

Consumer Tip Sheet – The Moving Process: What to Expect

Wow, there's a lot to moving!

If you are new to moving, or have never used a professional moving company before, here a basic run-down of what will happen and what to look for in the mover you trust to move all of your possessions. This is not an exhaustive list – depending on your circumstances, you may have more to consider.

In Home estimate

- Salesperson/move coordinator comes into the home

- Gets a quick overview of your plans (when you're moving, where to, new home details - if you know, why you're moving)
- Finds out details of what you'd like to have quoted on - full packing service, packing yourself, going into storage, things not moving, several pick up or drop off locations, etc.
- Goes room to room with you and looks at everything moving – we will go through your drawers, your closets, your crawl space, your garage/shed. It is your responsibility to let us know everything you are planning on taking. If you aren't sure – include it. You'd rather have an over estimate then be under and have surprise \$\$ additions later. If you are getting married, expecting a baby, or it's Christmas, we try to figure out how much extra there might be in gifts or baby furniture as these will be moved when the time comes.
- Make sure you show your mover everything! Trying to sneak in items afterwards only penalizes you – a quote is based on what the surveyor saw. The contract price is usually void and might not allow discounts if additional items are added and not disclosed to the mover.
- The surveyor will then double check with you about your move plans and should discuss valuation protection for your shipment. More on that in the estimate section

- The estimate

- The estimate will be based on what is seen and discussed with your surveyor. Most companies will provide a full estimate with all the details listed out. If you require additional services, they will also be listed. Additional services may include:
 - a shuttle at origin or destination. This is ordered if a 53' tractor trailer cannot get access to your home. The crew continually loads a smaller truck which shuttles your items out to the tractor trailer to be loaded securely for the transfer. (Always take valuation protection on a shuttle move because the crews are handling your goods twice as much and there is more opportunity for damage.
 - Bridge, ferry or toll road fees
 - Packing charges – either full packing (mover packs every box), partial pack (mover packs specific items like breakables).
 - Temporary or long-term storage charges
 - Extra pick up or delivery fees

- Replacement Valuation Protection (RVP)– check with your insurance company to find out if moving your household goods is covered by them. It often isn't and you can have valuation protection added to your estimate. RVP means that if a damaged item cannot be repaired to its original condition at the time of the move, it will be replaced at today's market price. RVP protection is limited only by the amount of valuation you select, so it is important that you establish a realistic replacement value of all of your possessions. The only requirement is that your shipment be protected to a minimum of \$10.00 per lb. multiplied by the actual weight of your household goods.
- Get at least three written estimates and compare the weight quote, services and total charges. Read the quotes – some might be a guaranteed price and often really low estimates are based on final weight and services provided. You are quoted low so the company can get your business and then they start adding fees AFTER they have your items loaded on the truck.
- Professional moving companies do not expect to have the entire payment in cash or cheque up front. Some may ask for a small deposit to hold the space, but they will never ask for the full amount before they get your items. Charges will be confirmed once your things are loaded on the trailer and the weight is confirmed. Then you will be told what the charges are and will be expected to pay in full prior to delivery only.

Moving Preparation

- Get a moving calendar from your mover
- Go through your home and get rid of items you are not taking – ask your mover for suggestions on organizations that accept donations.
- If doing some, or all, of your own packing, get an early start on it. Pack your boxes based on the room you're in. Mark your boxes with your last name, a general description ("books", "Juniors' clothes", "Knick knacks") and the room the box should be in. Many people number their boxes and keep a list of each box number and a more detailed content list. That way, when you're looking for something specific, you know what box number to look for. A good idea is to label your boxes A, B, C with C's being the last boxes that need to be opened. That way, you'll have an A box that will be open on moving day to put the last of your items in.
- Pack all valuable items to take with you – money, important papers, photographs, jewelry, etc. If any of these get lost or damaged during the move, the mover is not responsible for them.
- Roll up all scatter rugs and clear the entrance area and stairs so that there is nothing that the movers can trip over.
- Empty and unplug your fridge and freezer
- If you haven't already put it in your car, set aside and clearly mark items that you will be taking yourself (suitcases, small boxes. Etc.) Sometimes people put neon post it notes on them or put all of it in the bathtub so the movers know not to move it.

