

## **Packing Tips for the Do-It-Yourselfer**

An important decision for anyone preparing to move is whether to do all or part of the packing yourself or to have it done by professionals. For anyone seeking to save money during the move, substantial savings can be realized when packing is done by family and friends.

This article will offer you helpful tips for packing so that your belongings will be safely by Men on the Move without incident.

The packing skills offer by our professional packers have been acquired through years of experience. We hope to share some of our knowledge and techniques with you, to help guide you along the way as you undertake this new challenge. It may be difficult work, but if you allow yourself the right amount of time to do the job carefully, you will be justly rewarded.

### **Valuables**

Items of high value like jewelry or coin collections should not go into the moving truck. We strongly suggest that you transport items of this nature yourself. We also suggest that you contact us for information concerning the packaging and handling of painting, sculpture of statuary, antiques, mirrors or any other delicate items.

### **Materials Needed Boxes or Cartons**

You will need many boxes or cartons in assorted sizes. All should be clean, in good condition and have covers so that they can be closed and sealed. Start collecting boxes early on. You may often find used boxes that are suitable at grocery or other types of retail outlets. Liquor boxes are a great find since they are sturdy and have dividers. This makes them ideal for packing glasses, vases and other breakables. If you desire, we offer [moving boxes for sale](#). We carry assorted sizes and packages for you to choose from.

- A point to consider: Packed boxes are much easier to handle when they weigh 50 pounds or less.

### **Wrapping Paper**

You're going to need lots of wrapping paper in your move. Many people save old newspapers for wrapping. One thing to keep in mind with newspapers is that the ink generally does not thoroughly dry. Items wrapped in old newspapers will often end up soiled and in need of cleaning once they unwrapped. Our professionals use unprinted newspaper. For items that must be kept clean, it is best to use [unprinted packing paper](#).

Kraft paper, tissue paper, shock resistant corrugated paper or bubble wrap, all make excellent wrapping materials and may often be purchased at local stores. These materials provide excellent cushioning or lining for you items.

### **Carton Sealing Tape**

Heavy duty gummed tape or carton sealing tapes at least 1½ to 2 inches wide are most suitable for sealing cartons to be moved.

## **Felt Tip Markers**

Felt tip pens or magic markers are ideal for labeling your boxes with information such as "Contents", "Fragile", "This Side Up" or any other important information that will make handling safer and easier to identify upon your arrival at your new location.

## **Packing Tip Considerations List**

1. Start collecting boxes early. Storage is easier when you open both ends of the box and then flatten it and stack boxes until it's time to use them. They can be resealed as they are being used.
2. Pack on a room by room basis. Don't mix items from one room with that of another room. Clearly label each box with it's room location to avoid confusion upon arrival.
3. Begin packing early. If you pack two boxes a day, in a month you will have packed up 60 boxes. Start with things that are not used frequently. Start in the basement, the garage or closets or other areas of storage.
4. It may be necessary for you to have us do some of the packing for you. If you do the major portion you will save some money. You may also consider purchasing some of the specialized boxes that we offer. Boxes to accommodate large items or boxes designed for clothing or tall boxes for lamps or boxes to hold pictures or other items.
5. Hanging your clothing, like suits or dresses or coats in wardrobe boxes will save you the trouble of having these items laundered or having to press them upon arrival. You should not leave clothing in garment bags as they are not designed for moving. Clothing is best moved in wardrobes with your garment bags folded and placed in the bottom of the wardrobe carton.
6. Dresser drawers do not need to be emptied. Our movers can handle dressers with the drawers left intact. You should however, remove anything that is breakable and also make sure that drawers do not contain too much weight that may cause damage to the furniture during transit.
7. What size box should you use? A general rule of thumb is that small, heavy items like books, cds, canned goods and the like should be packed in smaller boxes while bulkier items like pots and pans or small appliances should be placed in boxes a little larger. Much bulkier items like blankets, lamp shades, toys or pillows should be packed in large boxes to accommodate their size.
8. Be careful to avoid overpacking your boxes. Try to keep the weight per carton to around 50 pounds or less. They are much easier to handle for everyone involved.
9. Do not pack flammables, combustibles or explosives. The safe shipment of your belongings is of primary concern. Further it is a violation of Interstate Commerce Commission regulations for us to transport these items. We are prohibited from transport aerosol containers, paint, paint thinners, gasoline, explosives or anything that may be flammable or combustible.

