



MOVING CHECKLIST: The Expert Edition

Legend or Superhero?

TOP REMOVALS are here to make your move as stress and hassle-free as possible. But it's our removalists that are the real stars of the show – from packing your house, to plumbing the washing machine, to taking apart and re-building even the most headache-inducing beds – they're moving machines.

So who better to ask when compiling a moving checklist? We asked our brawny but brainy removalists to think about what bothers them most on the job – what slows them down – and most importantly, what YOU can do to make your move fast, efficient and heaps cheaper!

CHOOSE YOUR LEVEL:

ESSENTIAL

Consider COVID safety – e.g. hand sanitiser, sign-in book

Many buildings have specific covid-safe guidelines for trade-workers so find out ahead of time what measures are in place, and if any extra steps need to be taken for the removalists to work on-site. You can find this information out by contacting your building's body corporate or building manager directly.

Pack as much as you can into boxes

Not only will this ensure the safe transport of your belongings, but it will also minimise the removalists handling unnecessary loose items. Condensing your possessions into small, medium and large boxes means they can be handled easily, moved on a trolley and stacked neatly on the truck.

Fill boxes all the way to the top

This is to allow the boxes to be stacked on top of one another. Pad the box out on all four sides and all the way to the top. When the box is closed, you should be able to lean a reasonable amount of bodyweight on the lid without squashing the box.

Protect your fragile/delicate items inside the box

Use plain, unbleached butcher paper as newspaper/magazine paper can leave ink stains. Be sure to wrap each item individually, ensuring they are not touching without a layer of protection in-between. Why not use tea towels and other linen like pillowcases for a great eco-friendly alternative? PRO TIP: fragile boxes should be silent when picked up - clattering sounds mean something is likely to get damaged.

Use bin bags to protect pillows and cushions

Heavy-duty garden bin bags work the best for this as they don't tear as easily. Also, soft bags and luggage are useful when the removalists are stacking the truck as they provide padding between furniture to stop unwanted movement during transport.

Securely tape all boxes

Use dedicated packing tape as regular tape isn't as durable. Consider investing in a tape roller as they really do make life a lot easier and scissors are easily lost. Just don't use your teeth!

Ensure all boxes are correctly labelled

Clearly write in marker pen the room and a brief list of contents. Consider a numbering system so you have an idea of how many you have in total – this will help when you are getting removal quotes for truck size. Colour coding can also be a good idea, matching each box to each room with coloured stickers. A blueprint of the new home layout can then be printed to guide the removalists and avoid confusion.

Mark delicate boxes with “FRAGILE” tape

This is better than simply writing on the box as fragile tape is very obvious. The worst thing would be having other boxes accidentally stacked on top of your fragile, precious and delicate items.

Stack boxes away from doorways and hallways

To make sure the removalists have a clear run with the trolleys on moving day, make sure all boxes are stacked up out of the way. The best option is to clear a corner of the room when packing and stack up your boxes neatly as you go. Ideally it's best to also separate fragile and non-fragile boxes.

Empty drawers of all furniture

Furniture should always be moved without anything inside. As your furniture will be manipulated in order for it to be moved safely down hallways, stairways and through doorways, this can put extra pressure on joints and corners. Even small furniture like bedside tables should be emptied as they will often be carried sideways or stacked in the truck upside down.

Clear hallways and doorways of all obstructions

A sure-fire way to slow down any move is having clutter where the removalists need to work. Experienced removalists will quickly ascertain the best access points to efficiently move your items from your home to the truck. If these are obstructed, they will have to spend time and your money clearing the way.

Empty fridge before removalists arrive

Removalists always begin loading the truck with the largest and heaviest item first, which in most cases is the fridge. Make sure your fridge is totally emptied before your move begins – either the night before if you want to defrost the freezer - or just before the removalists arrive. Use an Esky to transport your chilled and frozen food. Avoid doing any big food shops before moving to minimise fridge contents.

Inform your neighbours on both sides you are moving

Access at some properties can be tricky, meaning it may take a few extra minutes to manoeuvre the truck into position. Once the truck is parked – ideally as close to your property as possible – the removalists are focussed on moving you in or out. The last thing they want to hear midway through working is “Can you move your truck?” Although sometimes unavoidable, letting your neighbours know you are moving ahead of time is the best way to avoid unnecessary stoppage time.

Organise parking for the moving truck

Consider where the moving truck will park when they arrive at either property. If you don't have a driveway or designated parking on the street, try parking your car the night before the move in a spot close-by. If you have a large truck coming – 8 tonne (40 m³) or more – you may need to park two cars, depending on the size of the parking bays. Try and avoid parking spots with overhanging branches as these can obstruct the truck. Placing witches hats or a couple of bins usually work a treat as well. Apartment buildings often have a loading bay - discuss with your building manager about your best options for truck parking.

