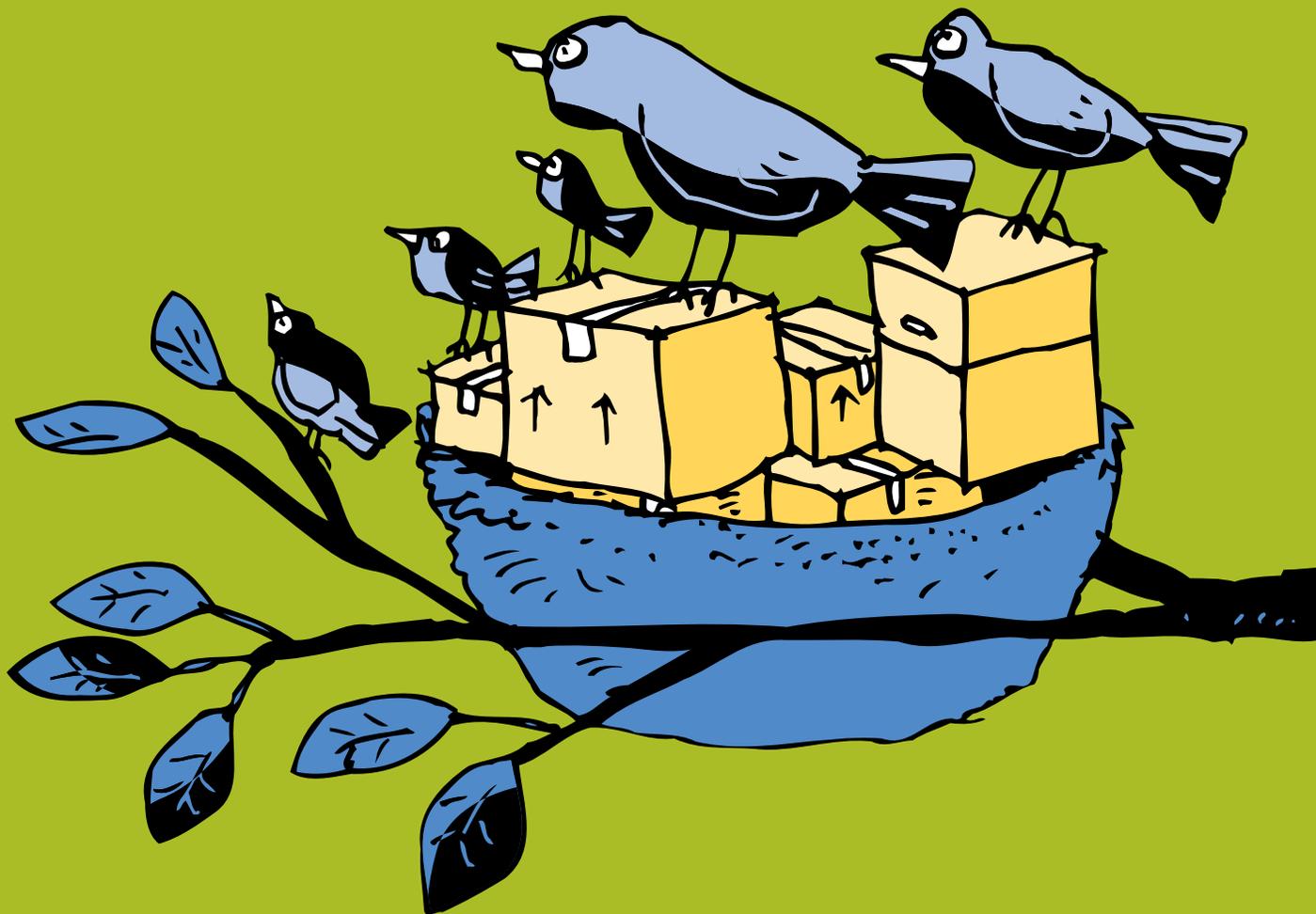
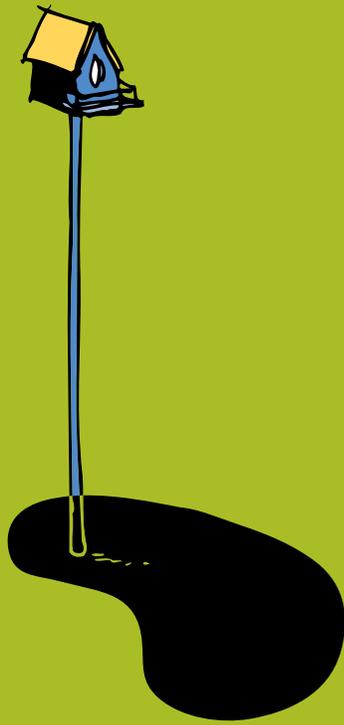


# Moving

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE









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If you're like most people, you're probably approaching your move with mixed feelings. After all, you're getting ready to make some big changes—you'll be leaving behind old friends and community ties while embracing a world of possibilities and opportunity in a new home. It can seem a little overwhelming at first, but by taking a few deep breaths and moving one step at a time, you can pick up and move to just about anywhere.

# Moving Timeline

## As soon as you know you're moving

- Think about your child care needs and if other relatives will be affected by your move.
- Start researching the new community and where you would like to live.
- If you are buying or selling a home, contact a real estate agent.
- Talk to your children about the move.

## Eight weeks before you move

- Get estimates from moving companies or truck rental companies.
- Start a file to collect estimates, receipts, and records of moving expenses.
- Start cleaning out closets, attics, and basements.
- Contact new schools and child care facilities in your new community.
- Make a list of all the people you will need to notify about your move.

## Six weeks before you move

- Choose a moving company or truck rental company.
- Look into new home and car insurance policies if you are moving out of state.
- Start sending out change of address notices to family, friends, and businesses.

## Four weeks before you move

- Hold a tag sale if you need to get rid of a lot of household items.
- Start packing.
- Go over the floor plan of your new home with your children.
- Get copies of family medical records and collect all important papers.

The program that provided this book to you can help. Call anytime for advice and support on everything from finding child care in your new community to getting a list of moving companies in your area. Meanwhile, this booklet should provide the basic information you need to take on a move with confidence.

#### Two weeks before you move

- Arrange for utilities to be disconnected at your current home and connected at your new home.
- If you will be driving a long distance, have your car serviced.
- Arrange with your bank to have your bank accounts transferred.

#### One week before you move

- Discontinue newspaper delivery.
- Fill your prescriptions.
- Complete as many errands as you can (like picking up the dry cleaning, having the carpets cleaned, and returning books to the library).

#### One or two days before you move

- Pack your belongings or have the movers pack them for you. Have your children pack any special items they would like to keep with them, and keep these items separate from the boxes going on the truck.
- Set aside valuables and important papers to take with you.
- Defrost the freezer and clean out the refrigerator.
- Confirm your arrangements with the moving company or your reservation with the truck rental company.

#### Moving day

- Be available when the movers arrive.
- Walk through the house when the truck is loaded to make sure nothing is left behind.
- Record utility meter readings.
- Take a final walk around the house and neighborhood with the family to say goodbye.

#### After you arrive

- Meet the movers at your new home.
- Check your belongings for damaged or missing property
- Celebrate your arrival!
- Take a walk around the new neighborhood to familiarize yourself.
- Take some time to relax!

# Making the Decision

People move for many reasons—job opportunities, personal relationships, the urge to roam, or retirement, to name a few. The most common reason is job opportunities. If your job has been transferred to a new location or if you have been offered a new job or promotion in another location, you now have a big decision to make. Should you pick up everything and move, or should you stay where you are?

Because relocating involves so many decisions and emotions, it may be difficult to weigh pros and cons of the move. The following questions may help you clarify your thinking and be comfortable with your decision. There may be other questions or considerations that might be especially relevant to your relocation decision.

- What are your (or your family's) top priorities right now and in the future? How will moving affect these priorities?
- How will all the members of your family react to a move? Is this a good time for everybody to be uprooted? Keep in mind that your children may be resistant to the idea of moving.
- What are the three best things the move will bring to the family?
- What are the three most difficult things your family will face if you move?
- Which people, places, or things will family members miss the most? Are they replaceable?
- Is the new community very different from the one you live in now? If so, how is it different? For example, is it a more expensive area to live in, or more affordable? Is the climate warmer or colder?
- Will other family members have to give up their jobs?
- Will there be a better time for the family to move within the next five years? If so, what would make the move easier at that time?

If you are moving because of a new job for you or your spouse, consider these questions:

- What will you or your spouse gain with the new job? A salary increase? Greater responsibilities? A chance to build new skills? Job security?
- Will your employer offer any assistance with the move, such as help with moving expenses or help for your spouse in finding a new position?
- Are there alternatives to relocating, such as commuting, retraining, or a temporary assignment?
- What would happen if you turned down the offer?

Consider how the move will affect other family members who work outside the home:

- What is your spouse's annual salary?
- How likely is it that he or she will find a job in the new location that is equal to, or better than, the job that he has now?
- If it takes him six months to find a new job, how much income will the family have lost?
- Is there a new opportunity that he would like to pursue?
- Would a temporary "commuter marriage" be acceptable?

When you have answered these questions, you can begin to weigh the benefits of the move against the costs. If you need to gather more information to make an informed decision, it may help to write down the questions that still must be answered.



- Handling stress
- Choosing a new community
- Cost considerations
- Temporary storage
- Packing

# Getting Ready

This is going to be a busy time in your life. You will be dealing with lots of conflicting emotions and a range of decisions, big and small. Although moving always brings stress, you will be surprised at how well you can handle it when you plan ahead and know what to expect.