Moving Day

- Your driver has to collect his crew and the paperwork and go get the truck weighed at the scales before getting to your place. This can take time depending on traffic. Generally, they like to get an early start, but don't be freaking out at 8:30 if they aren't there.
- Driver (who is the boss) and crew will arrive and set up the truck and then come in and meet you and take a tour of the house. This allows the driver and crew to understand what you are moving and where it is, how prepared you are to move, what will need to be dismantled, etc. It is at this time that you point out items that aren't moving or that you are taking yourself.

- o The driver will start to “tag and list” (inventory) your items. Each item will get a number and its condition will be noted (scratched, broken, chipped, new, etc)
- o The crew will start to dismantle beds, dining room tables and other things that can be flattened. Each piece will get its own number. Screws are often taped to a piece or put into a “parts box” – which also holds items like tv remotes and bookshelf pins
- o Everything is loaded into the truck. It’s like a giant Tetris puzzle. Great care is taken to make sure everything fits into each layer of the load so that it has minimal shifting once the truck is on the road.
- o The crews will likely take a break or two. Moving is hard work and the crews need to recharge once in a while. Depending on weather conditions (heat, rain or snow) it may seem to be taking forever to load your shipment. The crews will always ensure that they are working in safe conditions.
- o Before you sign off on the paperwork — make sure you go through each room. Look behind doors, in closets and crawl spaces to confirm that the driver has everything that is moving.
- o Driver will ask you to sign off on the paperwork and should confirm the level of replacement value protection you want to take. You can refuse valuation, but remember that if there is damage, you will only be compensated (if applicable) for 60 cents a pound. So, a 40 lb \$3,000 TV will only be compensated for \$24.00. Do not hesitate to contact your mover for clarification.
- o Confirm with the driver your contact phone number and email for while you are on the road. The driver will be calling to confirm directions, delivery day and time. If the driver will give you his cell phone number – take it! An unexpected situation may crop up while you are travelling.

Delivery day

- o Unless otherwise arranged, payment must be received in full by the moving company before the shipment can be unloaded.
- o Please be present or have someone at the house. It’s always better with two people. You will be in charge of a “bingo sheet” – a sheet of numbers that you will cross off as the item comes in the house. That way, you’ll know what’s missing.
- o While items are coming in the house, check them for damage. Immediately inform the driver and take a photo of the item. Don’t get into an argument about the item- just document it and let the crew continue to unload.
- o You will need to also direct where things are going – so you need to pay attention. It is not the mover’s fault if boxes or items end up in the wrong room. You must work with the crew as one to have a good unload. All of you are not familiar with this home and in most cases, the crew helping the driver may not be the same crew that loaded you up.
- o The crew will reassemble anything that was taken apart and unpack any boxes that the moving company packed. It should be noted that the movers don’t put things away – they unpack to tables, counters and other flat surfaces. If you had a full packing service, that will usually be done the next day.
- o Once everything is in, the bingo sheet will be looked at to see what numbers aren’t marked off. Sometimes the numbers fall off or perhaps you missed checking off the number. If the item cannot be found, after checking the house and the truck, the driver will make a note of it on the moving paperwork.
- o The driver will also write down any damage that has occurred. Again, do not sign off on the paperwork until you are sure that all of your non boxed items are looked over. Of course, if there’s a box that is rattling, then open it up and inspect. However, if you packed the box and

After the Move

- o If there is damage, you may open a claim. Contact your mover and advise them of the damaged or missing items and provide as thorough a description as possible. You will likely have a form to fill out. The claims process can take some time, so please be patient. A claim must be initiated within nine months of the moving date. You can only make one claim and must have tangible proof of damage.
- o Make sure you have copies of all of your moving paperwork. You may be eligible to claim part of your move on your annual federal taxes.
- o Take a moment to write an online review on the mover's Facebook or website page or write a review for their company page on the BBB website.