



A Moving Checklist for Military Spouses

Moving is stressful under the best circumstances, but this checklist will help you to keep things organized and under control. I know that some moves come upon you unexpectedly, so the timeline below may need to be altered depending upon the time you've been given. Just breathe, do your best, and know that everything will fall back into place eventually.

1-to-3 Months before Move

- Decide if you want the military to move everything, if you want to make a DITY move, or something in between. After you decide this, the active duty spouse can make the appropriate arrangements with your transportation office.
- Start saving for non-reimbursable moving expenses and potential emergencies that could happen during the move (blown tire, vehicle breakdown, extra time spent in a hotel).
- Discuss the moving process with your children, including where you are moving to and how it will be different from where you currently live. Start planning for special needs your children may have, including equipment needed for an infant, adequate medications and prescriptions, and things to do while on the road.
- If you have a landlord, notify him you will be moving, but do not give a date yet. If you own a home, find a realtor and begin to discuss things like comparables in the area, what you may want to fix or change in your home, and if you want to rent it out or sell it.

- If you need to ship your vehicle, talk to your transportation office and find out where you need to drop it off. Begin to plan for things like what you will do without your vehicle for the time you will be without it and how you will get from the drop off location back to your home or to the airport. You will also want to make note of dings, dents, scratches, etc., documented with time-stamped pictures, in case you need to make a claim after assuming possession of it at your new installation.
- Start a file or envelope to keep track of tax-deductible expenses for the move. These expenses include non-reimbursed transportation and storage of your household goods, and your cost of non-reimbursed lodging (not meals). See IRS.gov for more information.
- A full inventory of your possessions is always a good idea, but make sure you at least list out valuable, antiques, and collections. Take date-stamped photographs, and get appraisals for high value items; keep these with you during the move.
- Start a file or large envelope to keep personal records like birth certificates, passports, and insurance paperwork with you during the move. Also keep a list of emergency contacts, a list of current doctors and dentists, and any specialists that you or a doctor may need to contact in emergency on the road.
- Begin a list of those you need to notify you are moving. Don't forget clubs, organizations, magazine subscriptions, medical offices to include veterinarians, and your church. Make sure you cancel any appointments you scheduled at your last appointment, like with a dentist or specialist.
- Go through closets, dressers, and junk drawers. Sort through everything to find those items you no longer use, are broken or missing pieces, or are outgrown to sell, giveaway, or trash.
- Check all furniture and boxes kept from previous moves to make sure stickers from those moves have been removed.
- Purposely take time to allow yourself and your children to say goodbye to dear friends. This will get harder to fit in the closer to the move you get.

As you worked through this list, other things may have come to mind. Record them here and mark them off as you get them done.

1-to-3 Weeks before Move

- Double-check the expiration dates on all military IDs, drivers licenses, vehicle registrations, and inspections. Renew as needed.
- Cancel all standing mail order purchases or arrange to have them shipped to a friend or family member.
- If you have a local bank, decide whether you will transfer your accounts to your new home or deal with everything long distance. If you have a safe deposit box, decide if you will move it to your new home or arrange payment with the bank for the time you live elsewhere.
- As needed, cancel all local deliveries and services, like newspapers and pest treatments.
- Retrieve all items you have loaned out or delivered for service, such as dry cleaning. Return all borrowed items.
- Clean out your freezer, using remaining items before you are packed out. Use as many refrigerator items as possible.
- Schedule a carpet cleaning, and do a thorough job of cleaning the entire house before your favorite tools and supplies are packed.
- Arrange for child and/or pet care for the days the packers will be at your home.
- Renew and pick up prescriptions. Obtain copies of medical records and prescription slips just in case you need a refill on the road. Depending upon the medical issues within your family, ask the doctor for extra medicine to get you through the move. Protect your medical supplies in leak-proof, spill-proof containers.
- If someone will need to be seen within the first move after your move, call ahead to see what the procedures are. The appointment wait times and referral processes can be very different from one base to another.

