

Comprehensive Moving Checklist

A step-by-step timeline, room-by-room guide, and printable tick-box lists

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How to use this checklist

Work through the timeline sections in order, then use the room-by-room checklists while packing. Print this PDF or tick items digitally. Keep the Quick-Start list handy for the final week.

Quick-Start: Top 12 Moving Tasks

- ☐ Book reputable movers and confirm date, arrival window, and access at both properties.
- ☐ Declutter and donate, sell, or recycle unwanted items to reduce volume and cost.
- ☐ Create an inventory and box numbering system (e.g., Room-Code + Box #).
- ☐ Order packing supplies: boxes, tape, bubble wrap, packing paper, stretch wrap, markers.
- ☐ Set up a change-of-address plan for banks, work, subscriptions, and deliveries.
- ☐ Schedule utility transfers (electricity, water, gas) and services (internet, security).
- ☐ Measure key furniture and doorways; plan the layout of large items in the new home.
- ☐ Reserve elevator/parking permits at apartments/estates; notify body corporate/security.
- ☐ Photograph valuables and electronics setups; back up devices to the cloud/drive.
- ☐ Prepare appliances: defrost fridge/freezer 24–48 hours before; drain washers.
- ☐ Pack an essentials box (clothes, meds, toiletries, chargers, documents, snacks).
- ☐ Confirm payment method with movers and keep cash/card and ID on hand.

Move Timeline: Week-by-Week

8–10 Weeks Before

- ☐ Set your moving date and budget; decide DIY vs professional movers.
- ☐ Research movers; get 2–3 quotes; check reviews and insurance coverage.
- ☐ Create a shared moving folder (documents, quotes, inventory, checklists).
- ☐ Start decluttering each room; schedule charity pickup or dump runs.
- ☐ Plan time off work and childcare/pet care for moving day.
- ☐ Identify special handling items (piano, safe, antiques, artworks).

6 Weeks Before

- ☐ Book movers and confirm scope (packing, fragile-only, loading, storage).
- ☐ Order packing materials; consider wardrobe boxes and dish packs.
- ☐ Start packing non-essentials and seasonal items.
- ☐ Create a change-of-address list (banks, tax, employer, subscriptions, schools).
- ☐ Check access rules: estate/body corporate, lift bookings, loading zones, permits.
- ☐ Verify insurance: transit cover and high-value item coverage.

4 Weeks Before

- ☐ Finish most room-by-room packing except daily essentials.
- ☐ Label every box with Room, Contents, and Box #; mark FRAGILE where needed.
- ☐ Photograph electronics cable setups and furniture assembly points.
- ☐ Plan meals to run down fridge/freezer and pantry stock.
- ☐ Schedule utility final readings and new-home connections dates.
- ☐ Arrange cleaners for move-out or allocate time to clean yourself.

2 Weeks Before

- ☐ Confirm mover details: arrival time, team size, vehicle, and contacts.
- ☐ Arrange parking permits or access codes for both addresses.
- ☐ Update home/contents insurance to the new address and date.
- ☐ Prepare a floor plan of the new home and label doors/walls by room.
- ☐ Set aside important documents and valuables to move personally.
- ☐ Create a first-night kit: bedding, towels, toiletries, basic kitchenware.

1 Week Before

- ☐ Pack a suitcase per family member with 3–4 days of essentials.

- ☐ Separate 'Do Not Load' items (documents, meds, devices, keys, remotes).
- ☐ Service your car if driving long-distance; check tyres and fluids.
- ☐ Confirm elevator bookings and security access with estate/complex.
- ☐ Disassemble furniture where possible; bag and tape hardware to items.
- ☐ Prepare tip/change for building staff and small incidentals.

3 Days Before

- ☐ Defrost and dry fridge/freezer; keep doors ajar to prevent odour.
- ☐ Drain water lines (washer/dishwasher); secure hoses and cords.
- ☐ Charge power banks; back up computers and phones.
- ☐ Create a 'Load Last / Unload First' stack (linens, kettle, tools).
- ☐ Print a copy of this checklist for moving day and new-home setup.

Moving Day – Old Home

- ☐ Protect floors and high-traffic areas; remove wall hangings.
- ☐ Walk movers through the house and special instructions.
- ☐ Keep kids/pets safe in a separate room or with a sitter.
- ☐ Take final meter readings (electricity, water, gas) with photos.
- ☐ Do a final room-by-room walkthrough; check cupboards and garage.
- ☐ Lock windows/doors; hand over keys/remote as required.

Moving Day – New Home

- ☐ Meet movers; direct boxes to labelled rooms using your floor plan.
- ☐ Check for damage as items are unloaded; note issues immediately.
- ☐ Prioritise beds, bathroom basics, and kitchen essentials.
- ☐ Test utilities: power, water, gas; check geyser/boiler settings.
- ☐ Assemble beds; make the first-night rooms functional.
- ☐ Place 'FRAGILE' boxes on safe, flat surfaces.

First Week in New Home

- ☐ Unpack room by room, starting with kitchen, bedrooms, and bathrooms.
- ☐ Update address with remaining providers; verify mail forwarding.
- ☐ Test smoke/CO detectors; replace batteries if needed.
- ☐ Map the electrical board and water shut-off; note emergency numbers.
- ☐ Introduce yourself to neighbours/estate security; review community rules.
- ☐ Recycle boxes or list them for pickup/donation.

Room-by-Room Packing Checklists

Kitchen

- ☐ Pack rarely used appliances first; original boxes if available.
- ☐ Wrap plates vertically; use dish packs; fill gaps with paper.
- ☐ Bundle cutlery; protect knives with guards/cardboard sleeves.
- ☐ Tape spice lids; seal liquids in zip bags; label 'This Side Up'.
- ☐ Set aside a 'Day-One' kitchen box (kettle, pan, utensils, mugs).

