

## HOW TO

# Pack Like a Pro

**Plan ahead.** Develop a master to-do list so you won't forget something critical heading into moving day. This will also help you create an estimate of moving time and costs.

**Discard items you no longer want or need.** Ask yourself how frequently you use an item and how you'd feel if you no longer had it. Sort unwanted items into "garage sale," "donate," and "recycle" piles.

**Pack similar items together.** It will make your life easier when it's time to unpack.

**Decide what you want to move on your own.** Precious items such as family photos, valuable breakables, or must-haves during the move should probably stay with you. Pack a moving day bag with a small first-aid kit, snacks, and other items you may need before unpacking your "Open First" box.

**Know what your movers will take.** Many movers won't take plants or liquids. Check with them about other items so you can plan to pack them yourself.

**Put heavy items in small boxes.** Try to keep the weight of each box under 50 pounds.

**Don't overpack boxes.** It increases the likelihood that items inside the box will break.

**Wrap fragile items separately.** Pad bottoms and sides of boxes and, if necessary, purchase bubble-wrap or other packing materials from moving stores. Secure plants in boxes with air holes.

**Label every box on all sides.** You never know how they'll be stacked. Also, use color-coded labels to indicate which room each box should go in, coordinating with a color-coded floor plan for the movers.

**Keep moving documents together in a file, either in your moving day bag or online.** Include vital contact information, the driver's name, the van's license plate, and the company's number.

**Print out a map and directions for movers and helpers.** Make several copies, and highlight the route. Include your cell phone number on the map.

**Back up computer files on the cloud.** Alternatively, you can keep a physical backup on an external hard drive offsite.

**Inspect each box and piece of furniture as soon as it arrives.** Ahead of time, ensure your moving company has a relatively painless process for reporting damages.