## **Kitchen Items**

The kitchen table is a great spot to pack all of your kitchen items. But before you start, we suggest covering the table with a blanket or padding to prevent scratching the table.

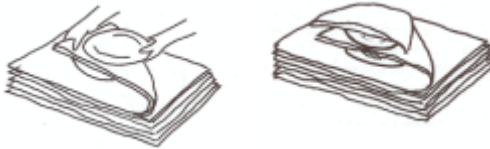


## Flatware

1. Place a stack of packing paper on the table.
2. Select a medium sized box and line the bottom of the box with several layers of paper or padding for cushioning of your items.
3. Place your first plate in the center of a sheet of packing paper.



4. Using at least two sheets of paper, grasp one corner of the paper and pull it completely over the plate.
5. Stack a second plate on top of the first plate and stretch the second corner over the second plate.



6. Next, add a third plate to the current stack and fold the remaining two corners, one at a time, over your stack of plates.



7. Re-wrap the entire stack, then seal with masking tape.
8. Turn the entire stack of plates upside down onto your packing paper.



9. Place your wrapped plates in your box so that your plates are standing on edge. Never lay flatware down. Your dishes can withstand greater stress during the move when they are standing.
10. Follow these same steps for all flatware including; saucers, bread or butter dishes etc.. Remember: When packing to place heavy items on the bottom and lighter items on top.

## Glassware

All glassware, including drinking glasses, goblets, stemware and most importantly, fine crystal, should always be handled and packed with care and each piece should be wrapped individually.

1. Place a stack of packing paper on the table.
2. Starting from the corner closest to you, roll the glass diagonally across the paper while holding a piece of the paper until the glass is completely covered and well cushioned. Fold excess paper over the glass and tape with masking tape.



3. Line your packing box with cushioning material (more is better in this case) to prevent damaging vibration and assure safe arrival of all glassware. Your less expensive, everyday cups or glasses can be "nested" with one item placed inside the other and then wrapped three or four in a bundle. For nesting, tear or cut up some small sheets of paper, then use at least a couple of those sheets between each cup or glass as protective lining.
4. Take your first glass or cup and line it with a couple of small sheets.



5. Place your second glass or cup inside the first and line with a couple more sheets of paper. Follow the same steps with the third and fourth item.
6. Use your best judgment, then nest three or four cups or glasses. Lay your nest on top of the stack of wrapping paper diagonally, off center and close to you.



7. Grasp two sheets on the corner closest to you and wrap around your glasses or cups.
8. Repeat this procedure with the remaining corners of wrapping paper and then roll into a bundle.



9. If you have liquor or divided boxes, pack glasses, cups and stemware in these boxes. If your glassware does not fill to the top of the box or compartment, add additional wadded paper to fill up to the top. Paper from shredded documents works well when packing glassware to act as insulation cushioning.



10. If you don't have divided carton, you can pack your glassware in boxes with other dishes by fitting them in wherever you have open spaces. Do however, make sure that glassware is near the top of the carton and not below heavy plates or other items.

### **Small Kitchen Appliances**

It's best to pack small appliances such as blenders, toasters, can openers, or coffee makers together in one or two boxes (or as many as required) rather than mixing them with other household items. When it comes time to unpack, all of your small kitchen appliances will be together. Wrap each item individually with two or three sheets of packing paper.

Once all of these appliances are packed, stuff any open spaces with wadded paper to fill the gaps. If there is a lot of space left over in your boxes, you could use the space to pack pots and pans.

### **Pots and Pans**

Generally, three pots or pans can be nested (one inside the other). Cut or tear pieces of packing paper large enough to line the entire interior of the largest pan. Then place your next pan inside the first. Follow the steps for your third pan.



