

How to Avoid 8 Costly Moving Mistakes



If you have a move in your future, there are definite ways to make the process go as smoothly as possible. Plan ahead and you'll avoid these 8 costly moving mistakes.

1. Scheduling your move on the same day of closing

While most buyers take possession of their new home on the day of closing, there are a lot of conflicts that can arise unexpectedly. Be sure to keep in constant communication with your escrow company so as not to delay your moving plans.

2. Not requiring a written estimate

It's fine to have moving companies give you an estimate over the phone or Internet. But to get a firm price, you need to ask the company to send a representative to walk through your home while you point out exactly what you want transported. Be sure you understand the conditions of the estimate - can they raise your bill on delivery? Does the contract allow them to bill you for more later?

3. Choosing a moving company based on price alone

You could end up spending more time and money in the end trying to fix a moving disaster. Check out the company's references (try to get two), licensing, insurance and length of time in business.

4. Not making a first night survival kit

Better to be safe than sorry. If your shipment hasn't arrived or you're simply too tired to unpack everything, you'll be thankful to have an accessible overnight bag with some essential items you'll need for the first night in your new place. Don't forget toiletries, medication, children's and pet's necessities - and maybe even a bottle of champagne to celebrate.

5. Not using a dolly or a hand truck

Whether you're moving yourself or just rearranging things after a professional move, the money you spend to rent or buy moving equipment will pay for itself by dodging back strains and chiropractic visits.

6. Refusing extra coverage for loss and breakage

The basic limited liability coverage offered to you, free of charge, by the movers will not be sufficient. And most homeowners' policies don't cover items broken or lost in a move. Extra insurance can be purchased through an independent insurance company, which will cover you for the duration of the move. Your mover will be able to direct you to a company that will bind your move.

7. Not labeling boxes

When packing boxes, make sure you label the top and sides of boxes with contents, location of contents in your house and any special instructions, such as "fragile" or "open first." Also, by keeping a list of the contents on the outside of the box, you won't have to dig through several boxes marked "kitchen" just to find a pan.

8. Not keeping your receipts

If you're moving closer to a job, your moving costs may be tax-deductible. Keep receipts for moving household goods, lodging, food and travel expenses. If your employer covers those costs, you won't be allowed to deduct them, but they will still want the receipts.