



Prep, Pack, Move & Store: A Complete Moving Guide

By  **SECURITY**
SELF STORAGE

The logo for Security Self Storage features a stylized house icon with an upward-pointing arrow integrated into its left side. The word "SECURITY" is written in blue above the word "SELF STORAGE", which is written in orange on a blue rectangular background.

INTRODUCTION

Whether you are entering a new phase in life or just looking for a change in scenery, there are many reasons why you might pack up your belongings and move. People frequently move to be:

- Closer to a loved one.
- A shorter distance to their places of employment.
- In a new area to live, grow and explore.

Whether it's to a new apartment, your first home or a new house—**are you in the market to move?**

For those that answered a resounding “YES,” the chapters in this ebook are packed with the knowledge you need to prepare, move and settle into your new living space.

Good luck, and happy moving!

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Chapter 1 — Getting Started: Moving Considerations

Congratulations on your decision to try out a new space. While the moving process may feel a little overwhelming at times, it's also very exciting—enjoy the hunt!

Before you begin, take the time to discover both what you want out of your new space, and what you will be able to afford. These two factors will be the largest indicators in finding the perfect place, and will help narrow your search.

Determine Your Budget: Assess Your Financial Situation

Knowing your existing budget is a great first step. Can you afford to spend more? Will you need to spend less?

Create a budget, keeping the following costs in mind:

- Mortgage (or rent)
- Down payment
- Closing costs and taxes
- Home Owners Association fees (if applicable)
- Utilities
- Furnishings
- Cost of upkeep
- Cost of necessary upgrades
- Inspection needs

Once you have a list of all upfront and monthly expenses, make a target spend column of limits and compare the total against your income. Think big picture and budget all expenses with your rent or mortgage in mind. New homeownership costs will greatly impact the difference between your total monthly expenses and your monthly take-home pay. [According to CNN Money](#), your housing payment should equate to somewhere between 28% and 33% of your overall take-home pay.

Manage Your Funds: Mortgage Loans 101

In place of rent, a home comes with a mortgage payment. Home mortgages are loans taken out by you, the homeowner, as payment for your new home. Your mortgage is a contract that states that you will pay the valuation of the home, plus interest and other payments, in a timely manner—typically over the course of 15 or 30 years.

Mortgage loans are usually secured through a bank or credit union. Important features of a loan include:

- **Size of the loan:** How large your principal (*defined below*) will need to be.
- **Maturity of the loan:** Time when the loan should be paid in full.
- **Interest rate:** The amount the mortgage lender will charge you for loan.
- **Method of payment:** Number and schedule of payments.

Additional terms for consideration:

- **Principal:** The total amount of money you borrow to buy your home.
- **Interest:** What the mortgage loan lender charges you for the principal.
- **Taxes:** Additional costs based on your home's valuation. These property taxes are typically based on the cost of living in your particular city, and will continue even after your mortgage is paid in full.

Select a Realtor

Before simply going with the first realtor you can find, do a little research. Consider their track record—are they usually successful at finding and selling homes? Are they in good standing with all necessary licenses and certifications?

As you walk through a few homes together, do they appear knowledgeable and aware of the area you're considering?

Once you've chosen, know if the realtor will be representing you or the seller, how much assistance the realtor will provide to you in the process, as well as how much of a cut the realtor will expect for his or her assistance.

A realtor's commission is based on the sale of a home and is paid in full by the selling party. While everything can be negotiated, a typical realtor's commission rate is in the range of 3%-6% of the sale.

A graphic of a real estate sign. It consists of a white rectangular sign with a black border, mounted on a thick black vertical post. The sign contains the words "FOR SALE" in a bold, red, sans-serif font. The sign and post are positioned on a solid brown ground surface.