Next, place your stack upside down on your stack of packing paper and use at least three sheets to wrap the stack of pans. Start by grasping one corner of these sheets of packing paper, pull it over and cover the pans. Pull the next three corners over the stack one at a time, then seal with masking tape and place into a medium sized box. You can use the same procedure with large bowls.

### **More Kitchen Packing Tips**

**Boxed foods:** Seal boxes that have been opened with masking tape. There is no need to wrap boxed foods in wrapping paper. If your move will require storage before it is moved into your new location, then you should dispose of or give away any opened boxed foods as they may attract rodents, insects or other undesirable pests. Also, by the time they are unpacked, they will probably not be fit for use.

**Spices:** Make sure that all containers are closed tightly and that the contents will not leak

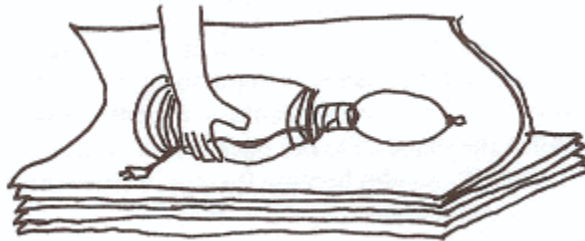
out. To be sure, it is wise to seal containers with tape.

Canister Sets: Generally the contents of canisters can be left inside the canister. Just be sure to seal each one with tape. Canisters should be wrapped with packing paper and taped closed.

### Packing Tall Table Lamps

The biggest problem that you will probably face when packing tall table lamps is obtaining packing boxes large enough to accommodate the lamp. If you have difficulty locating boxes, we offer dishpack style boxes. These are tall and sturdy boxes that are designed to protect your fragile items.

1. Remove the lamp shade and bulb. Wrap the electric cord around the base of the lamp.
2. Line the bottom of the box with wadded packing paper or shredded documents to assure a good cushion for the lamp.
3. Spread out several sheets of packing paper so that your paper extends longer and wider than the lamp to be wrapped. Place the lamp gently in the center of the laid out paper.



4. Roll packing paper around the entire lamp. Tuck in the paper ends at the base of the lamp and seal with tape.
5. Seal the seams of overlapping paper, then, wrap tape around the entire bundle.
6. Fold up the remaining paper at the top of the lamp, then seal.



If you have several tall table lamps, place them in your carton so that the top of one lamp is adjacent to the top of the next lamp. Alternating your lamps will allow them to fit better in the box. Packed wadded paper into any open spaces to provide cushioning and keep your lamps from hitting each other and breaking.

Once your lamps are packed and sealed, be sure to mark the box **"FRAGILE"** and **"LAMPS"** in large lettering on all sides of the box so that these boxes are handled with additional care.

## Lamp Shades

Whenever possible, lamp shades should be nested so that two or three can be packed into one carton. Use clean, unprinted packing paper as a protective lining between each shade. Holding the wire rim of the shade, gently lower it into your box to avoid soiling the fabric of the shade.



To make better utilization of each lamp shade box, fill the empty space with something soft. Small pillows, blankets or bath towels would work well to fill your box by placing these items inside the shades. Do NOT pack anything around the outside of the shades. They could crush your shades or cause damage to the lamp shade.

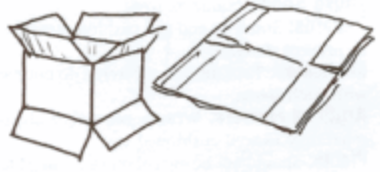


Once your lamp shades are packed and sealed, be sure to mark the box "**FRAGILE**" and "**LAMP SHADES**" in large lettering on all sides of the box so that these boxes are handled with additional care.

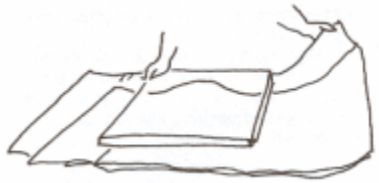
## Packing Pictures

Small pictures can be wrapped and placed on edge in regular packing boxes with other items that do not have any protruding edges that may cause damage to the picture. Extremely large pictures, like the type that may hang over a mantle or sofa that measure 24"x36" or large should be packed by your mover in boxes specially designed to handle pictures or mirrors. Some pictures that are too large to fit into a picture box may need to be fitted into a specially devised picture carton.