Living & Dining

- ☐ Photograph TV wiring; pack remotes, cables, and mounts together.
- ☐ Protect frames and mirrors; use corner guards; mark FRAGILE.
- ☐ Roll rugs and tape in paper; avoid plastic for long storage.
- ☐ Disassemble shelves/units; bag hardware and tape to panels.
- ☐ Use furniture blankets or stretch wrap to avoid scuffs.

Bedrooms

- ☐ Wash and pack spare linens; keep one set per bed for first night.
- ☐ Use wardrobe boxes for hanging clothes; vacuum bags for off-season.
- ☐ Disassemble bed frames; secure slats and screws in labelled bags.
- ☐ Pack jewellery and personal documents to carry with you.
- ☐ Label kids' boxes so they can find favourite items first.

Bathrooms

- ☐ Purge expired products; secure lids with tape or zip bags.
- ☐ Pack a 'First-Night' bathroom kit (towels, toiletries, medications).
- ☐ Wrap glass items and mirrors carefully; label FRAGILE.
- ☐ Drain and dry electric toothbrushes/razors.

Home Office/Study

- ☐ Back up computers; encrypt sensitive data; remove printer ink.
- ☐ Use original boxes for monitors; protect screens.
- ☐ File important paperwork; carry IDs, passports, and certificates.
- ☐ Label tech cables by device; keep a small tool kit handy.

Garage/Tools/Outdoor

- ☐ Dispose of prohibited items (paint, gas, solvents) safely.

- [] Bundle garden tools; cover sharp edges; empty fuel from mowers.
- [] Secure bicycles and sports equipment; label parts and bolts.
- [] Clean and cover braais/grills; remove gas canisters.

Kids & Pets

- [] Pack a comfort bag (toys, snacks, blanket) for travel.
- [] Arrange pet transport and microchip/address updates.
- [] Keep vaccination records handy; confirm pet-friendly stopovers.
- [] Set up kids' rooms early to ease the transition.

Special Items & Preparations

Appliances

- ☐ Defrost fridge/freezer 24–48 hours in advance; wipe dry.
- ☐ Secure doors and shelves; keep upright during transport.
- ☐ Disconnect washer/dishwasher; cap water lines; drain hoses.
- ☐ Let ovens/cookers cool fully; remove loose racks and parts.

Electronics

- ☐ Photograph cable setups; label both ends of each cable.
- ☐ Use anti-static bags for components; original boxes if possible.
- ☐ Remove batteries from remotes and small devices if storing long-term.

Valuables & Documents

- ☐ Carry jewellery, cash, IDs, passports, deeds, titles, and insurance yourself.
- ☐ Create photo records of artworks, collectibles, and antiques.
- ☐ Consider extra transit insurance for high-value items.

Plants & Pets

- ☐ Check moving regulations for plants; avoid watering immediately before move.
- ☐ Prepare breathable boxes for plants; stabilise pots.
- ☐ Plan pet-safe travel; pack food, water, leash, and bedding.

Vehicles

- ☐ Service vehicle for long trips; check tyres, fluids, and spare.
- ☐ Arrange towing/transport for non-running vehicles if needed.
- ☐ Remove toll tags and parking transponders; update vehicle address.

Change of Address Checklist

- ☐ Banking & credit cards; loan providers; investment accounts.
- ☐ Employer HR & payroll; tax authority.
- ☐ Insurance: home, contents, auto, health, life.
- ☐ Municipal services: rates, utilities, refuse.
- ☐ Telecoms & internet; streaming and mobile providers.
- ☐ Medical providers: GP, dentist, specialists; medical aid.
- ☐ Schools & universities; clubs & associations; security company/estate.
- ☐ Subscriptions & deliveries: online shopping, magazines, meal kits.
- ☐ Friends & family; emergency contacts.

Utilities & Services Transfer

- ☐ Electricity (final reading set & connection date at new home).
- ☐ Water (final reading & account transfer).
- ☐ Gas (where applicable).
- ☐ Internet/fibre installation appointment booked.
- ☐ Security/alarm monitoring transfer; update access codes & remotes.
- ☐ Refuse collection schedule set; estate/complex access registered.

Labeling & Inventory System

Adopt a simple code: **RoomCode-BoxNumber** (e.g., K-12 for Kitchen box #12). Log each box with a short contents note. Mark FRAGILE and THIS SIDE UP where needed.

Box Code	Room	Key Contents	Fragile (Y/N)
K-01	Kitchen	Plates, bowls, mugs	Y
LR-03	Living Room	Cables & remotes	N
B1-05	Bedroom 1	Bedding & pillows	N

Tips

- [] Use coloured labels or tape per room for faster unloading.
- [] Write the destination room on at least two sides of every box.
- [] Keep a master list on paper or in a spreadsheet for easy tracking.
- [] Create a 'Hardware' box for screws, brackets, and tools.

Post-Move Tasks (First 30 Days)

- ☐ [] Inspect for any damage and submit claims promptly if insured.
- ☐ [] Register for municipal services; update vehicle registration address.
- ☐ [] Change locks or reprogram access codes/remotes.
- ☐ [] Test alarm, smoke/CO detectors, and geyser/boiler safety valves.
- ☐ [] Locate water shut-off, electrical breakers, and emergency numbers.
- ☐ [] Find local GP, dentist, vet; update medical aid details.
- ☐ [] Explore refuse/recycling schedules and community rules.
- ☐ [] Introduce yourself to neighbours and estate/complex security.
- ☐ [] Plan a home safety checklist (childproofing, pool covers, railings).

Notes