Other things that came to mind.

Days before Move

- Make sure maintenance is up-to-date on your vehicle(s).
- If you have rented a storage unit, either empty it and close your account, or arrange for payment while you are gone.
- Dispose of all flammables, like cleaning fluids, chemistry sets, aerosol cans, oil, and paint. Be prepared to carry with you, have a family member store, or give away all ammunition.
- If you own a propane tank, make sure you will be permitted to take it with you. If the mover will allow it, they often require you to have it purged and sealed.
- Disassemble all outdoor play equipment and structures that go with you.
- Drain all garden hoses.
- Drain oil and gas from lawn mowers and other gas-operated tools. Disconnect spark plugs.
- Remove wall accessories, like drapery rods, small appliances, sconces, and picture frames. Set them neatly on the floor to be packed by the movers.
- Disassemble electronic components such as televisions, DVD players, and computers. If you have the original box and would like the movers to use it, set it near the item. If you pack it yourself, be sure to leave the top of the box open so the packer can look inside and seal it.
- Give a friend or family member your travel route and schedule for emergency purposes. Put a hold on all mail, or forward it to your new general delivery address.
- Set your final cleaning products (for use after the packers are gone) beside the items that will not be packed. Don't forget to include suitcases and other travel bags. Have a box of some kind ready to store the valuables and important documents that you will keep with you. If you include any boxes with this pile, be sure to mark them clearly, "DO NOT MOVE." A closet or bathroom may be a good place for this pile.
- Do final laundry and let washer dry for 1-2 days before packers.
- Make sure you have Ziploc bags in various sizes—they will come in handy for storing screws, bolts, bookshelf pegs, etc. Don't forget a marker to write on the bag!

Moving Day

- Get up early and be ready! Do not have dirty dishes in the kitchen, dirty clothes in the hamper, washer, or dryer, or trash in any trashcan.
- Have coffee, water, cold drinks, and snacks for yourself. It's polite but not necessary to provide drinks and snacks to your movers.
- Be sure you or someone you trust is in your home every moment the packers are present.
- Be sure your children and pets are under control.
- Have a marker handy to make extra notes on the boxes. Some packers are less organized than others, so be prepared to follow them closely.
- Verify that the mover's inventory is detailed, complete, and accurate. Do not accept vague entries like, "miscellaneous," particularly on boxes that contain high value items. Make sure you keep a copy of the forms with you during the move.
- As packers clear a room, go behind them and check all closets, drawers, and cabinets. Don't forget the attic, basement, garage, and shed. Do not release them until you are sure all items have been packed as they may not be required to return after you release them.

Other things that came to mind.

Arrival at Your New Home

- As needed, arrange for utilities to be connected.
- Check the pilot lights on all gas appliances, including the stove, water heater, and furnace.
- Decide where all furniture will go so you can quickly direct the movers when your household goods arrive.
- Check all items off the list as the movers bring them into the home. Do not release the movers until you have verified all items have been delivered.
- At time of delivery, you may request that the movers reassemble all furniture that the packers at your old location disassembled. In addition, you may request that they unpack any or all boxes and take all packing materials with them. Some will give you a grace period of several days within which they will come back for the packing materials.
- If anything is broken or missing, note this on the form specified by the mover on DD Form 1840 at the time of delivery, or DD Form 1840R after delivery. These forms can be found online if the mover does not have any with him. NOTE: You have a DEADLINE to file a claim so be prompt. As of July 2015, you have 70 days to turn in your DD 1840/1840R to your installation's claim office, frequently located in or near the JAG office.
- Process your change of address through the US Post Office online at usps.com.
- Register your children in school, or register your homeschool as required by your new location.
- Connect with medical services, including doctors, dentists, ophthalmologists, and specialists your family needs.
- Contact the DMV to find out where and how to register your car and update your driver's license.

Other things that came to mind.
