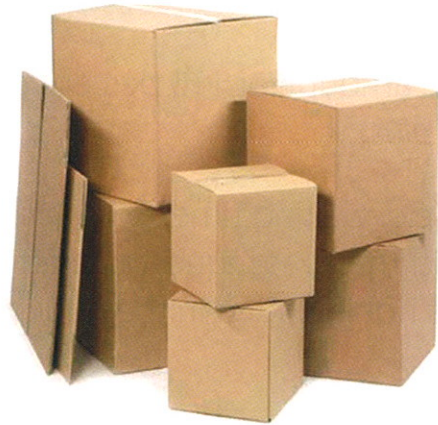


## Packing



To save on packing charges, you may want to pack part of your belongings yourself. This can save money but it requires expertise and the proper packing materials. Your mover can advise you on the purchase of packing materials and on the best procedures to follow should you decide to pack some of your goods.

Proper packing by a trained packer using specially designed cartons and materials is recommended for a damage-free move. Schedule packing a day or two before the moving van is loaded.

Be present when your goods are packed or arrange for someone to be there for you. You may want to carry valuables such as jewelry or photo albums with you. Before loading, your mover is required to prepare an inventory of your household goods being shipped. Make sure all copies of the inventory are legible and that all items are numbered, listed and described correctly. Have valuable items listed separately on the inventory. Discuss the inventory sheet with your mover and make sure you agree with the list of your possessions before you sign it.

The inventory record is one of your most important shipping documents. You will refer to it at your destination and be asked to sign it after you have received and inspected your goods.

Appliances you will be moving, such as washing machines, chest freezers, window air conditioning units and other items requiring special servicing and installation, should be disconnected by an appliance dealer or other service provider before moving day. Your mover may arrange to disconnect or install some appliances for you. Most movers can perform limited special servicing of televisions, stereo equipment, washers, refrigerators, home freezers and other items.

If you plan to ship your refrigerator or freezer, remove all food first. Next, defrost and bring the units to room temperature with the doors open. Then, thoroughly dry them to prevent mildew or other damage.

Before you move, you may want to have your furniture, draperies and carpets repaired and cleaned. Keep these items in the cleaner's wrapping during the move.

## Planning Your Moving Day

Your mover may ask you to select a date range during which your goods can be loaded and a second date range during which your goods can be delivered to your new home. A spread of 3-4 days gives you and your mover the flexibility needed to keep your move on schedule. If you desire pickup or delivery on a specific date, ask your mover about arranging for this service.

There may be unforeseeable delays in pickup, especially in the peak summer months. It is best not to plan to relinquish your house until a few days after the period in which your goods are scheduled to be picked up.



## Moving Day

- Be on hand when the movers arrive to answer questions and give directions
- Discuss delivery arrangements fully with your mover
- Have beds stripped and ready to be packed
- Save your energy by letting the moving crew take beds apart, roll up carpets and put mattresses in cartons
- Read the bill of lading – the contract between you and the mover – before you sign it. Keep it with you until your shipment is delivered, all charges are paid, and all claims, if any, are settled
- Tell your mover how and where you or your representative can be reached at your destination
- While shipment is in transit, keep in contact with the mover's agent at your destination

## Delivery

Generally, your belongings will be transported in a van along with those of other families moving in the same general direction. This helps to keep your costs down. Delivery is made during the date range agreed upon before the move began. The mover is required to notify you by telephone, e-mail, fax, overnight courier, return

### Collection at Delivery

Under federal regulations, your mover is authorized to collect the following charges when your shipment is delivered:

- 100 percent of the binding estimate amount, or 110 percent of the non-binding estimate amount, *plus*
- Charges applicable for any service (e.g. waiting time, extra pickup or delivery, storage-in-transit) that was requested after the contract was executed that was not included in the original estimate, *and*
- In the event that shuttle service is required, the mover may also collect for the shuttle charges at delivery, provided that the shuttle charges collected at delivery do not exceed 15 percent of the total charges due at delivery.

Any remaining charges must be billed to you with payment due 30 days from the date of the mover's invoice.





statement in the shipment documentation (usually the bill of lading) agreeing to it. An inconvenience claim may be submitted when a late pickup or delivery is the fault of the mover. Ask your mover about his company's policy regarding claims for valid out-of-pocket living expenses you incur while waiting for late delivery.