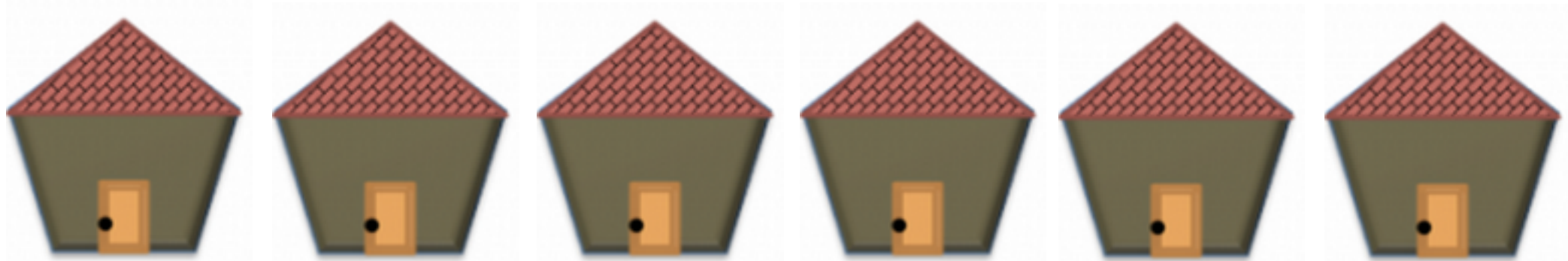
FOR SALE

Choose Your Neighborhood

Once you've determined how much you can afford to spend, completed your research, gained clearance for your mortgage, and found the perfect realtor, you'll want to determine the perfect location to reside.

Items to consider here:

- **Schools:** Do you have or want kids? If yes, consider local school programs and compare their average student's performance against national averages.
- **Property values:** This is important to know, as they will impact your property valuation and taxes.
- **Traffic:** Important to note for safety of little ones, and estimating your new commute to work.
- **Crime rates:** Websites like [CrimeReports.com](https://www.crimereports.com) can give you a general idea of the level of reported crime that has recently taken place in the area you are considering.
- **Proximity to places you regularly visit:** This includes work, grocery stores, doctors, convenience stores, etc.
- **Amenities:** Some neighborhoods and communities will include special perks or have conveniences close by, such as pools, community centers and libraries. Keep this in mind, and consider the proximity of these places to your new home.



Chapter 2 — Sell Your Home: Staging

When trying to sell your current home, look at it through a stranger's eyes before you put up the "For Sale" sign.

Is your space too cluttered? Too empty? Too extravagant in design? You'll want to make the space so welcoming, that prospective buyers will be battling for a chance to live in it.

Consider interior and exterior upgrades to give your property an extra selling advantage. These could include:

- New kitchen appliances or cabinet fixtures.
- Additional or improved landscaping.
- The addition of a deck or patio.
- Fresh paint.

Remember **curb appeal**. Look at your home from the street—does it look inviting? If "no," consider the items you could change to make the answer a definitive "yes."

Stage Your Home Like a Pro

Once all major decorative touches have been taken care of, go room by room and take a look at the décor of each. Remember this will no longer be your home. Don't let your personal preferences distract from the property—**keep things simple and neutral in tone. This needs to be anyone's space.**

Take into account how each aspect of each room on your property might catch a buyer's attention:

- Room layouts
- Closets
- Shelving
- Cabinets and drawers
- Hallways
- Garages
- Outdoor areas including your yard

Each of these can have a direct impact on the buyer's decision to put in an offer. Assess each carefully.

If any of your walls are painted bright or potentially distracting colors, consider a neutral tone such as a beige or white. Keep furniture to a minimum at key pieces only. Store the rest away in a [storage facility](#) until the house is sold.

Leave space among each room's belongings for prospective buyers to envision their own furniture or items. Less clutter will also make your rooms look larger, which can be a strong selling point and a determining factor for some buyers.

With the home of your dreams in mind, and a realtor helping you to close the sale, the time to sell your current home is now. As you collect quotes from prospective homebuyers, also collect quotes for the move.

Chapter 3 — Two Months Before: Prepare for the Move

Hire a Moving Team

Unless you're planning on doing all of the moving yourself, you'll want to hire movers to help transport your belongings from old home to new. Do your research and receive recommendations. These are people you'll be trusting with your belongings—you'll want to be sure they'll handle them with care.

Once you have a few moving companies in mind, bring each in for in-home estimates. These can come in many forms:

- **Non-binding estimate:** An estimated cost that could be lower or higher than the actual cost with the cost determined after the final shipment weight.
- **Binding estimate:** An estimate that you are obligated to pay regardless of the final shipment weight.
- **Not-to-exceed estimate:** An estimate based on the lower of two items: a binding estimate or the actual cost. The “not-to-exceed” estimate is the highest amount you will have to pay.

Get any estimates and agreements firmly in writing for record. Compare accordingly, and consider additional moving amenities each may provide (truck, packing supplies, etc).

Evaluate Self-Storage Solutions

Throughout the moving process, you may find a few instances where a self-storage solution is a welcome temporary home for your items. Whether it's [during the staging process](#), or to help break up the move, consider a unit as a place to keep your items safe and secure during the moving process. This could include storing away [fragile items](#) you fear could be easily damaged during the move.

