

# PACKING & LOADING LIKE A PRO



When it comes to packing up your belongings, it's smart to think ahead. Make it easier to step through the door of your new home by packing like a pro.

## ESTIMATE YOUR PACKING SCHEDULE

- Allow for one full day to pack each room of the house (except for the basement, garage and kitchen, which often take longer).
- Make a rough estimate, then add an extra 50 percent to your timeline.

## COME UP WITH A STRATEGY

- Start packing the parts of your home you don't use every day, such as the basement and attic, well before moving day.
- If you find an item you're unsure about keeping, start a pile of things to review at a later date.
- Scale down by tossing things out or donating unused items to charity.
- Designate a central location to keep boxes, tape, markers, stickers and bubble wrap to cut back on the number of times you will have to search for the supplies.

## TRANSPORTING ELECTRONIC ITEMS

- Even though electronics are heavy, they also have delicate parts that are easily jarred. Plus, you want to prevent rear-input jacks from getting clogged with debris.
- If you don't have the original box for your electronic item, start with a thick packing pad and wrap each component. Then put it in a box with extra-strong walls, such as a TV or computer box.
- Consider using plastic bins to protect electronics from moisture.



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### PACK THE PERFECT BOX

- **Choose a box:** Consider what you're packing and try to control box weight. If you're doing books, use a small box. If you're working on sweaters, a larger box can be used.
- **Prepare the box:** Tape the bottom, then line it with crumpled tissue paper or newspaper. Stack and fill in the box with your stuff, then top it with more tissue.
- **Wrap fragile items:** Use cardboard dividers, tissue paper or bubble wrap. To prevent small items from being thrown out accidentally, wrap them in brightly colored tissue paper or a labeled plastic bag.
- **Seal and label:** Tape the top and mark it with a descriptive label. You can print the name of the room the box belongs to or give more description to help with the unpacking process.

### PREPPING FURNITURE FOR THE MOVE

- Some furniture can be dismantled, but other pieces must travel as a whole.
- To protect them, tape all corners and legs of tables and chairs with discarded moving boxes and secure them with plastic wrap.
- If the wood has a finish that can be easily scratched, using plastic wrap may cause damage. Use moving pads or clean cardboard instead.

### MAKE YOUR MOVE SAFER

- A good rule of thumb: A healthy adult male should lift objects no more than 50 pounds, and smaller adults should lift no more than 35 pounds.
- And remember: The adage "lift with your legs, not your back" is no less true for being oft repeated.

### USING A HAND TRUCK

- **Load the hand truck:** To load boxes onto a hand truck (or dolly), have a helper tilt the box while you slip the truck's platform under it. Set the box down and push it snug against the hand truck.
- **Strap the load:** Secure the load to the hand truck with a strap and ratchet for tightening.
- **Brace and lean back:** Place your foot against the bottom of the back of the truck, and tip it back until you do not need to either push or pull to keep it steady.
- **Moving up and down stairs:** Work with a helper when going up or down stairs. Have the helper lift the bottom of the load while you pull on the cart handles.

### USING A HUMP STRAP

- A hump strap (essentially a 16-foot long nylon strap available at moving equipment stores) is a great tool for one person to more easily lift tall boxes or several boxes at once.
- **Set the box on top:** Try this technique to carry a tall box or several boxes at once. Lay the hump strap on the floor and place the box on top with the strap in the center. The stack should be near shoulder height; a smaller stack will not work.
- **Tie a knot:** Wrap the strap around the box and tie a knot just below the top front edge of the box. The knot should be comfortable to hold.
- **Lift and carry:** Back into the box, bend your knees, and grab the knot behind your neck with one hand. Slowly straighten your legs. Start walking when you feel comfortable, with the load resting on your slightly bent back.

### THE FOREARM STRAP

- A forearm strap is a real back saver if you are doing a major move. It extends your grab beyond your reach, effectively giving you another pair of hands for steady ing the load.
- Working with a helper, place the straps under the piece of furniture or an appliance and adjust the straps so they rest at a comfortable height for your forearms.
- Both you and your helper should lift together, using only your legs.
- As you climb a ramp, you can raise your lower your arms to keep the load upright.

### THE BLANKET DRAG

- This simple technique is especially helpful when moving an appliance through a doorway where there is little clearance on each side. It also works well for moving inside the truck.
- Have a helper tilt the appliance back while you slip a blanket under all the legs. Set the appliance back down and pull on the blanket to move it.