Organise lift booking with body corporate

Most apartment buildings with internal lifts have a body corporate that deals with moving. Liaise with the building manager to find out what the process is for moving in or out. Ensure you arrange a lift booking – this means the lift will be locked to your floor and you and the removalists will have priority access on the day. Generally speaking, you will be allocated a time window for your move in or out – be sure to make this clear to your removals company as this will determine when your job will be booked in for.

Don't water plants 1 or 2 days before the move

Plant pots become much heavier when watered, which means they are more awkward to move and run the risk of breaking and making a mess either in your home, a common area like an apartment lobby, or on the truck. Water your potted plants well ahead of time or no more than 1 or 2 days before moving day.

Remove gas bottle from BBQ

Legally, removalists are not permitted to carry gas bottles or any other similar flammable or explosive items in any part of the truck.

Give removalists a thorough walkthrough of the property

Walk through the entire property with them, room by room, ensuring everything has been accounted for before the move commences. If some items are not to be loaded onto the truck, make this clear to them. Similarly if you wish for certain items to be loaded separately, or towards the end of the job, let them know. If you require any additional care for particularly delicate or sentimental items, flag this to the removalists so they can discuss possible extra care or protection.

LEGEND

Dismantle bed frames

Whilst most reputable moving companies will include this as part of the service, taking apart beds can take a bit of time. Of course our removalists are more than happy to dismantle and assemble for you as part of the service, but having the beds dismantled and ready to be moved will certainly save time - especially if you have a family home with 3 or more bedrooms. Be sure to keep the screws, nuts and bolts together in a zip lock bag taped to the side of one of the bed parts.

Remove mirrors from dressers

When moving dressers or units with mirrors, it's generally a good idea to remove the mirror first. On a standard dresser, the mirror should lift straight off as it sits on pins that allow the mirror to swivel. Units usually have 4 or 6 screws fixing the frame to the backboard.

Remove cushions from armchairs and sofas

Removalists will have to angle and manipulate sofas and armchairs to allow them to go down hallways, stairways and through doorways – meaning cushions could come off mid-move. If your sofa or armchair has detachable cushions, take them off beforehand and put them into large, heavy-duty bin bags. This will ensure they are kept dust free when loaded on the truck.

Remove shades and globes from lamps

Lampshades are delicate and difficult to keep safe on the truck when still attached to the lamp stand. Similarly, globes can shatter very easily in transport. It's recommended to box up lampshades and globes, being sure to wrap the globes safely in paper and labelling the box clearly.

Brush away cobwebs/dust/dirt from outdoor furniture

The last thing you want is to bring any unwanted bugs and critters into your nice new home. Give the underside of benches, tables, chairs and BBQ a good brush, making sure you check where you put your hands first before lifting or moving anything. As any seasoned removalist in Australia will tell you: look before you lift!

Clean/dust tops of indoor furniture

In the lead up to the move, with your home in disarray and boxes up to your ears, it's understandable housework gets put on the backburner. But it's still always a good idea to give the tops of your furniture a quick wipe down before moving day - the removalists are happy to not get a face full of dust and everything coming into your new home is nice and clean.

Place plastic bags around outdoor pot plants

Displaced soil can make a real mess on freshly cleaned floors or newly laid carpet. Tape bin bags or shopping bags around your pot plants to catch any soil escaping whilst being moved or in transport.

Remove welcome mat from front and back door

Whilst it may seem like a good idea to keep your big chunky welcome mat at your door so removalists can wipe their feet, they can easily trip over them – not ideal if they are carrying a box of kitchenware or a cherished family heirloom. Instead, move them to the side out of the way of the doorway.

Wipe down the fridge

With the contents of your fridge loaded into an Eskey, it's a good opportunity to give the fridge a quick clean. Don't forget the top of the fridge, which can be a haven for grease, dust and old pizza menus.

Keep old mattress covers on to protect from dust

A good removalist will never drag your mattress, or even put it down until it's safely on the truck. However, mattresses are white and trucks can contain residual dust on the floor. Leaving on an old mattress cover works well, but nothing beats plastic wrap or industrial shrink wrap to fully protect for long-term storage and from dust and rainy weather. Speak to your sales representative or discuss with your removalists on the day about having your mattresses professionally wrapped.

Remove any glass from furniture

Glass in certain furniture pieces is not secured, for example outdoor tables where a sheet of glass sits on suction cups. Remove any loose and unsecured glass and protect separately with bubble wrap, then secure cardboard or Styrofoam to the corners to provide protection whilst standing on their sides or edges. Arrange the wrapped glass separately from the furniture and boxes, as fragile items will be loaded onto the truck at the end of the move.

Take artwork and mirrors off the wall

Remove artwork and mirrors from the wall and arrange them separately from the furniture, along with other fragile items such as sheets of glass. Fragile items will be loaded onto the truck at the end of the move. Protect artwork and mirrors by covering the glass or delicate part with bubble wrap, then securing cardboard or Styrofoam to the corners to give added protection whilst standing on their sides or edges.

