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Ten Steps for an Easier Move...

10. Start Early - End Happy

It's never too early to begin the downsizing process. Begin by focusing on typical problem areas such as the attic, basement, garage, closets, and file cabinets.

9. Get Generous

Since you can't and don't want to take everything you own to your new home, now is the time to make arrangements to give some of your treasures to special people in your life including family, helpful neighbors, friends, favorite non-profits, or a church/ synagogue.

8. Save Your Memories

You may have boxes of old photos from every holiday, vacation and birthday party attended. What do you do with them? Consider the following ways to preserve family photos and stories: Copy your special photos to digital formats for cloud storage, or try your hand at scrapbooking. Services now exist that will take all your photos, slides, and videos and do it for you.

7. New Looks for Books

If you own large quantities of books, you need to spend time downsizing your collections. Books occupy lots of space and are heavy and expensive to move. Consider donations to libraries, schools, senior centers, or sell to used bookstores. Call on a book dealer for older books with potential value.

6. Use It Up. . .Don't Move It Out

Take an inventory of your canned goods, frozen foods, and paper products. Plan to use as many of these products as you can before moving. If you simply have too many of these items, think about passing them on to a local food pantry.

5. Recycle the Toxins

Take time to put together a box or two of household, yard, and automotive products, including paint, that are considered hazardous. Find information on hazardous material collection in your area.

4. Don't Lose Touch

Create a list of people, places, and utilities/services that need to be notified of your upcoming change in address.

3. Space Plan Ahead

A floor plan of your new space will help you determine the pieces of furniture that will fit in your new home, and the best location of each. Knowing which pieces will fit in your new space will help you in your rightsizing process.

2. Pack a Survival Bag

Put together a survival bag for moving day. It might include personal needs (medications, eyeglasses, toiletries, change of clothes, important papers, etc.); kitchen needs (snacks, drinks, folding chair, disposable cups plates); basic tools (hammer, screwdriver, flashlight, tape, etc.); cleaning supplies (sponge, roll of paper towels, soap, etc.); and payment for the movers – be sure you know which form of payment they accept.

1. Ask For Help

Don't be too proud or independent-minded to ask for help. Moving is not easy and you shouldn't have to do it all yourself. But -- don't wait until the last minute to ask for help. Some of these downsizing steps require weeks or months to accomplish.