

CONSUMER GUIDE: 10 TIPS FOR UNPACKING SMARTLY AFTER A MOVE

Moving is one of the greatest stressors in life, but it's important to save some of that adrenaline for the final task: unpacking. If you're surrounded by boxes and feeling a little overwhelmed, these tips can help make the unpacking process go more smoothly.

1. **If you hire movers, the heavy lifting will be done.** They'll move the big pieces into their proper places and assemble bedframes. Movers will also save you time by putting boxes into the right rooms (as long as you've carefully labeled the boxes with their destination). If you are handling the move yourself, use furniture sliders and moving blankets/pads—and exercise caution to prevent injury.
2. **Be prepared with the right tools.** Wear an apron and have unpacking tools at hand—box cutters, scissors, cleaning spray and dust rags. Wipe down each room and make any necessary repairs before unpacking.
3. **Unpack the essentials first.** These are all the things you need on the first day after the move. That includes bedding, toiletries, phone chargers, medications, laptops and other equipment for work and school homework. Put perishable foods in the refrigerator.
4. **Have a donation box and garbage bag handy as you unpack.** You should have decluttered and donated items you didn't want before your move, but don't feel bad about tossing or donating items you've moved but don't really need.
5. **Establish an unpacking order.** Go room by room. The three priorities are generally the kitchen, bedrooms and bathrooms. Then move on to important common areas. Closets, storage areas and the garage can be tackled last. If you work from home, the home office may be high on your priority list.
6. **In each room, unpack all boxes and discard them first.** Once the boxes are moved out, then you can organize and put items away.
7. **If you have kids or other help, put them to work.** Assign age-appropriate tasks, or have them organize their own room or smaller rooms. As you move from room to room, you can rotate the delegation of opening and unloading boxes; breaking down boxes and packing materials; removing the boxes and other discards from the room; and taking out the trash.
8. **Set a timer.** Unpacking in timed spurts will make the task manageable. Between timed work periods, reward yourself with a treat or drink. For example, unpack for 45 minutes and then take a 15-minute break. Only unpack for a set number of hours each day to avoid burnout.
9. **Set realistic goals that are manageable.** Unpacking and settling in is a marathon, not a sprint. Everything doesn't have to be done on the first day or even in the first week. Pace yourself and set daily goals for what you want to accomplish.
10. **Make it fun.** While you work, listen to your favorite true-crime podcast, stand-up comedian, audio book or hype music. Sing, laugh and dance to make the time go faster. You might even find yourself enjoying it.

You've got this! Once all the boxes are unpacked and everything is put away in its place, the new house will start to feel like your own. Now it's time to start planning a housewarming party to celebrate and enjoy your new home.

Additional Resources

[Consumer Guide: 10 Tips for Packing Smartly for a Move](#)

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