



Relocation tips

From evaluating schools to a pre-move checklist, you'll find everything you need to know before relocating in this guide.

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Shorten your Career Transition

Relocation tips

We've scoured the internet and brought you the best relocation guide available, so you can focus on what's really important, your career search!

This information and educational resource, published by [Weichert Relocation Resources Inc.](#), has already helped thousands of relocating employees and their families get the most out of their relocation experience.

Evaluating Schools

- Ask your agent for his or her impressions of the school districts in your destination area. You probably will be able to narrow the field to a few communities that offer quality schools and reasonable proximity to work and local amenities.
- Think about creative options if you find you can't afford a suitable home in a top school community. You might opt to rent in the community temporarily, or you might consider buying in a different community and sending your children to private school.
- Take note of the education level of adults in potential neighborhoods (available through Flashpoint®). There's a close correlation between parents' educational achievement and the quality of local schools.
- Contact the state department of education for additional, objective school and student performance information. For very detailed school information, you can purchase comprehensive school reports from several companies.
- Consider these objective measures in evaluating schools:
 - State rankings
 - Class sizes
 - Teacher salaries
 - Per pupil expenditures
 - Library volumes/funding
 - Accreditations and awards
 - State proficiency test scores
 - SAT and other scores
 - Percentage graduating; percentage going on to college.
- Do conduct objective research, but remember that it's critical that you visit any prospective school. If school administrators are unwilling to meet with you, you should be concerned. Ask about teachers' credentials, discuss the school's educational philosophy and tour the facilities. Check to see if the school offers activities and sports that are important to your children.
- Remember that a school might seem impressive by the numbers, but still not be right for your child. It could be so large that he or she gets lost or so small that it lacks programs or activities that are important to you. You must be the ultimate judge.

Moving with Children

All Children

- Involve the whole family in the move process as early as possible. Tell children why you're moving in a way they can understand.
- Share information about the new area, communities and homes you are considering. Point out local attractions that are of particular interest, such as beaches, theme parks and zoos.



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- Remember that children will pick up on your emotions. If you or your spouse/partner are apprehensive about the move, try to keep these feelings from the children and present a united, positive front.
- Encourage and maintain a dialogue. Children don't necessarily act out in response to a move. Some might become quiet or withdrawn, or show no apparent concern. Probe beneath the surface, to make sure they've absorbed this information.
- Watch for any acute sadness, moodiness and anger. These emotions are normal for a time, but if you notice changes in appetite, insomnia or other drastic changes, this can be a sign of depression. If your child is exhibiting these symptoms, he or she should be evaluated by a mental health professional.
- Expect it to take up to several months for children to adjust to a new home (longer for older children).

Younger Children

- Be patient and reassuring. Younger children might not understand the concept of moving. They might believe you will be returning to the home soon, or that you'll be leaving the home's contents—or even them—behind.
 - Help your children to close one chapter of their young lives and open a new one. Encourage them to say good-bye to friends and exchange phone numbers and e-mail addresses. At the same time, gently help them focus on the future.
 - Pack younger children's' belongings last and unpack them first. Remember to hold out a few favorite toys, stuffed animals and clothing items. When you arrive, let younger children help you to unpack, arrange and decorate their rooms.
 - Expect younger children to temporarily become more dependent on you. Tantrums or tears might become more frequent, potty training might lapse and children might temporarily develop new fears.
- Encourage children to share their anxieties with you. Keep an even closer eye on their schoolwork than normal. You might want to accompany them to school for the first few days.
- Help children form new friendships. Ask them to tell you about the children they meet and try to arrange simple outings with one or two new friends for ice cream or another treat.



Older Children/Teens

- Set your older, computer-glued children loose on the Web to do some advance reconnaissance on the area. This helps to get them more involved and excited and can provide useful information for the whole family.
- Give teens reasonable control over their bedroom decor. While you might have to swallow hard, this traditional teen refuge becomes even more important during a time of upheaval.
- Encourage teens to get involved in favorite activities in the new location. With close ties to friends, school and activities; they can have a particularly hard time with moving. Sports can provide a sense of continuity and community as well as reducing stress.

