



Keeping Your Sanity During “The Move”

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If you are already working with an agent, this is not meant as a solicitation for that business.

There's no doubt that moving your household can be an enormously stressful experience. You, your family, your friends, and your pets will go through emotional upheaval during a move – even if it's a positive one, filled with joy. Here are a few tips to help you stay organized and reduce the stress.

Delegate. If you are moving with family members, determine what each person will be responsible for and the date the tasks is due. All tasks should go on your master list, which is posted where all family members can easily access it.

One room at a time. If possible, completely pack a single room at a time. You'll feel more focused.

Label (and number) each box. Use a big, fat, dark marker – and label on the sides and the top. Keep a box inventory which includes the box number, the name of the room it goes in, and a general idea of the contents.

Pack a suitcase. Pretend that you're going on a weekend getaway, and include everything you would need for that time away – a change of clothing, medications, etc. Keep the suitcases with you (not in the moving truck) so you have these key essentials immediately at hand.

Take photographs. Not sure how to rewire your stereo system? Take a few photos on a digital camera, and reinstalling it will be a snap.

Create “open me first” boxes. Each room of the house should have “open me first” boxes, which contain the most urgent things you'll need at your new home. Be sure to mark the sides and top of these boxes with “open me first”. What goes in the “open me first” box?

•**Kitchens:** saran wrap, aluminum foil, paper towels, disposable plates/cups/utensils, coffee maker/coffee/filters, dish detergent, frying pan, baking

sheet, spatula/spoons, scissors, pet food/water bowls, trash bags, favorite non-perishable snacks

•**Bathroom:** bath mat, towels, first aid items (band-aids, aspirin, ibuprofen), shampoo, soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, toilet paper, shower curtain and rings

•**Tools:** Flashlights, screwdrivers (flat and Phillips-head), tape measure, utility knife, hammer, level, duct tape, cellophane tape, box cutters, light bulbs

•**Bedrooms:** Pillow, nightlight, curtains, sheets. Kids will especially benefit from having a few favorite books or stuffed animals at hand.

Have a plan for small parts. Tiny screws, Allen wrenches, and other miscellaneous pieces should be taped securely to the underside of furniture they're removed from ... or have a sealable plastic bag that all of these parts go in, and store this bag in your “open me first” box.

Do the fixing up first, if possible. Does the new home need a fresh coat of interior paint ... or a thorough cleaning? If possible, tackle these issues before you move in.

Purge, purge, purge. Moving is an ideal time to get rid of the flotsam and jetsam you have accumulated over the years. If you haven't used an item in the past year (holiday decorations are an exception, of course) you can probably donate it and never miss it. Moving is costly, so don't spend money moving stuff that will just gather dust in your new home. I suggest you try to eliminate 25 to 33% of your belongings when you move. An easy way to do that: imagine packing it, carrying it to the new house, and then unpacking it. Is it really worth the effort?

Start before you think you need to. I guarantee packing will take you longer than you think it will!

Need more ideas for having a smooth move? Let me know – I'd love to share more with you! Call me at 360-620-2690 or send an email to mollyells@windermere.com and we can set up a time to chat!