The mover's liability and any additional protection may end if your goods are placed in storage. Your mover can explain the difference between permanent storage and "storage in transit," which is temporary storage in connection with the transportation of your goods.

### **Weighing Your Shipment**

Before the van driver loads your shipment, he weighs the van on a certified scale. After your shipment is loaded, he weighs the van a second time. The difference between the two weights is the net weight of your shipment, upon which final charges are based.

You may arrange with your mover to observe this official weighing. You can also arrange for a re-weigh before your goods are unloaded at your new home.

### **Payment on Delivery**

When your household goods are delivered and unloaded, be prepared to pay with cash, money order, traveler's check, or cashier's check as specified by the mover beforehand. Some movers also accept credit cards for payment. Check with your mover and ask about their payment policy.

requested certified mail, or in person if either pickup or delivery will not be on schedule.



Make sure you understand how you will be contacted for the specific delivery time. Get in touch with the mover's agent at the destination and make certain he has your current mobile phone number and/or e-mail address. If you cannot be reached at your destination upon arrival of the van, the mover may place your shipment in storage to avoid a delay of shipments for the other families whose household goods

are also on the van. This can mean additional charges for storage and handling, so be certain you are on hand for delivery.

Upon delivery, check your household goods for loss or damage. Do not sign the receipt on the driver's copy of the inventory until you have inspected your furniture items and the exteriors of the packed cartons.

If you do not want containers unpacked at the time of delivery, you and the van operator should carefully inspect them for any indication of damage. Check off how many cartons were left unpacked on your inventory sheet.



## Claims

If any of your household goods are damaged or lost, promptly report the facts in detail on the van driver's original copy of the inventory sheet before you sign it.

You do not need to unpack all the cartons and inspect their contents before signing the inventory sheet, but you should note obvious damage to carton exteriors. "Concealed" damage discovered later can be reported when a loss and damage claim is filed. Because reasonable proof must be furnished, leave the damaged items in the carton until the moving company's agent has inspected them. Do not dispose of broken pieces, as your claim may be denied if the damaged article is disposed of prior to inspection.



Under this level, if any article is lost, destroyed or damaged while in your mover's custody, your mover will, at its option, either: repair the article to the extent necessary to restore it to the same condition as when it was received by your mover, or pay you for the cost of such repairs; or, replace the article with an article of like kind and quality, or pay you for the cost of such replacement. An additional charge applies for this full (replacement) value protection which, at your option, may be subject to various deductible amounts. If you do not wish to pay this additional valuation charge or if you feel that you do not need this level of coverage, you must select the alternative level of liability described below.

### Alternative Level of Liability (released value of 60 cents per pound per article)



This is the most economical protection available; however, this no-cost option provides only minimal protection. Under this option, the mover assumes liability for no more than 60 cents per pound, per article. Loss or damage claims are settled

based on the pound weight of the article multiplied by \$.60. For example, if a 10-pound stereo component, valued at \$1000 were lost or destroyed, the mover would be liable for no more than \$6.00 (10 pounds x \$.60). Obviously, you should think carefully before agreeing to such an arrangement. There is no extra charge for this minimal protection, but you must sign a specific



apply if you are not prepared to accept delivery and the shipment is placed in storage, or if a smaller (shuttle) truck must be used to accomplish delivery because your new home is located on a narrow street.

Another type of estimate used by many movers is the **Not-To-Exceed Estimate**. This type of estimate is called various things by various movers, such as Guaranteed Price or Price Protection, but the end result is the same – an estimate based on a binding estimate **or** on actual cost, **whichever is lower**. Like a binding estimate, a not-to-exceed estimate must be provided to you in writing and is binding on the carrier.

## Valuation

All moving companies are required to assume liability for the value of the goods that they transport in the event of loss and/or damage. However, there are different levels of liability that apply and you should be aware of the charges that apply and the amount of protection provided by each level.

### Full (Replacement) Value Protection

This is the most comprehensive plan available for the protection of your goods. It protects your goods up to the amount that you declared, or if you do not declare a specific amount, up to an amount equal to \$6.00/lb. times the weight of your shipment (with a minimum of \$6,000). The exact cost of full value protection may vary by mover and is set forth in each mover's tariff. Ask your mover for the details of their specific plan.