## Handling stress

Some people enjoy their new jobs or friends so much that they experience only minor symptoms of stress during a move. For others, the stress can be severe.

Gaining a sense of control over your move can help ease daily stresses. Some good ways to gain control include the following:

- **Break tasks down into manageable parts.** Start with small jobs like arranging for mail to be forwarded or cleaning out a closet. After taking care of these things, you'll feel freer to pursue more time-consuming activities, like researching child care options in your new community or getting estimates from moving companies.
- **Make lists.** Write down what you need to do this week, rather than worrying about everything that needs to get done before you move. Refer to the Moving Checklist in the pocket of this booklet to help you get started.
- **Plan ahead.** Avoid last-minute anxiety by organizing as much as you can in advance.
- **Prioritize.** Rather than trying to do it all, identify and work on what is most important. You simply may not be able to do everything you think you "should" do.
- **Minimize other stresses.** Stress in other areas of your life may compound the effects of relocation stress. In the months just before and after a move, it's a good idea to avoid starting a diet or beginning a big, emotionally consuming project.
- **Take breaks.** Unplug the phone, turn off the lights, and enjoy a little quiet time.
- **Reach out and try to connect with other people.** Researchers have found that being with other people can make you feel less tense or depressed.
- **Hold on to your sense of humor.** Call a friend to share a joke or unwind after a long day by renting your favorite funny video.
- **Take care of yourself.** You can't function properly if you're not getting enough rest, exercise, and good nutrition.



**TIP** If you live in a multi-level home, move as many of the boxes and items to the main floor as you can before moving day. This will save you time when loading up the truck.

## Choosing a new community

When choosing where to live, it's a good idea to have some specific features in mind. For example, how close to your new job do you want to be? Do you prefer to be in a cosmopolitan area, close to museums and art galleries, or have you always wanted a quiet place in the country? Do you want a single-family house or a convenient apartment? Do you want to be able to walk to local stores, or would you rather live with more open space around you? Try thinking about your ideal place to live, and use that as a guide when choosing a new home. You may have to look at homes in various settings before you narrow down your preferences.

You can start researching your new community well before you have to move. A good place to start is with the local chamber of commerce. They will be happy to send you all sorts of information about the area, including maps, listings of community events, real estate contacts, and more. Many chambers now have Web sites. The employee resource program that gave you this booklet can also provide information on prospective communities, including school ratings, housing costs, local organizations, and more.

Local newspapers can give you an idea of what the important issues are in the new community, and the classifieds can tell you what things will cost. If you know someone in the new community, ask them to send you a couple of papers, or ask the chamber of commerce to send you one. If it will be some time before you move, you might even order a subscription. Just send a change of address form when you move.

If you are working with a real estate agency in the new community, it can provide plenty of information about the neighborhoods and communities in the area. Real estate agents visit homes in different neighborhoods every day, so they can answer many questions, and they may also have some brochures about the area. Most real estate agents will also tell you to look for a home in a school district with a high reputation. Not only will your children benefit from the better schools, but also homes in these neighborhoods tend to appreciate in value faster than homes in other neighborhoods. So even if you don't have children, it's a wise investment if you plan to sell your home some day.

If you are concerned about crime rates in any of the neighborhoods you are considering, you can call the local police department (or the employee resource program that gave you this book) for a listing of crimes reported recently in the area.

The best way to get the feel of a new community is to visit and see for yourself. While there, you can visit the neighborhoods and schools you are considering, go to public places to check out the local atmosphere, and talk to the local residents. If you have a particular concern, such as local transportation options, you can find answers to your questions first-hand.

## Cost considerations

### Buying versus renting

Take some time to think about your housing options. Will you be renting or buying? Will it be an apartment, a condominium, or a house? Your decision may depend on how long you plan to stay in your new home. If you plan to move on in a year or so, investing in a house may not make sense. If you want to settle down for several years, then buying may be the right option for you. If you are selling your current home, then buying another one may make financial sense. But you may not need to buy right away. It may make sense to rent an apartment for a while until you decide exactly where you want to buy. If you rent, you may wish to continue to do so. Try to figure out what your budget will be in your new location and what you will be able to afford.

### Moving yourself versus hiring a moving company

If you are moving because of a job opportunity, check to see if your employer will help cover your moving expenses. If not, you'll need to decide whether to pay for a moving company or rent a truck and move yourself. In either case, remember to save all receipts related to your move—some moving-related expenses may be tax deductible if you are moving for work. Contact the IRS and ask for Publication 521 for specific information.

## Moving yourself

Moving yourself can save money, but keep in mind that you will need plenty of help on both ends. Make sure you have neighbors and friends to help you pack up the truck at your old home and unload it at the final destination. You may also want to check out the pizza delivery options on both ends to keep your friends well fed and happy.

When you are renting a truck, try to get estimates from a couple of different truck rental companies, and give them at least two weeks' notice. If you are moving during the busy season (May to September), the earlier you call, the better. It's also a good idea to confirm your reservation a day or two before the move to make sure the truck will be waiting for you.

Another thing to consider when moving your possessions yourself is the value you place on your belongings. If you have a house full of precious antiques, you may want to pay a little extra to have professional movers handle your things.

You may want to ask yourself these additional questions before renting the truck:

- Do I feel comfortable driving a big truck? What if I have an accident?
- How much will I have to pay for gas, tolls, food, and motels?
- Do I have the time to do all the moving?
- Do I have the strength and the energy?

## Hiring movers

When hiring a moving company, you can pack your things into boxes yourself and have the company do only the moving, or you can have the moving company pack everything for you as well as move it. The advantage to having the company pack everything is that they are professionals and know how to pack boxes to avoid breakage.

You will want to get estimates from at least three different moving companies. Estimates are free, so take advantage of them. Be suspicious of any company whose estimate is much lower than the others—they may be deliberately “lowballing” the price to get your business, or they may not have done a proper estimate of your belongings. Here are a few things to keep in mind when asking for moving estimates:



**Pack your old phone book—you may need to call old neighbors or businesses after you've reached your new home.**

- **Ask for estimates only from licensed and insured movers** who have been in business for at least three years.
- **Remember that estimates are not always guaranteed prices.** Unless you specifically ask for a binding estimate, your estimate may be little more than the mover's best guess. Many factors can change the final price of your job—whether your building has an elevator, the total weight of your belongings, how close the truck can park to your door, and whether you have any difficult-to-move items, such as a piano.
- **A mover cannot properly estimate a job unless he comes to your home and sees exactly what needs to be moved.** Estimates given over the phone or Internet will be unreliable.
- **Make sure you show the estimator everything,** including what's in the attic and the basement, and if you plan to take the tractor that's in the garage with you.
- **Make sure the mover is adequately insured.** Ask for a copy of the policy to make sure the insurance covers your losses and not just the mover's.
- **Ask the mover about purchasing extra insurance** to make sure you are covered in case of an accident. Most movers offer three kinds of insurance (remember to read the fine print carefully for any restrictions or deductibles):
  - Released value liability.* The mover is responsible for damages or losses up to 60 cents per pound, regardless of the item's value.
  - Added value protection.* The plan would cover the actual value of the lost or damaged items (replacement cost minus depreciation).
  - Full value protection.* This plan covers the full current cost of replacing or repairing the items. The insurance usually costs about 90 cents for every \$100 of coverage with no deductible.
- **Get everything in writing.** If the mover's final invoice is different than the estimate, you will want to refer back to the original estimate to see what has changed. Find out whether each estimate is binding (or guaranteed), especially if it seems like a low price. If the estimate isn't binding, find out how much the mover will be able to deviate from his original price quote.
- **Find out how reliable the mover is before you make your final selection.** Interstate movers are required to prepare an "Annual Performance Report" that shows numbers of loss and damage claims, late deliveries, and incorrect estimates. Ask for a copy.
- **Give the mover at least two weeks notice** (preferably more) for any move, especially if you are planning to move during the peak moving season (May to September).



**Be sure to point out to the movers which boxes have fragile items. They may advise you to repack some items in sturdier boxes.**

## Temporary storage

You may have to put many of your things in storage temporarily if you are not moving into your house or apartment right away or if you're moving to a smaller or furnished home. The employee resource program that gave you this book or the chamber of commerce may be able to give you a list of storage places, or you can try the Internet or the yellow pages.

Get several estimates from different storage places in the area, and decide how much you want to spend. Some storage facilities fill up during the busy season, so be sure to call ahead and reserve a space by putting down a security deposit. You will pay a little extra for things such as climate-controlled buildings and 24-hour security, but the peace of mind might be worth it.

If you are worried about theft or damage, call the local police department to see if there have been any reported break-ins at the storage facility you are considering. If you can visit the facility beforehand, look around to see if it looks clean and well managed. You can purchase renter's insurance if you are worried about your property.

Here are a few simple tips on how to properly store your things:

- Lay down plastic sheeting or a pallet between the furniture and the floor of the storage unit.
- Wrap table legs with packing paper to keep them from getting scratched.
- Cover all furniture and take it apart, if you can.
- Try not to stack any furniture against the walls.
- Protect your bicycles and tools from rust by wiping a few drops of oil on them.
- Label all of your boxes clearly! If you have to keep your things in storage for a while, you will forget what is in each box.
- Leave appliance doors slightly ajar to avoid moisture and mildew. Make sure refrigerators and dishwashers are clean and dry.
- Use the valuable space inside your appliances to store small items.