As with movers, compare storage companies and the amenities each can provide. Take a look at unit safety and size, as well as additional storage features you may need depending on the items you select to store.

Once you've found a few area storage facilities that you really like, request quotes from each for a quick financial comparison.

Purchase Moving Supplies, Truck Rentals

If you've decided to have a moving team assist you, they may have their own set of moving supplies to work with, such as a moving truck, boxes and packing materials. If not, or if you decide that you want to tackle the move yourself, [these are all items you will need](#) to make the move successfully. Thankfully, these items are usually readily available at many retail stores, or at a self-storage facility near you.

As with movers and storage solutions, you'll want to compare your materials options for the best fits and bargains.

Each move and person moving is different—be sure to find the right solution for your particular set of items.

Organize Travel Plans

When you actually make the move, there are logistic items that may need to be worked out to get your items from point A to point B. **Have a plan.**

Know which items are going where and how they are getting to their final destinations. **Make lists for both yourself and your movers.**

Consider a system. Whether it's labeling, segmenting or some other technique, stick to a method that makes your boxes and other large items easily identifiable. This prevents confusion when it's moving time. (*More on this is addressed in [Chapter 6.](#)*)

Take into consideration all living beings that you keep under your care in your home—children, pets and plants all require special arrangements or accommodations during the move:

- **Children:** Consider a babysitter for the days of the move, or plan on-site activities to keep the kids occupied.
- **Pets:** Provide special transportation or consider a pet sitter for the actual day of the move until you are able to get settled.
- **Plants:** Research if any special care will be needed during transportation and provide necessary accommodations.

Chapter 4 — One Month Before: Personal Planning

As you begin to plan the move, transfer personal information ahead of time and take note of any changes that need made. Will certain items have to change out of necessity along with your change in location? For example, doctors, hair salons, libraries, etc.

Transfer Personal Information in Advance

- **Utilities:** Contact your utilities company to schedule a final read of all existing utilities for record. This will ensure that you do not get double charged as you move out and a new resident moves in. Take this opportunity to also let them know about your upcoming move, including your new address and new phone number, if applicable.
- **Banks:** Inform the bank of your address change, as it relates to any open accounts and bills.
- **Schools:** If you have children, notify their current and future schools (if applicable) of your address change. Speak with your children's future school about enrollment and obtain any necessary paperwork.
- **Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV):** Visit your local license bureau or contact your local DMV to get the address on your driver's license updated. These laws and forms will vary state by state.
- **Internal Revenue Service (IRS):** Use [this form](#) to update your change of address with the IRS.

- **United States Postal Service (USPS):** Use [this online form](#) to change your address with USPS.
- **Subscriptions:** While your change of address with the USPS should take care of forwarding much of your mail, you'll want to update all magazine subscriptions, as well as newspapers and any other organizations of your address change to ensure that you will receive all in a timely manner.
- **Doctors:** The medical, dental and vision doctors you currently have may be too far away after the move. Look into area physicians and seek out reviews and trusted recommendations for new ones.
- **Voting Records:** Use [this form](#) to update your address on your voter registration. You will use the same form if you ever need to update your last name, or switch political parties.

Understand Insurance Options

Items shift during the move, and try as you might, one of your trusted movers may slip up. **Make sure your high-value items are appraised and insured** in case of loss or damage during the move.

Check with your moving team and see if they offer any type of [liability insurance](#)—just in case. This may be referred to as “valuation coverage” and can come in variety of types. They may require movers to replace an entire item, pay for cost of repair, or pay for a portion of the damaged product's worth.

Know about Tax Deductions

Know what is owed to you come tax time. Don't miss out on an opportunity for a tax deduction.

Under [IRS topic 455](#), certain moving expenses that are the result of a change in location to begin a new job make you eligible for compensation. Do you meet either of the following requirements?

- Your new workplace is at least 50 miles farther from your old home than new home.
- You work full-time at least 39/52 weeks in the first year of your arrival in your new location.

You are also automatically eligible for compensation if your move is the result of strict military order, and a permanent change in your military station. Under this condition, you do not need to meet any additional requirements of distance from home or time served.

First time homebuyers may also enjoy a tax credit as a result of their investment. The IRS provides a [breakdown of first-time homebuyer scenarios](#) and if you can expect a return.