Packing Household Goods

If Your Goods Are Being Professionally Moved



- Don't pack any household goods that will be transported by a professional moving company, unless directed otherwise. The moving professionals will carefully pack your items and record a complete inventory of goods and condition. If you pack boxes yourself, moving companies may not assume liability for breakage or damage.
- Use up as much food as you can before the move. While packaged, non-refrigerated food items can be moved, know that moving vans can become quite hot or cold, and items like cans of soda might even

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explode.

- Plan to leave behind hazardous goods, as moving companies will not transport them. In addition to obvious hazards, such as gasoline cans and propane tanks, these include paints, aerosol cans and many everyday cleaning products.
- Keep small, valuable items with you. These include prescription medicines, important papers and documents, jewelry, family heirlooms and prized photographs.
- Note that if you're moving abroad, your benefits might include a small allowance for air shipment and a larger allowance for sea shipment. The small air allowance is for clothing and other small, personal goods. Sea shipping is used for heavier household goods.

If You're Moving Your Own Goods

- Allow plenty of time for packing. To make the project less overwhelming, try to pack a few boxes a day, beginning with seldom-used items.
- Avoid using boxes rescued from the supermarket or office for moving. They can easily break or tear, exposing your goods to damage. Moving boxes can be a bit pricey, but they are heavy-duty cartons, designed to withstand the bumps and jolts inherent in moving. They also can be had in many custom sizes and configurations, such as hanging wardrobe boxes and dish packs with separate compartments for glasses.
- Speed your settling-in process by wrapping items with moving paper (and bubble wrap, for fragile items) rather than newspaper. You also can use your towels, sheets and linens to wrap delicate items. The goods will arrive clean and ready to use.
- Pack heavy items, such as books and canned goods, in small boxes. Try to keep boxes to 50 pounds or less.
- Put stereo components, TVs, and other electronics in their original boxes, if you still have them.
- Label boxes clearly. Mark the destination room and number each box. Keep a separate sheet that details the contents of each box by number. Check numbers off as the boxes come into your home. This is a bit more work, but it will make it much easier to find things and ensure that nothing is missing.
- Pack a "survival kit" for the first day in the new home. This could include a portable radio or TV; a coffee maker and coffee; disposable plates, cups and silverware; a knife; a bottle opener/corkscrew; bed linens and toiletries.

Moving With Pets

- Show pets extra love and attention before, during and after the move. They will sense that something is up almost as soon as you accept the relocation.
- Be aware that dogs are usually more comfortable with travel and change than cats. Dogs will generally relax as long as they're with you; cats are higher strung and will take longer to adapt.
- Schedule a visit to your veterinarian before the move. You can discuss the move, get advice tailored for your pet and take care of any necessary vaccinations or medications. Ask for copies of health records and for a veterinary referral in the new location.
- Keep your pet's health documents with your other important papers during the final move. Make sure you have sufficient pet supplies and a leash for walks along the way. Bring your pet's favorite bedding and toys, along with any needed medications.
- Research issues associated with moving pets abroad. Some countries impose lengthy quarantine requirements; others require extensive inoculations; and still others deny animals entry outright. If your assignment is for a specific term, you might want to leave your pet with a friend or relative.
- Try to have your pet travel with you to the new location. Both you and he will feel more secure.
- Acclimate your pet to car trips before the move, if he will be driving with you. If pets are truly uncomfortable or fidgety, they might have to be crated or sedated for the journey. Consult your vet for advice.



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- Plan to stop more frequently for relaxation and exercise than you might otherwise. If you're making a multiple-day car journey, make reservations at a pet-friendly hotel in advance.
- Don't leave pets unattended in cars. During summer, the temperature in a parked car can quickly reach 120 degrees.
- Set up a comfortable, secure area for your pet as soon as possible. Make it as similar to the previous spot as possible. Try to re-establish normal routines, such as meal times and walks, for your pets.
- Keep even an "outside" cat indoors until she is accustomed to the new house (this might take a month or more). Homesick cats have been known to walk hundreds of miles back to the departure location! Dogs, on the other hand, need to explore the new home inside and out immediately.

