

Step-by-Step: What do you need before you pack?

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Did you know that people who are moving spend more money during the three months surrounding their move than non-movers spend in five years?

This is not surprising to anyone that has lived through a move recently. On top of the expenses of security deposits and the cost of renting or hiring a moving van, even the costs of packing supplies can add up quickly.

This checklist will help you estimate what you need for your move, and will streamline your purchasing—and your packing.

Boxes

To pack a five to six room house, you will need the following boxes. If you are packing an apartment, divide the number of boxes in each category in half.

- ❑ **Small (1.5 cubic feet)—14 boxes**
Small heavy items, such as books, CDs, record albums, files, glasses, canned goods, small appliances and electronics.

- ❑ **Medium (3 cubic feet)—16 boxes**
Larger and medium-weight items, such as toys, pots and pans, clothing, plastic items, kitchen and bathroom items, and small lampshades.

- ❑ **Large (4.5 cubic feet)—9 boxes**
Light and bulky items, such as plastic containers, bedding, drapes, sports equipment, lamp shades, clothing, pots and pans, and toys.

- ❑ **Extra Large (6 cubic feet)—8 boxes**
Larger lampshades, large outdoor items, cooking pots, and smaller framed pictures.

- ❑ Dish Barrel (5.2 cubic feet)—3 boxes
Glasses, dishes, and china (using the cell dividers that partition and protect breakables). Also for collectibles, art, keepsakes, frames, and mirrors. (Box has double-wall strength.)
- ❑ Wardrobe (14 cubic feet)—4 boxes
Hanging clothes, shoes, and blankets. (Box includes bar and handles.)

Other packing materials

Add to your list items to protect and pad delicate and fragile belongings. When you look at your possessions, determine which types of padding and protection are best for your purposes.

- ❑ **Bubble wrap**
- ❑ **News wrap packing paper**
- ❑ **Paper pads**
- ❑ **Packing peanuts**
- ❑ **Mattress bags (for mattresses, box springs, and other large items)**
- ❑ **Chair and sofa covers**
- ❑ **Stretch film wrap (2" or 20" wide)**
- ❑ **40-gallon heavy-duty trash bags (for packing soft goods like pillows and blankets)**

A packer toolkit

Along with a supply of boxes and padding supplies, each packer needs the following items as part of an essential "packer toolkit."

- ❑ Box-sealing tape with dispenser, for building and sealing boxes
- ❑ Masking tape, for securing wrap around objects and attaching moving or loose parts
- ❑ Utility knife or scissors, for opening sealed boxes, and cutting tape and wrap to size
- ❑ Marking pen, for labeling boxes with name, destination, contents, and inventory numbers
- ❑ Assorted labels, such as "Fragile," "This Side Up," "Load Top," and "Load Last"
- ❑ Twine, for tying and securing items

Where can you find what you need?

- ❑ Check the want ads in the newspaper or your company newsletter to see if anyone's giving away their moving boxes.

- ❑ If you see people moving into your neighborhood, ask if you can take their empty boxes. Up to their ears in their own moving stresses, they'll be grateful to you for one less chore.
- ❑ Purchase moving supplies from a self-serve moving and storage outlet.
- ❑ If you plan to hire a professional moving company, ask their agent about boxes. See if they can give you reduced rates or package deals. You might be able to get a great bargain with used boxes.
- ❑ Purchase boxes and supplies online.