A claim for loss or damage must be filed within nine months after delivery. However, it is to your advantage to file your claim promptly. The mover must acknowledge receipt of your claim within 30 days, and within 120 days must deny or make an offer to settle the claim. Loss and damage claim forms may be obtained from the destination agent or by contacting the mover's home office, or on their website. If there is no agent nearby, report your claim directly to the mover's home office in writing. The mover may require that you also enclose the original billing and your bill of lading, so keep all of your transportation documents.

## Arbitration

All interstate movers are required to participate in a dispute settlement program and offer neutral arbitration as a means of resolving certain types of disputed claims. Ask your mover for the details of its arbitration program.



# Pre-Move Countdown Checklist

## 8 WEEKS

- ☐ Obtain estimates from different companies and select the one that best meets your needs

## 6 WEEKS

- ☐ Meet with your mover to discuss cost, liability coverage, packing, loading, delivery and claims procedures
- ☐ Sort through and throw out, give away or sell things you don't want or need

## 4 WEEKS

- ☐ If the mover does the packing, arrange for it to be done one to two days before loading
- ☐ If packing yourself, begin packing
- ☐ If necessary, arrange for temporary storage of your goods
- ☐ Send furniture, drapes and carpets for repair or cleaning
- ☐ Arrange for repair work on your new house

## 3 WEEKS

- ☐ Schedule to have appliances and utilities disconnected in old house; schedule hookup for new house
- ☐ Make travel arrangements and hotel reservations for your trip
- ☐ Apartment dwellers: reserve elevator for pickup/delivery day

that movers are busiest during the summer months, especially around the first and last days of the month. Some movers offer lower prices during the slower season, between October and April. If you have flexibility as to the timing of your move, let your sales person know.

**Most movers offer two types of estimates: binding and non-binding.** To help movers calculate the cost of your move, show them every single item to be moved. Point out high value items during the walkthrough, and don't forget to include items that may be stored in the attic, basement, garage, back yard, closets, and under the beds.

**Non-binding** estimates are not final; they are the probable cost of your move. Non-binding estimates must be based on the actual weight of your belongings, plus the distance they are transported and the amount of packing and other services provided. Many movers also provide binding estimates.

**A binding** estimate means that you are obligated to pay the price set forth in the binding estimate even if the shipment weighs more or less than the estimated amount.

All binding estimates cover only the goods and services listed on the estimate. If you add items or request additional services prior to the actual pickup of your shipment, the mover may void the original estimate or revise it and enter into a new agreement with you.

In addition, all movers reserve the right to charge for services necessary to accomplish delivery, even if those services are not requested by the shipper. For example, additional charges will



mover best suits your needs and budget.

If you are moving between two states or crossing state borders, you should read and understand all the information you receive. In addition to brochures explaining their various services, moving companies are required to give you two consumer booklets prepared by the United States Department of Transportation – *Your Rights and Responsibilities When You Move* and *Ready to Move*. The mover will also provide information regarding its tariff (list of services and the rates associated with them) and information regarding the mover’s participation in a dispute settlement program.

It is important to make arrangements for your move well in advance, preferably four to six weeks before your moving date.

## Money Matters



The cost of an interstate move is usually based on the weight of your belongings and the distance they are shipped, plus packing and other services.

### Getting an Estimate

To help you anticipate your moving expense, movers will give you an estimate of the costs. Remember

### 2 WEEKS

- ☐ Obtain medical, dental and veterinary records
- ☐ Organize car license, registration and insurance records
- ☐ Obtain, fill out and mail change-of-address cards
- ☐ Make special arrangements for transporting pets and plants
- ☐ Take care of bills, stocks and bank accounts

### 1 WEEK

- ☐ Arrange for baby-sitter on moving day
- ☐ Transfer prescriptions
- ☐ Arrange for delivery services (newspapers, etc.) to be discontinued

### 1-2 DAYS

- ☐ Have mover pack your goods
- ☐ Defrost and dry refrigerators and freezers to be moved
- ☐ Arrange for cash/traveler’s checks for trip expenses and payment to mover
- ☐ If traveling by car, check your gas, tires, water, battery, oil, wipers
- ☐ Pack valuables to carry with you as you travel



## AMSA's ProMover Program

AMSA ProMovers are moving companies that have agreed to abide by our Code of Ethics and passed a review of professional business standards before being certified as a quality moving company. In addition, each ProMover has executed a Signatory Agreement affirming that they agree to uphold our rules and provide professional quality moving services.