Chapter 5 — Two Weeks Before: Organize & Pack Safely

Make Three Piles

As you commit to the move, evaluate your items and determine the best place for each. Find yourself with three piles:

1. Items to move to your new home right away.
2. Items to self-store.
3. Items to throw away.

If you're unsure of which items to self-store and which to simply get rid of, [ask yourself a few questions](#):

- Does this item have sentimental value? If no—**THROW AWAY**. If yes—**STORE**.
- Can I see myself ever using this item again? If no—**THROW AWAY**. If yes—**STORE**.
- Is this an item my son, daughter or another family member could use in the future? If no—**THROW AWAY**. If yes—**STORE**.

If you have any reservations about throwing an item away, and you fear that you may regret the decision later, it may be best to keep the item and revisit at another time.

As an alternative to throwing away, consider donating unneeded items to a charity or volunteer organization that could really use the items, such as [Habitat for Humanity's ReStore](#) or [GoodWill](#). Some of these organizations may come and pick up items from you for free, so be sure to look into options available.

Acquire The Tools to Pack

Begin by evaluating what you already have on hand. Suitcases, plastic bins, spare boxes and more can serve as ready-made item transporters, perfect for stuffing.

After you've taken a fair assessment of known supplies, find budget-friendly materials to assist with your packing adventure. Consider making a [checklist of the essential items you'll need for packing](#). These items may include:

- Cardboard boxes
- Packing tape
- Packing peanuts
- Markers to label boxes
- Plastic furniture covers
- Bubble wrap
- Plastic mattress bags
- Dish packers
- Glass packers
- Furniture gliders or sliders

Know your items and everything you will need to move each safely from one location to another.

Pack the Non-Essentials

Begin with the non-essentials—those items that you do not need every day—and pack those first. As you start the process, use these tips to [avoid common packing mistakes](#):

- Label all boxes as thoroughly as possible.
- Use the appropriate packing materials for each object.
- Pack lighter boxes (no more than 40-50 pounds per box).
- Bring highly personal or valuable items with you—do not store them on the moving truck and risk loss or damage.

If your items are fragile in nature, take extra care and [prevent damage with proper packing](#):

- Tape all box seams and corners for a sturdy foundation.
- Build a cushion inside the box using bubble wrap or packing peanuts.
- Individually wrap each fragile item that will go into the box, using extra cushion on thin areas, such as wine glass stems.
- Place the heaviest items at the bottom of the box, and lightest on top to avoid items getting crushed.
- Fill empty spaces and air pockets with additional packing peanuts or supplies to avoid items shifting during the move.
- Seal the box and label as “FRAGILE” so those handling the box will know to treat it with particular care.

Clean and Organize Emptied Rooms

After your non-essential items are packed, clean and organize any emptied rooms or spaces. This will keep the rooms tidy if potential buyers are still touring your home.

If the house is sold, this will simply help your space appear more livable for you in the last few weeks of your stay, and less like you're living in a storage unit or someone else's space.

The week before will be crunch time. If you've done the work to prepare, this week should just be a matter of confirming and finalizing move details.

Chapter 6 — One Week Before: Logistics

Review Your Plan

By now you should have travel plans in order for pets, children, plants, movers and more. Give each a review, and make sure all is in proper order and logistics still make sense. If not, update accordingly.

Confirm plans with your family members, movers, storage unit owners, cleaners (to make your place spotless for new residents!) and anyone else that you may see on moving day.

Also confirm all address and phone number changes have been made with the parties outlined in [Chapter 4](#).

Create Your Inventory

Do you have everything you need? Do you know where everything has to go? Be sure. Make a list, or a few lists, of everything you need, as well as everything you own and where it needs to go. Check these thoroughly.

Make two copies of the “own and where it needs to go” list to have on hand during moving day—one copy for you and one copy for the movers.

Pack and Label Boxes

To help with the task, plan to split the massive chore of packing items into boxes across multiple days. This will help make things much more manageable and save you some sanity. As you begin to pack, keep [4 Top Tips to Pack Boxes Like a Pro](#) in mind:

1. **Combine Like Items:** Keep items of a similar shape and variety together, such as separate boxes for plates, for more simplistic packing.
2. **Select the Right Box, For the Right Items:** Not all boxes are created to hold all items. Take weight under consideration and only store items you know the box is capable of holding without breaking the box (or your back!) during the move.
3. **Provide Room for Protective Elements:** You'll want to leave a little space between items in the box to avoid chips and scratches as items collide during the move. Allow for more than air to come between them, however! Add some packing peanuts or other packing supplies to hold items apart but in place.
4. **Play Tetris With Your Items to Box:** As you put belongings into boxes, see the various ways you can arrange items to hold as much as possible within each box (while still keeping total weight in mind).