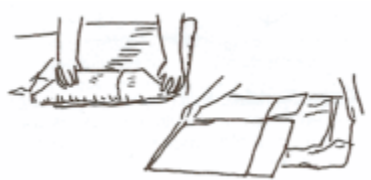
1. Choose a carton that is larger than your picture when it is open on both ends.
2. Open the bottom of the carton and flatten it out. Next, tape one of the open ends to seal it.



3. Spread out packing paper twice the size of your picture and lay the picture face down on the paper.



4. Wrap the picture like you would wrap a gift box and seal with tape. Turn the picture over and seal any overlapping paper.
5. Gently slide the picture into the unsealed side of the packing carton and secure the opening with tape.



## Miscellaneous Thoughts

### Hat and Shoe Boxes

Small boxes like this should be consolidated and packed together in one large carton. Fill and empty spaces of the box with wadded or shredded paper.

### Toys

Most toys do not have to be wrapped in packing paper, simply place them into large cartons and seal. Games in boxes with small parts should be taped closed with masking tape to contain all game pieces.

### Boots or Shoes

Just like toys, they don't need to be wrapped, just place into boxes and seal.

### Medicines

Make sure all caps have a good seal and pack into a separate box. Make sure to label the box so that it can be easily located when needed. Do not pack all medicines if you will need to them before the unpacking can begin.

### Artificial Flowers or Hobby Items

Wrap all items generously and pack separately in cartons with lots of wadded or shredded paper.



### **Plants**

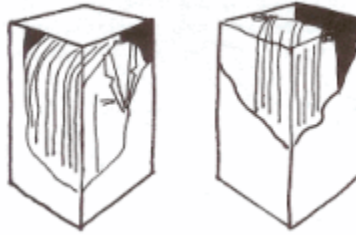
Plants should not be moved on the moving truck. See [Moving Houseplants](#) for additional information.

### **Tools**

Long handled tools like rakes, brooms or shovels should be tightly bundled together. Hand tools should be kept in tool boxes or individually wrapped and placed into well cushioned carton.

### **Clothing**

Wardrobe cartons are designed to provide your clothing a clean and wrinkle free move. Suitcase or clean and lined cartons may also be used to transport clothing.

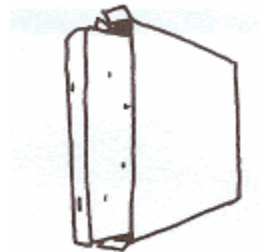


### **Draperies and Curtains**

Fold lengthwise and secure to padded hangers placed in wardrobe boxes or carefully fold and pack into clean lined boxes.

### **Mattresses**

Special mattress cartons are available to protect mattress from getting snagged or torn and to keep the mattress clean while being moved.



### **Do's and Don'ts for a Successful Move**

1. Wash your hands frequently to help keep everything from becoming soiled while it is being packed.
2. Set up a work area on a large table. Dedicate this area to only packing.
3. Refrain from smoking while packing to prevent burns on your items and to prevent a fire from starting from fallen hot ash.
4. Make sure all of your cartons are clean and dry and strong enough to handle the weight being packed into them.
5. Pack each carton wisely and with enough packing to prevent the shifting of contents while traveling. Keep the weight of each carton under 50 pounds to facilitate easy handling.
6. Don't pack soaps or fragranced items or medications with foods.

7. Don't pack coins, currency, jewelry valuable or important papers. Carry these items with you.
8. Never pack matches, flammable items, ammunition or explosives, paint or other chemicals.
9. Don't pack heavy items like irons or heavy pots with dishes and make sure that all dishes are padded and securely packed.
10. Don't leave loose trays, food items or pots and pans in stoves or refrigerators.
11. Be sure to properly label all cartons as they are being packed so you will know what items need to be unpacked first and know what each carton contains without opening it.

All of the pages in this article contain some of the best tips available from packing and moving professionals. If you follow these guidelines and tips, you will save money by doing it yourself and your move will be trouble free with all of your belongings at their destination securely.