## Packing

If you are packing your own things, be sure to have plenty of boxes in assorted sizes, wrapping paper (newsprint or packing paper), sealing tape, and a magic marker. Start collecting boxes and packing early to avoid rushing things on moving day. Moving companies often sell sturdy boxes in convenient sizes, and special boxes for special purposes, such as wardrobe boxes and boxes for large pictures and mirrors. But they aren't cheap.

Keep in mind the following packing tips:

- **Pack on a room-by-room basis.** Don't pack items from the living room in the same box as items from the kitchen. Room-by-room packing will make unpacking much faster and it will be less confusing.
- **Clearly mark all boxes with room location and contents.** This will make it easier to move things in when you start unloading the truck.
- **When packing fragile articles, remember to pack the heaviest objects at the bottom of the box and the lighter articles on top.** Be sure to use plenty of packing paper around breakable items and mark the box FRAGILE.
- **Use the right box for the right contents.** Small, heavy articles, like books, should go in the smallest boxes. Larger, lighter items can go in the larger boxes. The biggest boxes should hold things like pillows, toys, blankets, lampshades, or shoes.



- Moving because of a spouse's job offer
- Moving with children
- Moving with teenagers
- Parents and children moving apart
- Moving and older relatives

# Preparing Family Members

If you are moving as a family or a couple, you may have some extra planning and talking to do before the big move. It's important to talk to each other and keep tabs on how everyone is coping with the move. Children, especially, may need some extra hand-holding and attention as they try to understand what's happening. You will have a lot of decisions to make in the coming weeks, and the family will need to work together to make the move as smooth as possible.

## Moving because of a spouse's job offer



Let all your electrical gadgets return to room temperature before plugging them in.

Moving can be a difficult and stressful time for any couple, but it can get more complicated when you are relocating because of one person's job opportunities. Both of you will grieve for the usual losses of friends, co-workers, familiar sites, and community identities, but added to this may be feelings of guilt for causing the move or resentment for having to go along with it.

Both partners need to feel they have an equal say in the decision, even if one of you makes most of the money in the family—moves involve many factors other than economic ones. You may have to compromise, but make sure that major objections by either of you get addressed. If one of you feels like you have to sacrifice too much, you may grow resentful, and your partner may feel guilty for having caused so much unhappiness.

Couples need to face the move together, supporting each other and making the best out of a stressful situation. By identifying all the opportunities that the move may offer, you can make the experience less painful and more promising.

### When both of you work outside the home

For two-worker families, it's a good idea to consider the move successfully completed only after both of you have found satisfying jobs. If you are the accompanying spouse, you may feel pressure to find a job quickly, but keep in mind that most people believe that it's important to be selective about accepting a new job. Use this break in employment to examine your career path and decide if you want to change anything. Maybe now is a good time to get that extra training you've been thinking about, or to try something a little different. Here are two exercises that may help:

- **Create a time line.** Place your current occupation at the top of the page. Below that, include the years and nature of your other activity—paid employment, community projects, hobbies, school, and accomplishments. Look for common threads in the time line, and try to imagine what you would enjoy doing in the new community.
- **Identify your ideal occupation.** Identify a dream job and then brainstorm ways to make that dream come true.
- **When you're ready to start looking for a job, start networking.** Talk about your goals and what you're looking for to neighbors and acquaintances in the new community. Talk to co-workers and other contacts from your old job for possibilities in the new community. Connect with people at your spouse's new job, too.

Many companies are aware that relocating employees have working spouses or partners and are starting to offer them help with job searches. Your spouse can ask the human resources department at the new job if they can offer any advice or assistance, like resume-writing help or career counseling.

You may not have to give up your current job at all—with all the advances in telecommunications, you may be able to “telecommute” from your new home. Many employers are rethinking the traditional way of doing business and are embracing more flexible work arrangements. If you really want to keep your current job, you may want to talk to your employer about the possibility of working at the same job from another city.

Don't forget the Internet! If you have access to the Internet, you can start researching the job market in your new community long before you actually move there. There are thousands of job postings on the Web every day, in every category imaginable. If you don't have access to the Internet, check out your local public or college library. Many libraries can provide Internet access at no charge or for a small fee.



**TIP** If you're moving long distance, your property might share a truck with other people's property. Or the mover might have to warehouse your belongings for a few days. Ask your mover whether your things will remain on the truck the whole time. If not, ask whether you can check out the warehouse for security and cleanliness.

### When one of you doesn't work outside the home

If you have dedicated your life to raising children, managing the household, and being an active member of your community, a move can mean abandoning everything outside the family. There is no box in which you can pack your community work and contacts, friends, status, and identity.

You may suffer a painful loss of credentials. You may have made a name for yourself in the community through doing volunteer work, helping out in the children's schools, or growing prize-winning tomatoes. It can take longer to rebuild these kinds of community connections than it takes your partner to reconnect at work.

Here are some ideas for easing the transition to your new home:

- **Get support.** Ask a relative or close friend who's a good morale booster to visit with you during the week after the move. If your budget allows it, send him or her a plane ticket.
- **Stay in touch with old friends.** It's important to recognize that you are not alone. Telephone calls to friends and relatives are one way to talk through the stress you are experiencing.
- **Keep active in organizations and activities.** If you were involved in a club or sports league in your old community, try to find these same types of groups in your new community. You can engage yourself in activities you enjoy while meeting new people in a comfortable setting.

## Moving with children

With everything that's going on in your life as you get ready to move, it may be easy to forget that your children are probably excited and worried, too. They may not understand what's going on as clearly as you do, so it's important to pay extra attention to them, listen to them, and help them through the changes they'll be facing. If your child is a teenager, see also "Moving with teenagers" on page 23.

Depending on their ages, your children may have very different concerns about the move. Your 3-year-old may assume that the family pet will be left behind, and may be unhappy for days without saying why. Your 6-year-old may worry that he won't make any friends in his new neighborhood, and may be very sad about leaving his school. Or your older child may be afraid that she won't fit in at her new middle school, and may suddenly become tearful or withdrawn.

You can make the move easier for your children by dealing promptly and thoughtfully with their concerns. Even though you have a lot of other things on your mind, a little time from you at each step of the way can make a big difference in how well your children cope with the move and adjust to their new home. If you let your children know that you see moving as an adventure for the whole family, chances are that they will share your feeling.

### Helping young children prepare for the move

Once you've told young children about the move, they will still have plenty of questions and concerns. Here are some ideas that may help in the weeks before the moving van arrives:

- **Recognize that your children may have mixed feelings about the move.** Be patient if they're thrilled one minute and sad the next. Your children might find it reassuring to know that you have mixed feelings, too. You might say something like, "I'm really excited about moving into our new house, but I'll miss that apple tree in our back yard."
- **Talk about your new home.** Get pictures of your new home and give copies to your children. If you're not moving far, take them to see their new home. Take a walk around your new neighborhood. Even a look at the outside of the home can make the move seem more real and less frightening. You may also want to arrange a visit so your children can see inside the house as well. As you find out about the new community, share your news with your children so they can catch your enthusiasm.



**If you are going to stay in a hotel or motel during your move, make reservations in advance so you have one less thing to worry about.**

- **If you remember moving as a child, tell your children about it.** They may be reassured to know that you went through the same emotions when you were their age, and that you eventually made new friends and liked your new home. Or if this is the first big move for you, share that with them, too. You could say, “This is scary for me, too. I’ve never lived anywhere else but here. We can explore our new neighborhood together!”
- **Expect some changes in behavior.** During a move it’s normal for children to become fussy or moody. Younger children may “unlearn” their toilet training for a few weeks or “forget” other skills. Older children may slip in their performance at school. Try to see these lapses as signals of your child’s worries and be as helpful as you can. Things will probably straighten out soon after you are settled in your new home.
- **Start a scrapbook.** Putting together a scrapbook can help your children feel part of the activity of a move. It can also help them sort through what’s coming and what they’re leaving behind. You might help a younger child paste in pictures from brochures or sections from maps of the new community. An older child might fill the scrapbook with pictures or notes from friends, postcards, or clippings from a newspaper.
- **Encourage school-age children to keep a journal.** Some children find it easier to write about their feelings in a diary than to talk about them. Keeping a journal can help an older child sort through her confused feelings about a move or record her memories of her friends. If your child likes to draw, you might give her a book with blank pages so she can draw pictures of her old or new community.
- **Give your children some control over the move.** Ask them for their ideas about the decisions you have to make. They’ll feel better if they are part of what’s going on and know that you are interested in their views. Encourage them to make decisions about which of their possessions to keep and which to discard or give away.
- **Ask your children for help with the move.** Letting your children help with the practical aspects of the move will give them a better sense of what’s happening. Even a preschooler can help tape boxes or draw pictures on them to show what’s inside. Older children may enjoy some special tasks: the family historian to keep a journal of the move; the photographer to record the before, during, and after; the chef to make snacks for the trip.
- **Help your children think about and plan for their new rooms.** Buy or make something special for each bedroom: a poster, a decoration to put in the window, or a plant. Even talking about colors and looking at a few paint chips can help your children get excited about their new home.

- **If you'll be moving during the summer, plan for what your children will do before school or child care starts.** Find out if there are day camps, community recreation programs, or summer sports leagues, and register ahead of time. Plan some fun family activities, too. Is there a beach or park nearby? What kinds of day trips can you take? These will help your children enjoy their new community while they are waiting to make new friends. The employee resource program that gave you this guide can help you find summer activities for your children.
- **Let your children help pack their own travel bags.** Let each child pick out special toys, games, a bedtime storybook, a favorite blanket, a pair of pajamas, or other items that will go into the car or the carry-on luggage on the plane. These will help keep your children busy during the trip and reassure them that their favorite things won't get lost.

