



### Tips for Moving

By Maggie Higgins

Moving after college, or any time for that matter, is a really big life adjustment. Your whole world changes— where your social situation, where you buy your groceries and get your oil changed, if you even still drive a car, where you get your haircut and what your new home looks like. It's important as you move to be organized so you can quickly start to feel at home.

#### **Make a list:**

Write down everything you need to do before moving. Include the big stuff and the small stuff, like finding an apartment in your new city or town, packing, saying good bye to everyone, all those papers you need to do before graduation, any shopping you have to do before you leave. Keep this list somewhere accessible and refer back to it, edit it and add to it as needed.

#### **Find a place to live:**

Before the big move, be sure you have a place to go. If you can it is best to go to the new city or town and look for an apartment or house in person. There are plenty of websites available to help find apartments.

#### **De-clutter first, pack second:**

Many people buy boxes and just start packing, but really, you should evaluate your possessions before you even consider putting any of them in boxes. Clean out your closets and cupboards and make a healthy donation to your local goodwill. If you are not currently making use of the item, or you didn't even realize you still had it, you don't need it.

When it comes time to pack make sure you have plenty of boxes, in various sizes, and paper or cloth to wrap valuables in. You can buy boxes or you can also ask stores for their leftover boxes from shipments. Most stores just throw them out anyway, so they are often happy to comply. You can buy bubble wrap or paper, but wrapping items in your clothes or towels is a cheaper option. Make sure you mark your fragile boxes so you don't stack a box of books on top of them and also make sure you don't fill an enormous box with just books. Remember you will have to carry everything at some point.

It's also good to label all your boxes clearly, and prioritize them. You won't need your winter clothes immediately if you are moving in the summer, but you will most likely want to have toilet paper readily available when you arrive. Make sure you know where your tools and your bedding are. You don't want to be searching for a wrench when your futon is in pieces and you really won't want to search for your pillows when you are ready to go to sleep.

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Be sure to pack a personal bag as well. Include the stuff you need on a daily basis– a few changes of clothes, toiletries, cell phone charger and some snacks. You will want this bag to be easily accessible so you don't have to search for something to sleep in or your toothbrush after a busy day of unloading and unpacking. Finally, pack the cleaning supplies and trash bags last; though you are packing it always seems like there is trash to take out just as you are leaving.

### **Say Good Bye:**

Don't forget to say good bye! You want to maintain the relationships you worked so hard to build, so make sure you leave time to have lunches, workouts, coffee dates and properly say good bye to your friends and family.

### **Move:**

Load your truck and go! If friends and family offer to help load the truck and see you off then take them up on it. Chances are they want to help and you need the help.

If you have a friend who is willing to make the drive with you, take them up on it. It might be worth it to drive together and for you to buy their return plane or train ticket home. This way you have someone to help you unpack and you won't feel so lonely your first night in your new home.

### **Unload, Return the truck, buy some grub and start to unpack:**

When you arrive, unload everything and return the truck. You don't want to get charged for extra time. While you are out, pick up some light grocery items, just enough to get by. You will be busy unpacking and you don't want to have to keep running out for fast food.

Hopefully you labeled your boxes well and when you unloaded you put them in the appropriate areas of your apartment to make unpacking easy. Unpack the things you use most frequently. Making your bed and unpacking the bathroom are both good places to start, since you will be using them immediately.

### **Decorate:**

Once you have all the initial unpacking undone, bed made, shower curtain hung up and towels put away, start decorating your new place. You don't want to come home to bare walls and a place that doesn't feel like home everyday. Hang up curtains, put your favorite college blanket on the couch, burn some candles and put photos and magnets on the fridge. Anything to make it feel more like home.

### **Learn Your Way Around:**

The first few days will most likely involve a lot of unpacking, decorating and business items. You might have to go to the utilities office to get your electricity turned on, the post office to get your mail, the grocery store. Be sure to take advantage of these opportunities to learn your way around.

Also, take some walks in your new neighborhood. If you are a biker or a runner go out and get to know the new place that way. If your new home has a public transit system learn that too. Try taking the train or the bus next time you need to go out for something you inevitably forgot to bring with you.

### **Enjoy yourself:**

It's a lot of work to move, and making new friends and creating new patterns can be stressful, but remember why you moved. You

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are starting a new chapter in your life and you should be proud of yourself and take some time to enjoy it!

### References:

Gracia, M. (2000). 25 Tips and tricks for an Organized Move. Rental Decorating Digest. Retrieved on May 3, 2010 from <http://www.rentaldecorating.com/0704/25tipsorganizedmove.htm>



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