Preparing To Move

Four to Six Weeks Before the Move:



- Notify your landlord, if applicable.
 - Begin researching your new location, using Flashpoint, information from your destination real estate agent, local Chambers of Commerce and other resources.
 - Go through your closets, basement, attic and other storage areas. If you have boxes of goods that have been moved from place to place without ever being unpacked, take a hard look at whether or not you really need the contents.
 - Donate unneeded items to charity or have a yard sale.
 - Consider using light fixtures, custom draperies, older appliances, etc. as sale negotiation tools, rather than moving them.
 - Begin packing less-used items, if you are moving your own household goods.
 - Run down your inventories of perishables, cleaning products and other items that can't be moved.
- Complete change of address forms for subscriptions, bills, etc.
 - Contact your homeowner's and automobile insurance agents; transfer or cancel coverage.
 - Arrange to have utilities disconnected at your old location and connected at your new one. Keep your current utilities and telephone line operational throughout the move.
 - Request any refunds due you: security deposits, club dues, etc.
 - Take pets to the vet for a checkup and referral in the new location.
 - Have your carpeting cleaned, if needed.
 - Register your children for school.

Two to Four Weeks before the Move:

- Plan your travel to the new location.
- Notify any service providers of your move (newspaper, cleaning services, landscapers, pool service, snow plow, etc.)
- Gather important documents, including school, medical, dental and veterinary records; automobile documents; insurance policies, wills, and securities; etc.
- Open new bank accounts at the destination (this usually can be done on the Web or by mail). Arrange for transfer of your current accounts.
- Have your car serviced.
- Arrange for use of the elevator on moving day, if you live in an elevator building.



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- Research motor vehicle requirements in the new location.
- Speak with your doctor and dentist; ask for referrals in your destination area. Ask the doctors to transfer your records. If you're relocating abroad, ask if you or your family need any special vaccinations.

One Week before the Move:

- Return borrowed goods, rental videos, library books, etc.
- Gather any goods stored with friends or relatives. Pick up dry cleaning, items at the tailor shop, etc.
- Fill any prescriptions.
- Defrost and clean refrigerator/freezer.
- Arrange for babysitting on moving day.
- Complete local banking. Withdraw needed cash; arrange for transfer of balance, and empty safe deposit boxes.
- Empty gas and oil from power tools (lawn mowers, snow blowers, etc.).
- Notify destination rental or condominium management when you plan to move in, if applicable. Make sure elevator is reserved.

Day Before The Move

- If you're driving to the destination, pack a "survival kit" for the first day in the new home (portable radio or TV; a coffee maker and coffee; disposable plates, cups and silverware; a knife and bottle opener/corkscrew; hammer, screwdrivers and other basic tools; bed linens and toiletries).
- Place any items that aren't to be packed by the packing crew in a clearly marked, separate room or area. You or someone trusted should supervise the packing.
- Set aside games, stuffed animals and other amusements for children.
- Assemble and set aside important papers and valuables that will travel with you.
- Leave appliance manuals and other house-related papers on the kitchen counter.

Move-out Day:



- Plan to stay with the movers. You will need to sign off on the bill of lading and inventory (including the condition of goods upon departure). Keep copies until the move is complete and goods are unpacked.
- Ensure that your house is empty before the truck leaves. The house should be "broom clean," with no trash or debris.
- Be sure the house is secure. Leave keys with your real estate agent or rental manager.

Move-in Day:

- Clarify when the movers are arriving and be prepared to meet them. You might want to pick up sandwiches, snacks, soda, juice, milk and other basics on your way to the new home, since you won't be able to leave the house until the move-in is completed.
- Make sure utilities are connected and that major systems are operating.
- Unpack your "Survival Kit" so you're more comfortable.
- Check off each item on your inventory form as it is brought into your home. Note any damaged or missing items.
- If you're arriving as a family, one partner might want to take the children off to a movie or other activity while the goods are being delivered.
- Try to set up children's rooms and pet areas first.

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Post Move-in:

- Take care of driver's licenses and auto registration. Most states have limited grace periods to transfer registrations, and a local driver's license will simplify many transactions.
- Arrange for newspaper, alarm and other services.
- Register to vote.
- Don't feel that everything has to be perfectly arranged immediately. Allow some family down time. You've been through a lot!