### Saying goodbye

Saying goodbye is an important way for children to gain control over their feelings of loss. They may not understand what a move involves, especially if they have never moved before. You can help them deal with their confusion and create happy memories by planning a few goodbye rituals.

- **Encourage your children to say goodbye to their favorite people.** These might include friends, teachers, librarians, neighbors, coaches, doctors, and other community members. Help your children plan ways to stay in touch with people they especially like.
- **Help your children say goodbye to places, too.** Your children may have a special attachment to a zoo, park, or place of worship. Plan special visits to these places and let your children take pictures of them.
- **Take a walk around your neighborhood.** Gather the family together and take a walk around the neighborhood. Look back on the happy times you've had there and talk about what it will be like to leave. Talk about some of the exciting things about your new neighborhood, too. This will help your children acknowledge their sense of loss while they also look forward to the adventure of discovering a new community.
- **Have a goodbye party.** A fun event can make saying goodbye easier for your family. Give each child who attends a party favor—for example, a small address book with your children's new address written in. Make sure your children get address books and collect friends' addresses, too. You might also take pictures or give your children autograph books and ask everyone at the party to sign them. Or ask each guest to bring going-away letters to your children.
- **Plan a special goodbye at child care or school.** Talk to your children's teachers or child care providers and find out if the school or center has any special rituals for children who are leaving. Find out how you can be part of these or what else you can do to help your children say goodbye to friends and classmates.



**Don't pack sesame oil. If the bottle breaks, it creates a terrible stench!**

## Finding new schools

One of the most important decisions your family will ever make is choosing where your children will go to school. You may be trying to decide between public and private school or choosing where to live because of the reputation of area schools. How much choice you have depends in part on your location. In some communities parents may choose public schools regardless of their school district. In other communities you choose your school by deciding where to live.

Choosing a school begins with evaluating your child's educational needs. Is your child happy and doing well academically in her current school? If so, you'll probably want to look for a similar school. But if your child seems restless, bored, or inattentive, try to figure out why. Would a more disciplined or flexible atmosphere—or a school with special programs—suit your child's needs better? Here are some ways to evaluate your child's educational needs:

- **Look at what kind of learner your child is.** Children who like to explore independently may flourish at a school that encourages self-directed learning. Students who need more supervision and guidance may do better in a more traditional setting.
- **Ask your child what he likes most and least about his current school.** Does he feel there is anything that would make it easier for him to learn?
- **Talk to your child's teachers.** Is your child having trouble in any areas? Ask teachers what kind of setting would bring out the best in your child.

Taking time to learn about a number of schools can prevent problems later on. You may also discover options you hadn't considered. These tips can help you learn about schools:

- **Gather information.** Subscribe to a local parenting magazine or a local newspaper that carries reports on school board and other educational meetings. Make a list of schools that interest you. Watch for signs of possible trouble, such as budget cuts, teacher strikes, school board battles, and poor test scores.
- **Ask about test scores.** Contact the state department of education to see if it requires students in certain grades to take standardized tests. Ask about the scores in schools you are considering and how they compare with those in other schools. You can call the employee resource program that gave you this book to ask for test and ranking scores at the schools you are considering.
- **Visit Web sites of schools, if available.** These can give you information on teachers, students, courses, sports teams, and other aspects of a school. If you don't own a computer, see if your public library has one you can use for free. A librarian can help you get started.



**If you are moving into an apartment, be sure that it is in the same condition you were told it would be in. Describe in writing anything that has been broken or worn and give a copy to the property manager.**

- **Talk to school guidance counselors.** Ask about drop-out rates, SAT test scores, and whether a high school offers advanced-placement or college-credit courses.
- **Ask about each school's annual expenditure per student.** Students don't necessarily get a better education at schools that spend more. But be wary of a school that spends much less per pupil than its neighbors. Ask also about teachers' salaries. A school district that pays well often attracts first-rate teachers.
- **Talk to real estate agents.** The quality of a school system tends to affect real-estate values. This means that an agent can often point you toward school districts likely to attract parents who share your educational concerns.

### Choosing new child care

Start thinking about child care options well before you move. How soon after you move will you need child care? Does your child's new school offer extended-day programs? Do you want child care to be close to your new home or closer to work? Do you want someone to come into your home? How much can you afford? The program that provided this book can help you find child care in your new community. Here are a few ideas to help you narrow your search after you have names of a few programs that may meet your needs:

- **Call each program or provider and interview the director or provider.** It's generally a good idea to ask one or two important questions—such as what a typical day is like or how long the provider has been caring for children—before you decide to visit.
- **Ask for any literature or materials they may have available.** Read the brochures, contract, and handbooks from each program.
- **When you visit the new community, take some time to visit some of the providers that sound like possibilities.** Ask lots of questions! Allow yourself enough time to sit in the room and watch how the children and provider act together.
- **When you've narrowed your search down to one, two, or three choices, ask the program director or provider for references from other parents** who are using or have recently used their services. Check at least three references.
- **Visit your final choice again** at a different time of the day.

## Moving with teenagers

Teenagers tend to resist the idea of moving more strongly than any other age group. That's because they are struggling to gain some independence from their families, and their friendships are becoming more important. At this vulnerable time of life, it can be wrenching to separate from friends, especially for a teenager who is just starting to feel socially self-confident. Helping your teenager cope with a move and adjust to a new home under these circumstances can take a lot of patience and flexibility. But the effort is worth it. If you can help your teenager deal successfully with a move, he will have taken an important step toward feeling confident and proud of his ability to handle the many transitions that will be part of his adult life.

Preparing your teenager for a move begins with good communication. Here are some tips that may help:

- **Talk with your teenager about your plans.** Explain when, where, and why you are moving. By letting your teenager know what's going on, you can help her keep her worries in perspective. No matter how she feels about the move, it's better for her to hear about it directly from you than from overheard conversations.
- **Involve your teenager in decisions, if possible.** You may not have much control over when you move or where you will live. But if you have some flexibility with other decisions, ask for your teenager's ideas about things and try to accommodate his needs. Be clear about what he can and can't decide.
- **Give your teenager plenty of time to adjust.** Try to let her know at least two to three months in advance that you'll be moving. This will give her time to adjust to the idea of the move and will give the two of you time to work together to plan a going-away party and other events that can make the transition easier.
- **Focus on the good things about the move, but be realistic.** Your teenager will pick up on your feelings about the move. If you're unhappy about the move, he probably will be, too. If you're excited, he probably will share your enthusiasm. Don't promise your teenager that he will love everything about his new home or make lots of new friends right away. Let him know that it may take a while to feel comfortable, but that you will be there to support him.
- **Be flexible.** Try to work out a way for your teenager to attend a school or community event that matters a lot to her. If she's heartbroken about having to leave town before the junior prom or her best friend's Sweet 16 party, see if you can arrange for her to return for those events.

- **Be aware that your teenager may protest.** It's normal for teenagers to feel sad about, and even strongly resist, leaving their friends and school. Your teenager might become rebellious and seem to be trying to sabotage the move—for example, by refusing to clean his room before your house or apartment is shown. This kind of behavior may be your teenager's way of showing his sadness and confusion. Try to acknowledge his pain without condoning behavior that may hurt the family.
- **Contact your teenager's new school.** You will need to register your teenager, and you may be required to send medical forms and other information. Collect information on the curriculum, sports teams, extracurricular activities, or anything else that might help your teenager feel less nervous and more confident about starting a new school.
- **Talk about your own feelings about the move.** Let your teenager know that you have some mixed feelings, too. She might feel reassured to know that you're sad that you'll miss a co-worker's retirement party or your next-door neighbor's annual Fourth of July barbecue. Talking about a difficult move during your own childhood can be an especially good way to get a teenager to talk about her feelings.
- **Encourage your teenager to say goodbye to the people and places that have been important in his life.** Saying goodbye is an important way to gain control over feelings of loss. Saying goodbye can also help to boost your teenager's self-esteem by giving friends and teachers a chance to tell him how much he has meant to them.
- **Plan a going-away party with your teenager.** Some teenagers may want to avoid goodbyes altogether because they seem too painful. But this can lead to greater homesickness later on when your teenager realizes that she didn't say goodbye to friends who matter a lot to her. You can help by giving a going-away party that will make moving more fun and set the stage for staying in touch.
- **Remember that it will take time for your teenager to adjust after the move.** It's normal for teenagers to seem slightly withdrawn, unhappy, or moody at first, even to have spells of unhappiness months after the move. Your teenager may be nostalgic for his old home or neighborhood or say things like, "I'll never like living in this town." This is a normal part of the adjustment process. If you can see such behavior in that light and not as a criticism of the move, you'll be better able to provide the support your teenager needs.

It's natural for a teenager to feel sad about leaving friends and classmates. That's why it's important for you to offer support, encouragement, and reassurance to your teenager before, during, and after a move.



**TIP** When the truck is finally loaded, take a few minutes to walk through every room in your home. Open closet doors and cabinets to make sure nothing gets left behind.

## Parents and children moving apart

Today, one child out of four is being raised by a single parent, and 60 percent of children will spend some part of their childhood in single-parent homes. One of the most important aspects of a child's development is maintaining a close relationship with both parents. Distance does not change this need, although it may make it more difficult to fulfill.