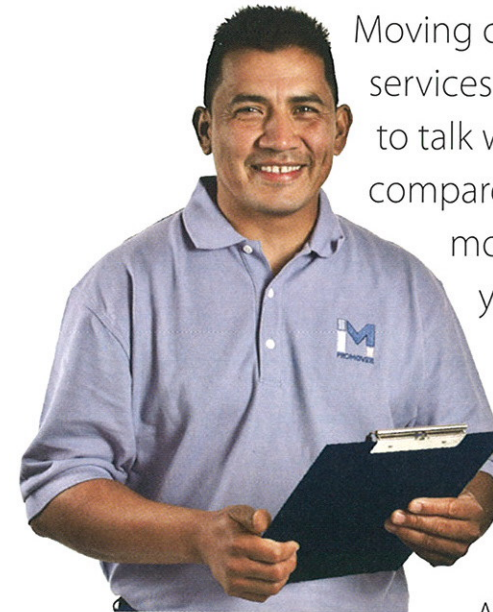


Look for this symbol when searching for a mover.

The ProMover Program promotes ethical principles in the moving and storage industry and works with federal and state governments to mitigate unethical moving practices; it clearly separates professional movers from rogue operators masquerading as legitimate movers. And most importantly, this program aids consumers by providing an identifiable measure of quality while, at the same time, enhancing the moving industry by encouraging and recognizing high professional achievement.

Only qualified AMSA movers are able to become ProMovers and only ProMovers can use the identifying logo. While most ProMovers are certified for performing interstate (state-to-state) moves, the program is being expanded to include local and intrastate moves. It was recently expanded to include California and Michigan, and international movers are being considered for certification in the near future.

## Choosing Your Mover



Moving companies provide a variety of services for a range of fees. It is a good idea to talk with several different movers to compare their services. To find reputable movers in your area, begin by asking your friends about their experiences with movers they have used.

You can also check with the local Better Business Bureau (BBB), Angie's List, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA).

The American Moving & Storage Association (AMSA) is the national trade association for the professional moving and storage industry. Many AMSA members with interstate operating authority have been certified as ProMovers, meeting the highest standards in the industry. A list of these ProMovers can be found on AMSA's consumer website, [www.moving.org](http://www.moving.org)

Once you have compiled a list of potential movers, inform them of the destination and timing of your move. Ask them about the types of services they offer. You'll want to ask them to perform a visual survey of your possessions in order to assist in preparing an estimate. Each mover should explain their estimate in detail and to give you a copy. Then, carefully compare them to see which



**MOVING** your household possessions and relocating to a new home is one of the most exciting yet challenging activities you'll undertake. It's important for you to become familiar with the moving industry and fully understand your rights and responsibilities when you move.



## AMSA Code of Ethics

Members of the American Moving & Storage Association stand united in the sincere belief that honest, ethical, efficient and quality services to the public are the ultimate goals of this organization. And, we who are engaged in the transporting and storage of household goods, pledge ourselves to uphold and advance the following ideas and principles:

- To consistently offer and provide the most efficient and reliable moving and storage services available, while adhering strictly to a policy of truth, honesty, integrity and fairness in all business transactions
- To consistently strive for improvement in all facets of industry operations and bind ourselves to the individual and collective effort of seeking and effectuating such improvement
- To be conscious and considerate of consumer needs and continually promote the progress, fraternity, education and dignity of our industry so that the public will be better served
- To promote the elimination of fraud, deceit, misrepresentation and unethical practices within the industry and engage in formal disciplinary review of any and all members involved in such practices
- To afford all members and applicants due process in the administration of association affairs, promote competitive practices and eliminate unlawful restraint of trade within the industry
- To maintain the highest concern for the health, welfare and safety of our employees, while recognizing their needs as both human beings and individuals
- To faithfully fulfill all obligations of membership, including the timely payment of all charges for membership affiliation and services
- To protect free enterprise in a democratic society and foster the commercial viability of the small business component of our industry





CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO A  
**SATISFYING MOVE**