Evaluating New Communities and Homes

Evaluating New Communities

- Use FlashPoint to research new communities even before your first visit. This easy-to-use program includes reliable information on schools, crime, houses of worship and many other community characteristics. Your Relocation Counselor will tell you more about this comprehensive, easy-to-use resource.
- Ask your new co-workers where they live and how they feel about it. Their first-hand knowledge of housing costs, commuting times and local amenities can help you get behind statistics and narrow the field.
- Take advantage of your AR/WGR's local expertise. He or she will usually provide a "welcome packet" of local information and an overview tour of possible communities.
- Contact local chambers of commerce for more information, including contact information for local clubs and associations.
- Chat with some of your potential neighbors to get their impressions of the neighborhood.
- Relocating abroad can present different living options. In some places, you may opt to live in an expatriate area or choose to live among local nationals. In others, security concerns might dictate a more closed community. Rely on the judgment of your WGR; he or she is a local expert and will present the most appropriate options.
- Try to get a sense of everyday life in a potential neighborhood. Is there a supermarket nearby? How is public transportation? How close is the area to major highways and your new workplace? Is it simple to reach attractions and amenities that are important to you?



Evaluating Homes

- Avoid new construction when you're being relocated. Homes are rarely completed on schedule, and you could find yourself in a costly, stressful temporary housing limbo. Moreover, since new construction usually sells at a premium, you could lose money if you need to move again soon.
- Consider more modest homes in prized communities rather than elaborate homes in less distinguished communities. Homes in more desirable communities appreciate in value more reliably and sell more quickly. They generally give your family access to superior schools and community amenities as well.



- Develop a list of "musts" in your new home and other nice-but-not-essential features. Be cautious in considering swimming pools, elaborate landscaping and other high-maintenance amenities.
- Evaluate "fixer-uppers" carefully. If a well-priced property needs just a facelift of new carpeting, paint and appliances, it can be a good deal. If

it needs more extensive work, be sure that you know what is needed and how much the work will cost. Also be certain that you have the time and inclination to see the project through. Your agent can offer more advice.

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- Consider homes with three or more bedrooms and condos with two or more bedrooms. They have greater appreciation potential and sell faster than smaller properties. Look for two or more bathrooms. Homes with one bathroom can be difficult to resell.
- Make sure the house meets all of your needs. Are there enough bedrooms? Are the rooms large enough for your furnishings? If you like to entertain does the space flow well? Is the kitchen modern and efficient? Is there space for children to play?
- Consider purchasing a home if you're a renter moving from a high cost of living area to a less expensive area.
- Be sure you're at ease with potential mortgage payments, and that you can comfortably afford to make the home your own. Your personal tolerance for debt might be lower than what you can technically afford.
- Note that living arrangements in other countries might not exactly mirror your current housing arrangement. For example, American homes, furnishings and yards tend to be much larger than those in Europe and Asia. Your Global Accredited Representative will present options that meet your needs and your company's policy.

Evaluating Rental Properties

- Determine your priorities. If you have children, you will want to seek a rental property in a community with excellent schools. If you are childless and active, you probably will be more interested in the apartment's proximity to local cultural, recreational, and entertainment facilities.
- Make sure that the development's focus (if any) is compatible with your lifestyle. Some properties are targeted to specific audiences, such as young singles or a more mature 50+ audience.
- Be sure that you're aware of, and comfortable with, any restrictions on the use of your space. These can include pet prohibitions, bans on barbecue grills or balcony furnishings, restricted parking, prescribed "quiet hours" and many more.
- Consider visiting a development in the evening, to get a more realistic reading on neighbors and noise levels. What seemed like a quiet oasis during the day could turn into a fraternity party at night.



- Inspect on-site fitness facilities, if this amenity is important to you. Does the area contain the equipment you use? Is the equipment in good repair? Are there enough machines to go around? Are locker rooms clean?
 - Make sure you understand all of the terms of your rental agreement: the amount and due date of the rent, the duration of the rental, the conditions of occupancy and the rights and obligations of both parties.
 - Ask your landlord to include a relocation clause in your rental agreement, so that if you are relocated during the lease term, you can terminate the agreement with reasonable notice.
- Be aware that in some cases, leases automatically renew, unless one of the parties cancels the agreement. More frequently, the tenancy converts to a month-to-month status. Under these agreements, either party may end the tenancy with proper notice (usually 30 days). Landlords can also increase the rent; again, with proper notice.
 - Streamline the rental process and protect your financial health. Order a copy of your credit report in advance and correct any errors. Almost all landlords will order a credit check before renting you an apartment, and studies have shown that 30 to 50 percent of credit reports contain significant errors.
 - Ask people who can attest to your stability and strengths as a renter to write you a letter of recommendation (or at least alert them that a landlord will be calling).

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