If you are a non-custodial parent and are moving, it's important to

- **Discuss the move ahead of time with the custodial parent.** A move can have an impact on parenting and custody issues. Clear these matters up before you move so you and your child know exactly what to expect.
- **Explain the move clearly to your child.** Give specific reasons (for example, a corporate transfer) to make it clear that you are not rejecting him.
- **Express love.** Make sure that your child understands she is loved, no matter where you live. Tell her clearly that you aren't moving because of anything she (or her other parent) did.
- **Anticipate visits.** Be sure to emphasize the good things about the area to which you are moving and talk about places to see on visits together.
- **Set a date for a first visit.** Make specific plans to visit your child and give him a schedule of future visits.
- **Avoid talking about how lonely you will be without him.** Your child may feel insecure, frightened, or guilty if he thinks you will be miserable without him. Try to emphasize that life can be safe and happy when you are apart and when you are together, too.

If you are a non-custodial parent and your child is relocating with her other parent, you will want to try to

- **Be supportive and positive.** Your child may already be angry at her other parent and frightened about leaving familiar places and people for the unknown. It's important that both parents try to stay positive.
- **Avoid adding to your child's guilt.** He may feel guilty about leaving you, and displays of sadness can only make him feel worse.
- **Be reassuring.** Talk about future visits and the fun you will have together.
- **Set a date for a first visit.** This will give your child something concrete to look forward to.



**TIP** Don't wrap your lampshades in newspaper (the ink can smudge). Use clean white tissue paper only.

### Communicating after the move

For long-distance parents, communicating requires some forethought and planning. Write letters and postcards, call regularly, send photos and small gifts, or, if your child is too young to read, tape-record letters to her.

It's just as important to communicate with the other parent. No matter what your personal differences may be, it's important to keep the lines of communication open. Keep each other informed, and share information about what happened in your house. Open communication allows both of you to carry out rules and avoid being played against each other. If one of you is too angry or uncomfortable to speak civilly, communicate through notes or tape recordings. But remember that no one should expect messages like these to be delivered by a child.

In order to help a child maintain a long-distance family relationship, both parents may need to spend time listening and talking with him about the feelings he is experiencing, including pain, rejection, loss, and anger. By keeping in close contact even through difficult times, a long-distance parent can build a meaningful, lasting relationship.

### Moving and older relatives

If you have an older relative who depends on you, you may have some extra concerns about moving. You and your relative may need to find substitutes for the help you've been giving, whether it's shopping, managing bills, or just being nearby for emotional support and company. Or your relative may be moving with you, either as part of your household or to a new living arrangement nearby.

You may be under a great deal of pressure. But taking time before the move—talking, listening, and planning—can make a big difference in how your family copes with the move and adjusts to a new home and new routines.

### If your older relative will be moving with you

Your relative will have an easier time adjusting to a new community if you do some planning before you move. Include your older relative in the planning as much as possible.

- **If your relative will need separate housing, start your search as early as possible.** Retirement communities and subsidized senior housing often have waiting lists. Visit the housing options with your older relative to make sure you are both happy with the new arrangements.
- **Think about how your relative will take care of basic services.** Consider how your relative will deal with cooking, shopping, and getting around. Plan ahead for services that may be needed.
- **Find a new doctor.** Your relative's current doctor may be able to give you a referral. Even if you decide to switch later, this can give your older relative peace of mind during the first weeks in a new community. Arrange to have medical records forwarded.
- **Explore ways for your relative to meet people in your new community.** Look into senior centers, Elder Hostel courses, local chapters of clubs or organizations to which your relative belongs, and adult day health programs for those with special care needs.
- **Talk with your relative to understand his income.** Then help notify all income sources of his new address. These might include the Social Security office or the Veterans Administration.
- **Collect names and addresses of key people in your current community.** Your relative may want to stay in touch with friends, neighbors, doctors, or lawyers. Keeping a list of important phone numbers will help you quickly obtain any important records or information after you move.
- **Pull together important medical and insurance information.** If a medical emergency arises, you will need to be able to find insurance policy numbers and coverage information. In any case, you will need to notify insurers of your relative's new address. If you are moving to a new state and your relative qualifies for Medicaid, you will need to reapply for Medicaid at the new address. Find out if your relative has a living will or an advance medical directive, and keep it with other health and insurance information, so that you can find it easily during a move.
- **Fill prescriptions just before you move,** and find a new pharmacy soon after you arrive. You may be able to find a pharmacy that will deliver prescriptions.
- **Help your relative gather important legal and financial information.** This may include bank account numbers, stock certificates, deeds, titles, and other legal documents or financial instruments. If your relative has a safe deposit box, be sure to empty and close it before you move.

### If you are moving away from your older relative

Moving can be much harder when you are leaving somebody you love. Here are some ways to make sure that your relative gets good care after you leave:

- **Plan ways to stay in touch after you move.** Reassure your relative that you will be in touch regularly. You might pick a date for a visit and think about making audio- or videotapes to send with letters. Or make a photo album with space for your relative to add pictures after you move and ask for a few mementos or photographs that you and your family can take with you.
- **Plan a regular time for phone calls.** Making a written agenda can help you remember everything you want to talk about. You might also find out if you can use SeniorNet ( an organization that provides adults 50 and older with access to and education about the Internet and computers—[www.seniornet.org](http://www.seniornet.org)) or another computer network as a way of staying in touch after you move.
- **Have a family meeting (in person or by phone).** Discuss any new arrangements that will have to be made because of your move. Think of your “family” as anyone who cares about your relative—it might include friends and neighbors. Decide who will be responsible for different parts of your relative’s care after the move. You may want to have other meetings later on. Good communication is the key to making sure that things work out well after the move.
- **If new housing arrangements will be necessary for your relative, start looking as early as possible and explore all your options.** Many retirement communities and subsidized senior housing facilities have waiting lists. Visit the housing options with your older relative to make sure you are both happy with the new arrangements.
- **Collect important names, addresses, and telephone numbers.** Make a master list of people you may need to reach if a problem comes up that your relative can’t handle. You may want to bring a phone book with you to refer to after the move.
- **Pull together the information you will need in order to deal with your relative’s medical or legal needs from a distance.** Include what you will need for her routine medical care needs as well as an emergency. You will also want to make a list of account numbers and the phone numbers of bankers and lawyers.

Moving can be much more complicated when it involves an older person who depends on you. But careful planning and open communication can make a move easier for everybody. Your hard work will pay off when you begin a new phase of your life knowing that someone you love is receiving good care.

# Moving as a Single Adult

At first glance, single adults don't seem to have much to worry about when moving to a new community. After all, you don't have kids to find schools and child care for, you don't have to compromise with a spouse about where you want to live, you seem to have very little to tie you down.

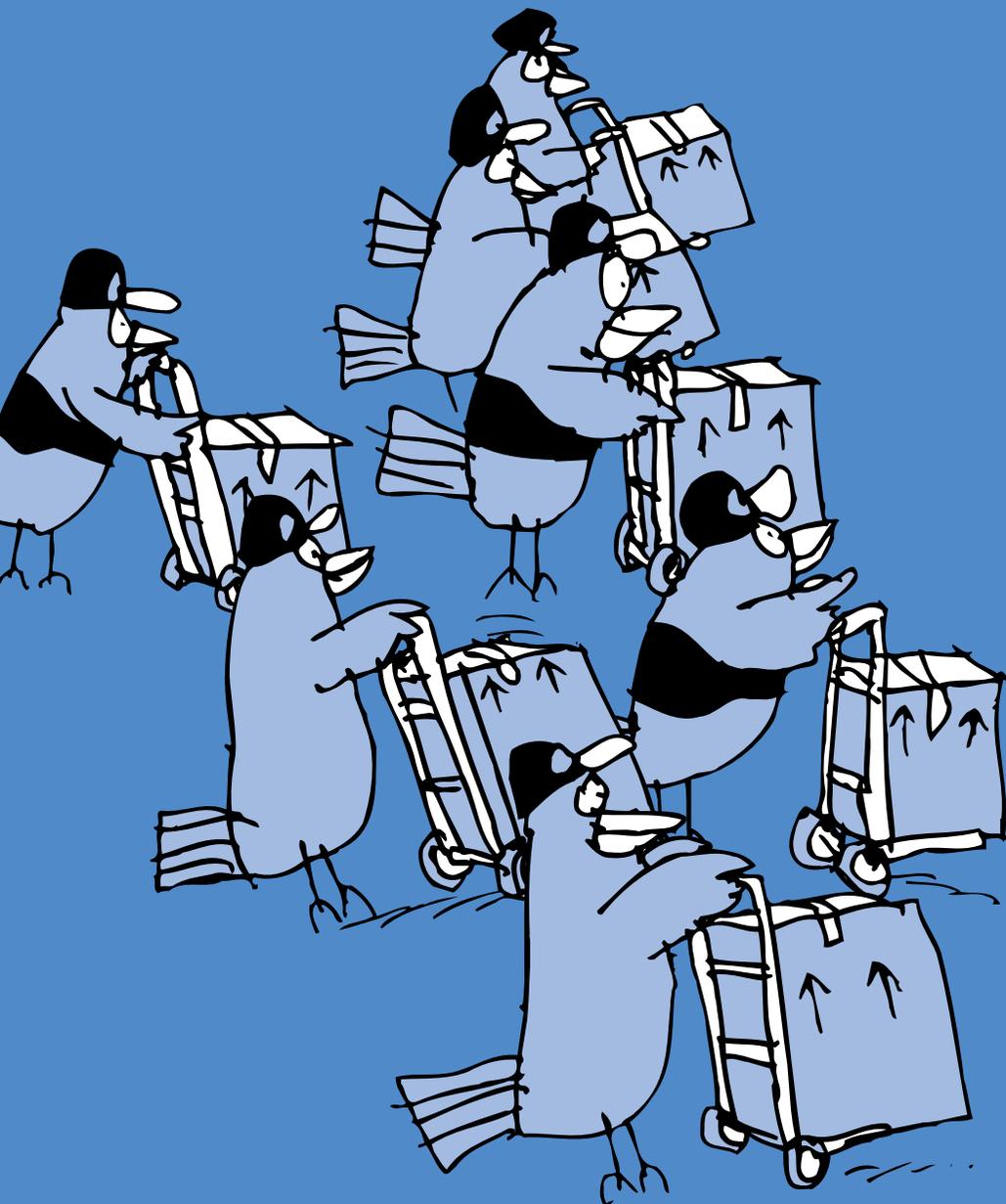
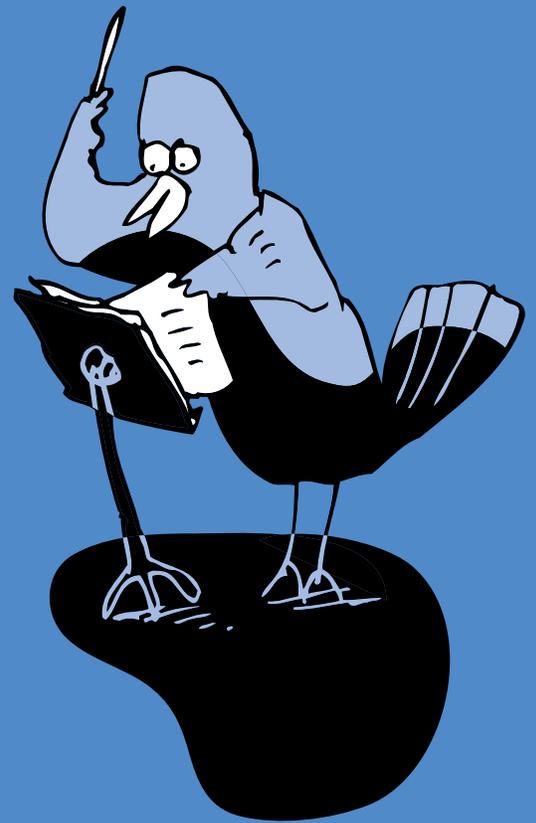
But settling into a new community can seem like a lonely and daunting task if you're on your own. Couples and families have a built-in support system right at home, but as a single person, you'll have to make an extra effort to create a support system in your new community.

