

Tips to Downsize and Pack to Move

How to Prioritize Your Belongings and Make Your Move Easy

Downsizing and packing a family home can be overwhelming and stressful. But if you take your time and focus your efforts, you will be able to confidently make decisions and make the process work for you. Here are the steps to take and things to consider as you begin.

MAKE A PLAN.

- Start by making sure all your affairs are sorted. Consult a lawyer and estate planner to arrange an estate sale and trust, and to update your will.
- Set yourself a timeline to operate in by identifying your needed pace, setting your goals and making sure you give yourself enough time to schedule necessary services.
- Check with family and friends to see if they're willing to provide help.
- Create a moving folder. This will be your place to collect information you need to access during the whole process such as addresses, rental or purchase papers, moving papers, lists and other items.
- Weather can impact your planning. Make sure that you schedule in weather breaks depending on your needs.
- Measure your new space (The Windsor of Savoy offers floor plans you can view on our website) and consider the new lifestyle you're looking forward to.
- Take inventory of your belongings. Don't forget the everyday items that are easy to take for granted like plants, wall hangings, furniture and appliances.
- Take photos of your home as it is now. Not only will this help you remember your cherished space, but the pictures could help you take a different view of each room and decide where you need to focus your time during decluttering and downsizing.
- Decide which rooms can be decluttered and downsized first, based on how frequently you use them or the items in them.

- Go through each room in your house and make a list of the things you absolutely must keep. It may help to write down everything in the room and then arrange and refine your list by writing down what you use every day, what you use occasionally, what you never use and what you keep for sentimental or financial reasons.
- If you're really feeling lost or overwhelmed, there are many self-help books and articles at your local library or online that are designed to help you declutter and downsize. There are also professional organizers and moving managers who can assist you. Contact the Leasing Office at The Windsor of Savoy for local resources.

DECLUTTER.

- The goal of decluttering is to help you organize your belongings, make easy decisions of what to let go and focus your plan on downsizing.
- Don't try to do it all at once. Only go through one room's items at a time and break it up over however many days you need to. This helps to keep you focused and makes the process feel more approachable.
- Set aside working times of 15-20 minutes and take true breaks in between.
- If you run across an item that brings you joy or good memories, take time to cherish it.
- Focus on one area in each room at a time and get through it before moving on to the next area.
- Set aside items which have been moved into the room but don't belong there, so you can later move them back into the room where they belong.
- If you have duplicates of something, consider keeping one and letting the others go by gifting, donating or selling them.



- It may help to conquer this task by making a game of it. Try dividing your room up by identifying similar items to tidy/organize or giving yourself points for every item you decide to let go of.
 - When you're going through papers, here are some things to consider:
 - Make sure you have good lighting so you can see and read everything.
 - Work on a table that you can spread things out on.
 - Make three piles: save pile, shred pile for personal information and garbage/recycling pile.
 - As you go through photographs, consider labeling them on the back. If you can't remember what or who is in the photo, consider letting it go.
 - Questions to ask yourself about papers and photographs:
 - Is there a specific time you would use this information again?
 - How hard would it be for you to get this information again if you needed it?
 - How recent is this information?
 - Is it worth your time to file this information and deal with it again?

DOWNSIZE.

- The goal is to keep your favorite, most valuable and most necessary items, but to separate out the rest by deciding what goes to family, friends, charity, sale or garbage/recycling.
- Work in one room at a time, one area at a time.
- Create three piles: Keep, Toss or Give/Sell. Looking at your inventory list may help you to decide which item goes in which pile.
- Let go of anything that won't have a designated space within your new home.
- If you have items that have value or are in good shape, but you no longer need them, donating them to charity or including them in a yard or estate sale is an excellent option.
- If you haven't used the item in a year or more and it isn't necessary or sentimental, consider letting it go.
- Be kind to yourself during this process. It is common to feel anxiety or stress when organizing the items in your life. But if you focus on what you actually use and things you truly love, you may find the decision-making process to be easier than you think.

ORGANIZE.

- Once the downsizing process has been finished, you can organize your remaining belongings and plan to pack for the move.
 - Just like before, focus on only one room at a time.
 - Make a new inventory list for each room. It may be helpful to arrange the items by how they need to be packed or loaded onto the moving truck. Not only will this help you identify what materials you'll need to pack each room, but it will also give you a comprehensive list which you can both provide to your moving company, if you are using one, and for you to keep on hand in case you need to locate an item after you move.
- Separate the essentials that you'll need soon after the move and set them aside to be packed and loaded last.
- Make a list of how many boxes you'll need, the sizes of boxes, and whether the items in the room need to be wrapped in plastic, paper or other packing materials.
- Ensure your necessary reservations are made, like moving truck, movers or other services you plan to use.
- Consider making yourself a checklist of things to purchase and rooms to pack.
- Make sure you have all the packing and labelling supplies you'll need: tape, boxes, labels, markers, plastic wrap, and other packing materials like paper, peanuts, foam or bubble wrap.

PACK AND MOVE.

- Start by packing the items you won't need for a while and start as early as possible.
- Color code boxes by room for quick unloading.
- Pack similar items together.
- Make sure as you pack each box that its contents are not too heavy for the box to support.
- Don't leave empty spaces in boxes that will be stacked. Stuff crumpled paper or other packing material into empty spaces you can't fill.
- Towels, blankets and throw rugs make excellent padding for fragile items.

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- Label each box with its contents and the room it will go to.
- Keep essential items in separate boxes that are loaded last and easy to access.
- Make sure larger items like furniture and appliances are loaded first.
- When loading, make sure the heavy boxes are loaded on the bottom, with lighter boxes on top.
- Take your time, get help when needed, take deep breaths – and enjoy the new journey to your new home.