Stack boxes up in one room, away from the furniture

If you have the space, arrange your boxes in a separate room from the rest of the furniture. This will ensure the removalists can get at boxes when they need them, rather than them being an obstruction to the furniture. Be sure to clearly divide fragile and non-fragile boxes. Keep individual rooms grouped together wherever possible.

Organise charity pickups prior to the move

Moving house is a great opportunity to de-clutter. As you're packing, arrange different categories like "Keep", "Throw" and "Charity". Reputable removals companies will be happy to help you chuck larger items and furniture onto the nature strip included as part of your move. Charity organisations and opp shops can collect unwanted household items and furniture – just be sure to arrange this ahead of time.

SUPERHERO

If your sofa is bulky, remove the legs

It's often hard to remember the sticking points on your previous move until it happens again on moving day. One of the most common occurrences is furniture items being too bulky to fit through doors, which are usually sofas with especially high backs and/or wide armrests. The quickest fix for this common issue is whipping the legs off - taking them off in advance will ensure a smoother loading process for the removalists.

Plastic wrap/protect mattresses

Plastic mattress protectors not only keep your new mattress new and white, but they also help keep your mattress dry on rainy days. Putting these on beforehand saves on time, so when the removalists arrive, they can focus on loading the truck.

Secure loose items such as bed parts

If you've already been a Legend and taken apart your bed, advance to Superhero status by taping your bed parts together – including those awkward slats. Be sure to keep all the screws, nuts and bolts together in a taped zip lock bag secured to the side.

Protect corners of delicate furniture with cardboard

Corners of furniture are the most exposed whilst moving and in transit, and therefore the easiest to get damaged. Whilst all reputable removals companies will protect your furniture in blankets on the truck, folding cardboard around the corners of tables and desks is a good preventative measure against any knocks.

Protect TV

If you don't still have your original TV box, don't worry – there are still ways to protect your TV for safe transportation. Firstly, wrap the TV in a couple of layers of bubble wrap - ensuring the screen is completely covered. Secondly, open out a large and durable box and fold it around the TV, again making sure to protect the screen. Tape the opened box into place - focussing especially on the corners so the box is unable to slip away from the TV when lifted. The removalist will then wrap the TV in thick blankets and secure it safely with straps to the side of the truck.

Plumb out washing machine

Whilst reputable removalists are willing to do this for you, it will save on time if the washing machine is ready to be loaded straight onto the truck. Find the taps where the pipes at the back of the machine go – usually under the sink or above the washer. Ensure they are turned in the OFF position – clockwise. Place a small bucket or basin under the taps to catch excess water. Unscrew the pipes from the taps in a counter-clockwise motion. Remove the waste pipe. Unscrew the pipes from the back of the machine and place them inside the washing machine drum. Consider installing transport bolts at the back of the machine to secure the drum if you are moving long-distance.

Plastic wrap doors and drawers of furniture

Avoid using tape to hold drawers and doors closed as this can take the paint or varnish from the furniture, or leave behind a sticky residue. Instead, use plastic shrink-wrap, which is basically industrial grade cling wrap. Ensure you get a decent amount of tension on the wrap in order for them to hold the drawers and doors securely – you can do this by going around the furniture a few times.

Remove overhanging tree branches/overgrown bushes

Truck heights vary depending on the overall size of your move – generally speaking a small 4 tonne truck (20 m³) will be around 3.2 metres tall, with a large 12 tonne truck (60 m³) being over 4 metres. If you have any low branches that may obstruct a large truck pulling close to your property, this may cause the move to take longer. Consider cutting back branches and overgrown bushes to allow for the truck to gain better access.

If a door was removed on the previous move, take it off ahead of time

Do you remember if your large double door fridge fit in through the kitchen door? Quite often, removalists have to take off the door in order for large and bulky items to fit. Whilst experienced removalists will be fast at doing this, it will save time - and therefore money - taking it off ahead of moving day.

Dismantle/partly dismantle large or bulky furniture

Anything that can be done in preparation before the move will always save time on the day. If your 8-piece sofa is attached via clips or hooks, take them off so they are ready to be moved. If you know you had to take the legs off your 10-seater dining table to move it through the house, consider separating the legs from the table. Experienced removalists know what needs to be done to safely move these items, so always work within your limits. Furniture like large dining tables are very heavy, so there's always a risk of hurting yourself or damaging the item.



FROM OUR REMOVALISTS –

Cheers!

For this list, we asked our removalists not only what would make their life easier on the job, but what preparation would they do if they were moving themselves.

It's up to you if you decide to be a Legend - or a Superhero like our trained and experienced removalists - but TOP REMOVALS always recommends to tick off as many of the Essentials as you can. Not only will you make your movers smile, you'll save heaps of time on the job – not to mention your hard earned dollar.

If you'd like to find out for yourself why TOP REMOVALS is the moving service trusted again and again by our customers, why not leave your details so we can give you a quick and comprehensive quote?

Estimate your move size here

www.topremovals.com.au/estimate-move-size