If the thought of moving all by yourself makes you uneasy, ask a friend or relative to come with you on the journey. Consider paying for the return plane ticket in exchange for his moral support. The investment may be well worth it.

Trying to make new friends as an adult can be complicated. For many adults, lasting friendships have arisen naturally from shared activities and years of belonging to the same community. Most people feel an especially strong need for friendship when their surroundings and jobs have changed. But making friends in a new community isn't always easy. It can take a lot of time to find a circle of friends who make you feel at home, so don't give up.

Here are some ways to begin to make connections in your new community:

- **Look into adult education classes or volunteer work.** Take that photography class you've always wanted to take, learn to speak French, or volunteer to read to children at a nearby hospital. You can visit your local library to find out about classes and community events, or pick up the phone and call local community centers or colleges for information.
- **Try contacting the local chamber of commerce for a listing of clubs in the area, finding a spiritual group, or joining the local alumni chapter of your college.**
- **If you were active in a professional, political, volunteer, or social organization in your old community, find out if there is a local branch in the new area.** This is a great way to meet people who share your interests while you continue to participate in activities you have always enjoyed.



- Safety issues
- Helping children during the move
- Moving with pets
- Loading the truck yourself
- Damage claims
- Helping your children unpack

# Moving Day

The big day is finally here. The truck is on its way and everyone is nervous but excited. Here are a few tips to make the day go smoothly:

- **Keep your telephone and utilities hooked up until the day after you move**, so you can keep communication lines open on moving day.
- **Have lots of cold water available for the movers** so they don't become dehydrated. It's also a good idea to have some soap and paper towels handy in case they want to clean themselves up.
- **Keep your sense of humor!** This is going to be a hectic couple of days—you'll get through it much easier if you can laugh at finally finding that toy your teenager lost when he was 2.

## Safety issues



Be sure to remove any pendulums or weights from clocks, or secure them tightly to the base of the clock.

- **Do not pack any flammable, combustible, or explosive materials for shipment on a moving truck.** Movers are not allowed to transport aerosol spray cans, paint thinner, gasoline, or any other potentially harmful material. Safety is the first concern.
- **Drain fuels from mowers and other machinery** before loading onto the truck.
- **Avoid waxing or oiling wooden antiques and fine wood furniture right before moving.** Some products can soften the wood, making the wood vulnerable to imprinting from furniture pads and other items placed on top of them.
- **Check with your local appliance repair shop or your owner's manuals to see if major appliances, like refrigerators, dishwashers, or washers and dryers, need any special servicing before or after the move.**
- **Stoves must be disconnected before they are moved.** Be sure gas lines are shut tightly and capped. For electric ranges, removable coils and other parts must be packed separately.



**TIP** Teach your children your new address and phone number right away. They can practice writing it on packing cartons.

## Helping children during the move

- **Make sure that all family members take part in the move.** If you send your children to a relative's house on moving day, they may fail to grasp the reality of the move. Try to find a way for even very young children to take part in the move. This will help them understand that a big change is taking place in their lives and, if they're confused, will give them a chance to ask questions.
- **Keep favorite toys or belongings where children can get them during a move.** After your children have packed their special travel bags or boxes, keep these in an accessible place during the move—in the car you'll drive or as carry-on luggage on the plane. Make sure they're among the first things you bring in when you reach your new home.
- **Plan to have some new toys, games, or activities for the trip.** Depending on the ages of your children and how you are traveling, these might include story tapes, books, markers and paper, a journal, a magnetic board game, binoculars, and simple "sitting still" toys like magnets, magic tricks, dolls, or cards.
- **Ask a child to play "navigator."** Mark the route beforehand and let a child who's old enough "lead" the way. Show your children where you are on a map and where you will be going. Encourage all your children to help you look for landmarks that will help them get to know their new community—a park, a statue of a soldier, a funny sign or billboard.
- **Pack some healthy snacks to eat along the way.** It can be hard to find fresh fruit, raisins, nuts, cheese, or even juice when you are on a long trip.
- **Make the trip fun.** If your move involves a long car trip, plan for fun stops along the way—a visit to a museum, a theme park, or some other attraction that's on your route.

## Moving with pets

- **As you prepare to move, try to keep your pet's routines as regular as possible** to avoid stress. On moving day, you may find it helpful to keep your pet at a friend's house or at a kennel to reduce the risk that it will grow frightened and run away or hide in a box about to be put on the truck.
- **Take your pet to the veterinarian** before you move, and make sure all vaccinations are current and your pet is healthy. Get a copy of your pet's veterinary records to take with you and ask your veterinarian if he can recommend anyone in your new community. You may also want to discuss with your vet whether your pet should be tranquilized during the move. The vet should give you enough medication so you can try it out before moving day to see how your pet reacts. Ask your vet if she knows of any state regulations you should know about before bringing your pet into a new state.
- **Keep some form of identification on your pet** at all times in case you get separated.
- **If you need to feed your pet during the trip, take along water and bland food** from your old home. Different food and water can give your pet an upset stomach.
- **If your pet is on any medication, be sure to have an ample supply** so you won't run out before you have a chance to find a new vet.
- **Avoid temperature extremes for all pets.** Do not leave pets alone in the car for more than a few minutes. Use a sturdy, insulated carrier to help regulate the temperature when they are traveling.
- **If you are transporting your pet by plane,** try to book a direct flight so it won't spend a lot of time waiting in a cargo hold.
- **If you will be staying in a hotel** during your trip, call ahead to find one that accepts pets.
- **Keep some of your dog or cat's favorite toys or a blanket with him.** Being able to smell some of his favorite, familiar things may help reduce stress.
- **If you have a dog, be sure to carry along paper towels and plastic bags for disposing of waste.**
- **For cats, have a litter box handy.**
- **For any pet, it's a good idea to keep a sponge and paper towels handy** to clean up any accidents.
- **If you have exotic or unusual pets, ask your local pet store or your veterinarian for more detailed moving instructions.**

## Loading the truck yourself

- **Be sure to load the heavier furniture first, so it's near the front of the truck.**
- **Use rope to secure large pieces of furniture to the sides of the truck**—your things will move during the trip, and the rope will help keep the furniture from sliding too much.
- **Pack mirrors and large picture frames between mattresses** to prevent them from breaking. Just remember you put them there when you unpack the truck!
- **Heavy boxes of equal weight can be stacked on top of each other. Otherwise follow the rule of heavy things on bottom, lighter things on top.**
- **Keep the tool box handy** in case you need to disassemble any furniture or remove a door, and make the toolbox the last thing you pack on the truck so you can get to it easily at any point during the move.

