

# Top Ten Ways to Prepare for a Smooth Move

Prepared by the American Moving and Storage Association

- 1. Get three written in-home estimates.** Be wary of phone or internet estimates. Show the mover everything that will be moved, including items in attics, basements, garages, storage areas, sheds, etc. Typically two of the estimates will be very close together in price, weight, and service. Select one of those two estimates. The other bid will be very high or low. Avoid that carrier.
- 2. Obtain and read the three “pre-move” required documents from your carrier.** These documents include: Your Rights and Responsibilities and Ready to Move brochures, and information on the arbitration program that the carrier participates in. These documents are all required for every interstate shipment.
- 3. Avoid large down payments.** Be wary of carriers seeking large down payments to hold dates or to reserve service.
- 4. Ask questions.** If you do not understand something, ask. The moving business is complex and has its own language. If you aren't satisfied with the answers to your questions or if the carrier hesitates when you ask for clarification, talk to another carrier.
- 5. Plan an Off-Peak Season Move (when possible).** June to September is the high season. If you can avoid moving during those months, you will likely receive better service. If you must move during the high season, move mid-month, mid-week, and avoid the end of the month.
- 6. Be Reachable by Phone.** Make sure the carrier is able to reach you by phone during your move. This can save time and storage costs if the driver is ready to deliver and you ready to receive the shipment. Be sure to have the driver's full name, id and truck number to allow for fast and easy communication.
- 7. Take Valuables with You.** Valuables, such as cash, coins, jewelry, photographs, and important papers should be taken with you or sent ahead. Be sure to use a traceable service, such as FedEx and United Parcel Service.
- 8. Segregate Personal Travel Items.** The items traveling with you, such as clothes and papers, should be put in one place or in the vehicle you are taking with you. Avoid having those items loaded on the truck and having to find them later.
- 9. Try to Relax.** No matter how prepared you are things occasionally go wrong. Moving is one of the most stressful times in your life. Take a deep breath, be patient, and get a good night's sleep before moving day.
- 10. Use an AMSA ProMover.** Make sure your mover is a member of the American Moving and Storage Association. Visit AMSA's consumer website: [www.moving.org](http://www.moving.org) and also visit the Department of Transportation's web site: [www.protectyourmove.gov](http://www.protectyourmove.gov).