



The Ultimate Pre-Move Checklist: 10 Steps to a Stellar Family Move

Moving your home is one of the most stressful things you'll ever do. That is, of course, if you do it without a checklist. Whether you're moving down the block or across the ocean, keeping a checklist is a surefire way to preserve your sanity in the midst of (seemingly endless) turbulence and frustration. It will also help you stay on-time and on-budget -- maximizing your efficiency and making your transition smoother than your crying baby's bottom. Below is everything you need to remember to do before you move, neatly classified and bulleted for optimal convenience and organizational bliss:

1. Your Kids

- **Set up non-academic/after-school childcare services** (e.g., daycare, summer camp, piano lessons, Taekwondo). These are typically private businesses that only accept a finite number of children, so the earlier you lock down your spot the better.
- **Register your kid(s) for school.** Proof of Residence, health/physical forms and your child's current school records must be transferred to your new school district.

2. Your Local Services

- **Cancel any local memberships/services** (e.g., landscaping services, the gym membership, dog walker). This is doubly important if you've set up automatic payment plans with these businesses. Canceling at least 60 days in advance will ensure your payments are stopped before you relocate.

3. Your Money

- **Open a new bank account.** *If* your situation calls for a bank switch, finding a new bank and opening an account with a minimum starting balance should be your next priority.
- **Cancel bank-sponsored online bill-pays.** Moving will inevitably require you to rearrange some (if not all) of your service providers (e.g., cable, heat/air, electric). If you're paying for these services automatically via your checking account, be sure to discontinue the payments ahead of time to avoid getting charged for someone else's utility use.
- **Set up direct deposit at work.** Remember, if you have a new bank *and* a new job, you'll usually need a check from your new account to get this going.

4. Your Health

- **Find a new pediatrician/OB-GYN.** You can utilize your health insurance roster as well as trusted mommy networks to find a reputable professional.
- **Send your medical records to your new doctor.** This requires filling out a release form and should be completed about 30 days prior to your move.
- **Refill prescriptions.** If you or anyone in your family is running low on their medication, refill it and forget it. You'll feel better knowing everyone in your family is covered during this transitional period.

5. Your Address

- **Officially change your United States address HERE.**
- **Inform businesses of your address change** (e.g., newspapers/magazines, financial organizations, old job/school, insurance providers, charities, the IRS). You can order new address labels to help you do this more efficiently or, if your specific service permits, update your address online.

6. Your Entertainment

- **Update your cable plan.** Some cable providers are only available in certain areas. If you're moving to a city that isn't supported by your current provider, you'll have to cancel your subscription and sign-up elsewhere.

7. Your Vote

- **Register to vote.** This is one of the easiest ways to establish residency in a new state -- something you typically must do before enrolling in school or participating in other public services. Google "voter registration in [your new state]" to get started.

8. Your Driver's License

- **Register your car(s) in your new state, county or city.** Doing so ahead of time can save you several monotonous hours at the DMV later.

9. Your Utilities

- **Set up/cancel utilities as needed** (e.g. electricity, landline, cell phone, cable, gas, Internet, water). If you've executed this list in order, this point may be redundant. However, the money and time you'll save yourself by double checking is worth it.

10. Your Move

- **Reconfirm moving arrangement.** Call your moving company 1-2 weeks before the big day. Make sure they have your old and new addresses and that your contact information is correct.
- **Prepare payment.** Movers will accept a cashier's check or money order as payment (and a ten percent cash tip is considered industry-standard). Also, consider providing Gatorade and water for your moving crew. This is especially tactful during hotter months and will not go unnoticed.
- **Consider cleaning services.** Because the last thing you want to do after a grueling move is *clean*.
- **Arrange travel/hotel accommodations.** If a long-distance move is going to displace you for a night or two, give some thought to where you'd like to stay during the transition. If circumstances permit, consider taking a "mini-vacation" to pass the time. After a stressful move, there's nothing like a simple retreat to clear your mind and start fresh, wherever that may be.