## Damage claims

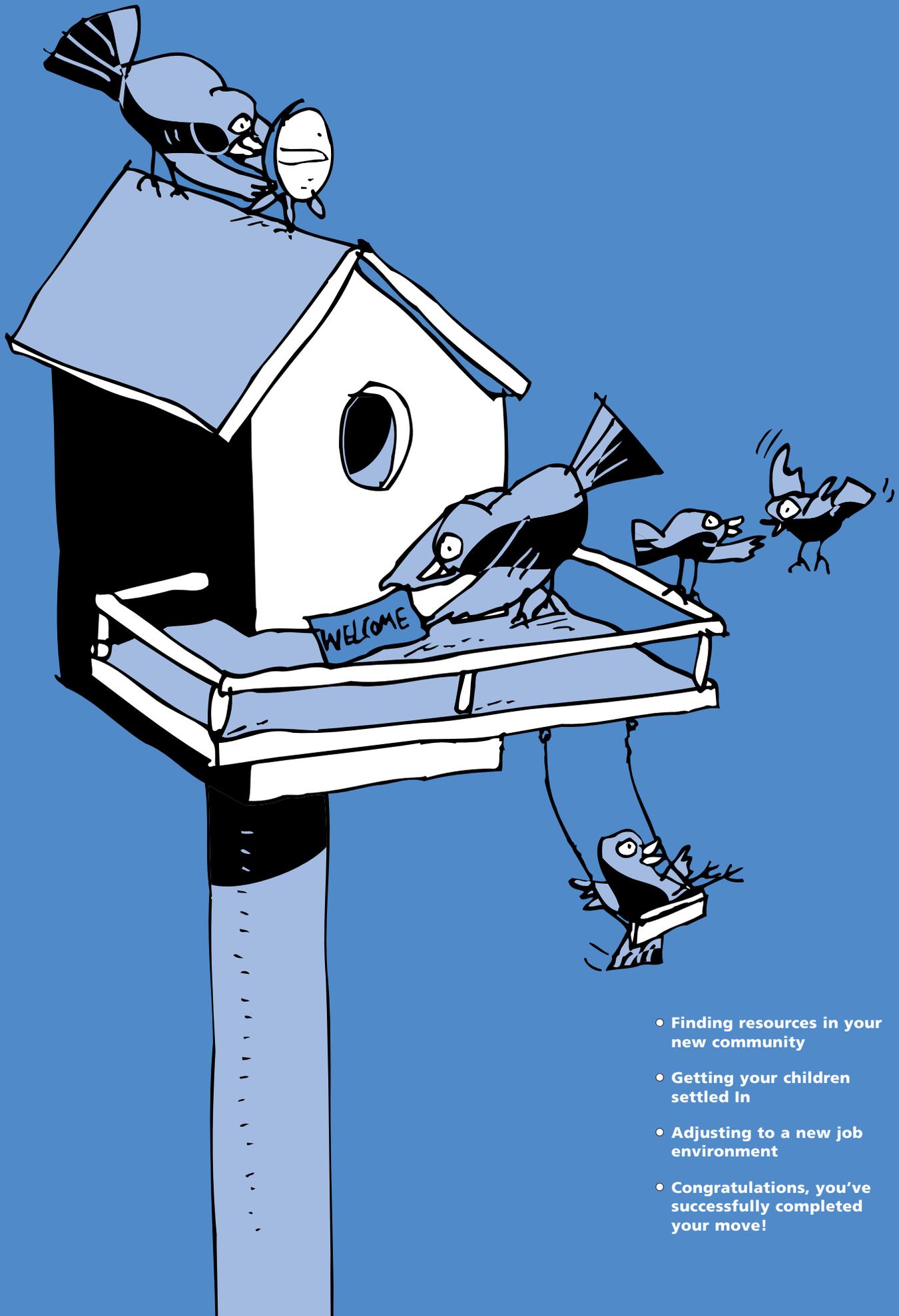
If you hired professional movers, examine all items carefully before signing the final receipt. Bring any damage to the attention of the group leader on moving day. Ask the group leader for damage claim forms in case you find something later on. You have up to nine months to submit a damage claim, so if you don't discover a problem until you're unpacking some seasonal decorations, you can report it then if it's within the nine-month period.



**TIP** Remember to return all your library books before you move.

## Helping your children unpack

- **Unpack some of your children's belongings first.** You will need to get the kitchen and living room set up, too, but it will be easier on you in the long run if your children can be settling into their rooms at the same time.
- **Unpack the TV and the VCR promptly.** Unloading a moving van can take hours, so you're probably going to need more than a few toys and games to keep your children busy on moving day. If you unpack the TV and VCR right away, they can watch their favorite video while they're waiting for the rest of their belongings to be unloaded.
- **Encourage your school-age children to unpack some of their own belongings.** This can give them a sense of control over the move, especially if you let them make some decisions about how to arrange their toys or books.
- **Celebrate your family's arrival.** You probably won't be able to unpack in a single day. So, after you've taken care of a few basics, ask your children to suggest a way to celebrate your arrival in your new home. Getting a pizza or playing a game might reassure your children that everything won't change just because you've moved.
- **Make sure your home is safe.** If you have an infant or toddler, make sure that electrical outlets are covered and that small objects are put out of reach as you unpack. Put up gates or keep doors closed at the tops and bottoms of stairways and put dangerous objects like knives away in drawers or cabinets with safety locks.
- **Hold on to your sense of humor.** All of you may be tired after your trip or wish your new home looked perfect right away. But if you can laugh about how you packed a bag of trash or got lost three blocks from your new home, your children probably will be able to see the humor in their experiences, too.



- Finding resources in your new community
- Getting your children settled in
- Adjusting to a new job environment
- Congratulations, you've successfully completed your move!

# Settling In

Moving to a new community is an enormous undertaking. Learning all about a new community and establishing the local connections and “know-how” you need can seem overwhelming at first, but it can also be a fun adventure to make these discoveries.

## Finding resources in your new community



Placing an open box of baking soda inside your refrigerator will help to absorb extra moisture during the move.

It is often the little things—where to go for dry cleaning or for a good take-home meal, having a reliable babysitter or pet sitter, knowing what’s fun to do on the weekend—that make the difference between feeling frustrated and feeling at home.

- **Visit the local library.** Ask the librarians for background information about the town as well as for any other information you need.
- **Attend meetings in your new town.** Go to a school board meeting or meetings of the town council or PTO. Try showing up 15 minutes early to meet and chat with new neighbors.
- **Go for walks or bike rides.** It’s a good way to learn the terrain and to discover the smaller attractions, like unique shops, attractive side streets, and tucked-away parks. Take your children for walks, too, so you can get a feel for the area and discover new places together.
- **Attend church, synagogue, or other religious meetings.** Religious services can offer a sense of stability at a time of great change in your life. They also offer a good way to make connections with people in your new community.
- **Act like a tourist.** Take the time to enjoy the local attractions and to learn your way around. Local museums and tourist spots can give you a sense of the history and culture of your new community—and they can be a fun diversion.
- **Reach out.** Introduce yourself to your new neighbors. Ask about school bus routes, local parks, trash pickup, and local repair services.
- **Respond positively to gestures of friendship.** Return a neighbor’s phone call or respond with a dinner invitation. Let others know you’re interested in meeting them.



**Keep your pets out of packing boxes and away from all the activity on moving day—you don't want to accidentally pack the cat!**

- **Join up.** One of the best ways to learn about a new community and make personal connections is to join professional, political, and social organizations. Joining a health club, sports team, hobby group, or local professional association can be a wonderful way of quickly forming new relationships. Although you may feel short of time as you settle in to the community, consider volunteering or taking an adult education class. Read the local paper to look for opportunities. If you have relocated with an older relative, keep in mind that the local Area Agency on Aging often provides information about volunteer opportunities for seniors.
- **Contact the Department of Parks and Recreation or the Town Hall.** Does your city or town offer activities for children or adult education classes? Ask where to find local parks, tennis courts, places to swim, or baseball and soccer leagues.
- **Senior and Youth Centers usually offer recreational activities.** Is there a Jewish Community Center or YMCA/YWCA in the area?
- **Local newspapers and parents' papers** typically carry listings of area events, local club meetings, movie showings, and dining and shopping options.
- **Call local stores to see if they offer classes or fun activities.** Computer centers, arts and crafts stores, bookstores, and toy stores sometimes sponsor these events.
- **Check the Yellow Pages** under headings like “clubs,” “museums,” “restaurants,” “theater,” and “stadiums & athletic fields.”

Although identifying community resources may appear to be a chore, it is one of the best possible introductions to a new community. It's through these connections that you become part of a new community and begin to establish new routines.

## Getting your children settled in

After you've arrived, your children may still have some big adjustments ahead of them. Here are ways to make their lives easier:

- **Keep up your children's favorite rituals.** Think about the things you always try to do together as a family—reading a bedtime story, watching a favorite TV program, making pancakes on Saturday morning. Make a special effort to keep doing these things in your new home. Keeping up family rituals can give your children a sense of comfort and security when a lot of other things in their lives are changing.
- **Let your children know any rules you've made for your new home.** These might include rules about crossing streets in the neighborhood, where and when they can go outside, and what parts of the community are off limits (train tracks, dumps, highways, and so on).
- **Take breaks from unpacking every day.** Explore your new neighborhood, meet the neighbors, and find out where things are. Spending some time learning about your new community can help your children stay interested in and excited about their new surroundings after the initial excitement of the move has worn off.
- **Get a map of the new community.** Help your children mark the new things you are discovering: where your home is, the school, the library, a new friend's home, the fire station, the closest place to get pizza.
- **Try to meet some families in your neighborhood.** Your children probably will have an easier time if they meet one or two classmates from their new school, make friends with other children in the neighborhood, or meet other children from their child care before they start. Making friends right away can make a huge difference in how easily your children adjust to a new place.
- **Invite neighbors with children for a visit.** Encourage your children to pay attention to where the other children live on your street or in your apartment building so that they can help you figure out whom they might like to get to know.
- **Sign your children up for extracurricular activities.** Right after a move is a good time to think about getting your children involved in ballet classes, sports teams, Scouting programs, or music or theater groups.
- **Let your children know that it's OK to miss their old friends or school.** Your children may find it reassuring to hear you say that you miss your best friend, too, or got lost while you were trying to find the bathroom at your new office. Let your children know that it isn't their fault that everything isn't perfect right away—even adults have trouble adjusting.