After you're all packed, it's time to [label your boxes](#). Pick a system, provide details, note weights and differentiate between fragile and non-fragile items to stay organized and save yourself time later. Consider marking the following on a side of each box:

- The room the item will live in at your new home.
- Specific contents of the box.
- Relative weight if particularly light or heavy.

Create Floor Plans

Create floor plans for your movers and use your label system to your advantage. Show the movers visually which boxes belong where in your new space.

Prepare for Moving Day Survival

Once all is in place, prepare your moving day survival kit! This should include the following items:

- Phone numbers for those you will come in contact with on moving day: movers, storage facility owners, family members, cleaners and more.
- Copies of each of your lists and important papers, especially inventory and floor plans.
- Extra packing supplies and tape for last-minute packing supplements.
- Cash tips and any needed toll money for the movers

Additional Items for Consideration

As you take a look at everything that's been put in place, and everything you have left to do, keep the following items in mind as additional items that will need to be taken care of shortly before move-in day:

- Make sure plans are in place with all utility companies for speedy set up.
- Make appointments to get your landline phone number changed, if applicable.
- Change all of the locks and keypad codes at your former residence, and gather together any keys and electronic door openers so you will be able to provide them readily to their new owner.

Chapter 7 — Moving Day: Out with the Old and Into Your New Place

The day has finally arrived—moving day! You’ve prepared well, and we hope everything goes according to your plan. Take a deep breathe, pick up a box, and get excited for the future!

Help Coordinate Day-Of Moving Details

Provide your moving team with their copies of your inventory checklist and home floor plan. Have contact information, your new address and directions all ready to go. Make things as simplistic as possible for your moving team.

Also make things as simplistic as possible for yourself. Before signing any documents from the movers (estimates, order of service, bill of lading, etc.), read all thoroughly and understand their contents.

Check The House Before You Leave

Do a final walk-through of your home once all boxes have been loaded onto the truck. Make sure the movers have not caused any damage and look for any forgotten items.

After your run-through is complete, check all meter readings and write down the current numbers. You may need these to verify future bills for accuracy.

Plan to Arrive Ahead of Schedule

The day before your move, you should meet with your real estate agent and walk through your new house. This way, you will be able to address any broken utilities or other issues before the movers and your items arrive.

Also beat the movers to your new home the day of the move. In doing so, you will be able to help them move all boxes and items to appropriate locations in the space.

Chapter 8 — Post-Move: Settling In

Before opening a single box, clean and dust each room. This will give each area a fresh slate for which to work and build.

As you begin to unpack and settle in, make sure all of your belongings have arrived safe and undamaged. Then, based on your evaluation of utilities, schedule appointments for any that will need set up.

To help break up the unpacking, start with one room and stick to it until completion. Move room to room until the whole house is set up and all items have made their way to their new spaces. Fill closets first, and keep any boxes separate that may need to be stored off-site after all unpacking is complete.

Finally, after all is set up, walk through your new home, and appreciate the finished product of your hard work.

Congratulations on a successful move!
Welcome home.

About Security Self Storage

For three generations, [Security Self Storage](#) has run as a family-owned and operated company with an emphasis on quality self-storage solutions and the highest regard to customer service, including 24 hour available access and free valet service for your items from your home to your storage unit.

Founded in 1983, Security Self Storage is Ohio's only two-time National Facility of the Year Award winner, and was recently named [News Herald's 2013 best of the best](#) storage facility.

Built on a strong foundation of honor, trust and fairness, Security Self Storage is located at 30525 Aurora Rd., Solon OH 44139.

Specializing in a variety of storage unit sizes and types, Security Self Storage has a unit for every storage need including recreational vehicle storage, wine storage and items that require climate-controlled environments—all locked up with a suite of [premium security features](#) to keep your most valuable assets safe and secure.

For more on Security Self Storage's self-storage solutions, be sure to visit the [Security Self Storage website](#), fan on [Facebook](#), or follow on Twitter ([@NEOSelfStorage](#)).



About the Author

Norm Kotoch, Jr. is president of Security Self Storage, Ltd, a family-owned company started by his father. In his role, Norm oversees day-to-day operations and corporate sales for Security Self Storage location in Solon, Ohio.

Always putting the customer first, Norm makes himself available before and after standard business hours and on weekends to meet customer needs, and address any self-storage questions or concerns on their time and schedules.

Norm guides his team to an unparalleled 24/7 commitment to the customer by embodying the foundations of honor, trust and fairness in his own work, leadership and approach to taking care of the customer and their treasured items.

Connect with Norm on [LinkedIn](#), or follow Norm on Twitter ([@NormKotoch](#)).

