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Stress-free MOVING

► Moving season is here ► We have guidelines to make the process painless ► No more dumping things into boxes the night before!

Moving can be torture. Just the thought of packing all of our belongings makes us want to crawl into bed and take a long nap. Peggy Abke-meier, President of Rent.com, snaps us out of it. She gives us step-by-step instructions on everything we need to know to make the process less stressful. At least to the point where we aren't calling our mothers in tears.



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Before you move

Information every renter should get from his or her new landlord before moving:

1 Verify your preferred move-in date with your landlord before scheduling your move.

2 Check on utilities. There is nothing worse than moving into a new place only to discover that the gas or electric has been turned off. Ask your

landlord how it works and what is required of you to ensure everything is functioning.

3 Some properties require move-in deposits to ensure the building's property isn't damaged.

4 Check building/city restrictions: Are you required to use a freight elevator if your building has one? Does the city require a loading permit to park a moving truck in the front of the building?

Find a good mover

Talk with different movers to compare their services, and get all quotes in writing. Asking friends or family for recommendations is a great idea. After you've collected a few names of movers, check and see if they are members of any national or state moving associations (such as the American Moving and Storage Association).



► Yes, it's true, there are ways to make your move like this!

Important tips from Abkemeier:

Keep an eye on valuables and make sure items that are hard to replace — such

as medications, insurance policies, car titles and the moving services contracts — are packed in a box that you move yourself. Or, ship ahead of time with a service that requires a delivery signature.

► **Move only what you really need.** Packing will unearth all of those items that you haven't used in months or years. Consider donating unneeded items to your local charity, or help fund your moving expenses by selling

them on eBay.

► **Pack your favorite items last,** as comfort items can be powerful stress relievers. Your morning coffee mug or favorite DVDs can help you feel sane in the midst of chaos.

Online

► **Rent.com** has an online moving center, www.rent.com/moving-center, dedicated to helping renters with the moving process.

Checklist

"A checklist allows you to visually see everything that needs to get done, and gives you peace of mind," says Abkemeier. Here's her sample list:

3 – 4 weeks before move: Plan your move. Take inventory of your current home, room by room. Start collecting boxes and packing supplies. Call your insurance agent.

1 – 2 weeks before move: Prepare to move. Arrange for moving help. Start packing what you can. Schedule disconnect dates with utility providers.

Moving Day: Organize your day. Meet the movers. Check your home one last time. Ensure your new place is move-in ready.

1 – 2 weeks after move: Check all appliances. Unpack. Start making your place feel like home. Explore your new area.