- **Help your children call, write, or e-mail old friends.** They'll probably be eager to stay in touch over the first few weeks, and less so as time goes by. For school-age children, you may want to establish a "phone allowance" so they understand the limits of time and phone bills, but have the opportunity to stay in touch.
- **Keep using the scrapbook to make a record of your new home.** Encourage the keeper of the scrapbook to draw pictures of your new home or neighborhood, write in the names of people you're meeting, or paste in photographs of your new back yard. He can also look through it to remind himself of the people and places he's left behind.
- **Encourage your children to introduce themselves to other children.** Set an example by introducing yourself to other parents or to children at the park or playground.
- **Wait a while to buy new furniture.** Your old furniture may not fit well into your new home. But a familiar bed, chair, or clown lamp can give a child a sense of comfort and security. She might have an easier time adjusting if she doesn't have to live with new furniture, especially in her room, while she is getting used to a new home.
- **If you have school-age children, contact the new school.** You will need to register your children, and you may be required to send medical forms and other information. You might also send the school information about your child's special strengths, likes, and dislikes. Try to find out who your children's teachers will be, and, if you are moving during the school year, what their classes are working on and reading. If you do find out the teachers' names, help your children write letters introducing themselves. A friendly letter from a teacher can be a wonderful reassurance to a child who's nervous about starting at a new school.
- **Bring your children to visit their new school or child care before the first day.** If you can, make arrangements to let a preschooler explore his new child care when other children aren't there so he can meet his new caregiver, learn where things are, and see what there is to play with. Older children may be more comfortable if they know the route to the school and where they can find things like the classrooms, the bathrooms, the library, and the gym. See if you can introduce your children to teachers when you visit.
- **Ask the teacher or principal if the school can assign each of your children a "buddy."** Children might find it easier to cope with a lot of new faces if at least one student is friendly, encouraging, and willing to help with problems such as opening a tricky locker.

- **Give your children time to adjust.** It will take time for all of you to settle in and feel comfortable. It's normal for children to be moody after a move, even to have spells of unhappiness months later. Children are often nostalgic about their old home or neighborhood and may say things like, "I want to live in our old house again." These feelings are part of the process of adjustment. If you can see them in that light and not take them as criticism of the move, you'll be better able to give the reassurance and security your children need.

After you've settled in, try to keep up some links to the past as you become part of a new community. It's normal for children to take six months or more to adjust to a new home. Spend time with your children—listening, explaining, and reassuring—and the adjustment will go more smoothly for your entire family. Call the service that gave you this book if you are concerned that your child is taking too long to adjust to the new community.

## Adjusting to a new job environment



**Load boxes first and furniture last into the truck. This way, the path will be clear when you load and unload your furniture.**

If you're starting a new job, you now have the task of learning your new responsibilities and the names of your new co-workers, in addition to learning your way around the new neighborhood. This will probably be a stressful and busy time, but keep a few things in mind:

- **Don't expect to be perfect your first day on the job.** Remember that it will probably take a while before you feel completely comfortable with all your new tasks—almost everybody at times feels overwhelmed by new responsibilities.
- **Try not to make judgments like, "I'll never get this right."** Keep your mental focus on what you can do well until the harder parts of your job become easier.
- **As you learn more about your duties on the job, you'll probably feel more confident at work.** Ask your boss for new responsibilities to show that you are willing to learn.

Every company has a "corporate culture"—a set of unwritten rules that its employees observe. These can involve anything from how people answer the telephone to how they dress. You learn these unwritten rules mostly by observing your co-workers and, if you're still unsure, asking questions. Here are examples:

- **Dress.** Take your cues from your co-workers about how to dress. In the beginning you'll be safest if you dress the way you saw people at your level dressed on the day you went for your job interview. But remember that some companies have "casual Fridays" or times when people dress informally. Call the human resources department of your company if you aren't sure how its employees usually dress.

- **Office manners.** Some companies have formal guidelines for how they want you to refer to your managers or decorate bulletin boards, offices, or cubicles. At others you will have to figure this out by observing the people around you. You can pick up a lot of information just by asking your co-workers questions like, “Do you think anybody would mind if I kept a candy dish on my desk?”
- **Phones.** Some companies prefer that employees rarely use office phones for personal reasons. They may expect you to reimburse the company for calls unrelated to your work. Find out what your employer expects before making personal calls at work.
- **E-mail.** Does your company have a strict policy about personal e-mail? Or is it understood that you will use your best judgment when e-mailing co-workers and friends? A good rule of thumb is to only send messages you would feel comfortable placing on an office bulletin board.

## **Congratulations, you’ve successfully completed your move!**

You may still have some boxes to unpack and still be learning your way around town, but the hard part is over. The next year will be full of new experiences as you discover your favorite new restaurant, a really good bookstore, and the best place to have a picnic on a sunny day. Good luck as you explore your new life!

# Glossary of Terms Used by Moving Companies

**Additional services (also called “accessorial services”)** Services such as packing, servicing appliances, or stair carries that you requested or that building regulations require. These can result in additional charges.

**Advanced charges** Charges for services performed by a third party (not you and not the moving company), like servicing an appliance or dismantling a pool table. The charge is added to your final bill.

**Agent** A local moving company acting on behalf of a larger, national company.

**Bill of lading** This is your contract with the carrier. It is your receipt—make sure you read and understand everything on it before you sign it.

**Bulky article** Articles such as cars, boats, snowmobiles, and campers. These usually carry a bulky article charge to compensate the carrier for the difficulty of moving such large articles.

**Carrier** The mover you are working with.

**Claim** Your statement of loss or damage to your property while your items were in the carrier’s care. You usually make a claim on a claim form provided by the moving company.

**C.O.D. (cash on delivery)** Payment is required at the time of delivery. Most movers don’t take personal checks, so be prepared to pay with a credit card, money order, or cashier’s check.

**CP (carrier packed)** Articles packed into boxes by the moving company.

**Elevator carry** Movers may charge extra if they have to move your items by way of an elevator.

**Estimate** A professional assessment of your belongings by a representative of the carrier to visually determine the weight of your household goods, the size of the truck required, and the approximate overall cost of the move. There are two kinds of estimates:

*Binding estimates.* The mover quotes a flat price for the move, no matter how long the move takes.

*Non-binding estimates.* The mover charges you by the hour per man, per truck.

**Extra stop (extra pick-up or delivery)** The carrier will charge you extra if the van has to make an extra stop at either location.

**Gross weight** The weight of the moving truck fully loaded with your belongings. The tare weight, or weight of the truck without your belongings, is deducted from the gross weight to calculate the weight of your belongings.

**High value article** An item in a shipment that is valued at more than \$100 per pound.

**Inventory** The detailed list of your household goods, listing the quantity and condition of each item, that you have loaded onto the truck.

**Linehaul charges** These are the basic charges movers use to calculate the cost of your move, based on the mileage and the weight of your shipment. These charges don't include any additional charges such as advanced charges, long carry charges, or charges for additional services.

**Local moving** A move is considered local if you are traveling less than 100 miles in the same state.

**Long distance** A move that is more than 100 miles in the same state or is a move from one state to another and is billed by weight and distance. This type of move is regulated by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

**Long carry charge** A carrier can charge you extra if the distance from the back of the moving van to your front door is more than 75 feet.

**Lowball** A moving estimate that is quoted too low to get the customer's business. Sometimes it is the result of the carrier miscalculating the weight of your goods.

**Order for service** The document authorizing the movers to move your goods.

**Order for service number** The number used to identify and track your shipment. It appears on the bill of lading and on the order for service.

**Overflow (also called "leaveover")** Items that had to be left off the truck because of insufficient space on the truck. These items are loaded onto a second van for transportation.

**PBO (packed by owner)** Articles packed into boxes by you (the shipper), not the carrier.

**Peak season rates** A higher premium rate that movers charge during the busy moving season, usually May to September.

**Pickup and delivery charges** Additional charges if your goods have to be transported between a "storage-in-transit" warehouse and your new home.

**Road van** A long-haul tractor trailer that moves shipments over a long distance.

**Shipper** The customer whose goods are being moved.

**Shuttle service** When a smaller vehicle is used to haul goods to a location that is not accessible to large moving trailers.

**Stair-carry charge** An extra charge for carrying items up or down flights of stairs.

**Storage-in-transit (SIT)** Temporary storage of your goods in a warehouse if you are not ready to move into your new home. You have up to 180 days to keep them in storage, and you will have to pay for the storage charges as well as warehouse handling and final delivery charges.

**Straight truck** A truck that is generally half the size of a tractor-trailer.

**Tare weight** The weight of the moving truck without your belongings. It is compared with the gross weight to calculate the weight of your belongings.

**Tariff** The carrier's provisions, including rates, for services performed during the course of moving a shipment.

**Valuation** The declared amount your goods are worth. This establishes the carrier's maximum liability for loss or damage to the shipment. If no value is declared, the liability is limited to the tariff.

**Van operator** The driver of the vehicle carrying your household goods.

**Writing agent (also called "booking agent")** The agent who accepts your order for the move and registers it with the van line.

