MINIMIZING MOVING STRESS

If you're feeling overwhelmed by your mounting to-do list, don't worry—it's perfectly normal to feel stressed or anxious about your upcoming relocation. There are a number of things you can do to minimize your moving stress. Here are 12 common tactics:

1. Start early

Start planning your move and accumulating packing supplies as soon as you can. The more lead time you allow yourself, the more flexibility you'll have if something goes wrong or if you forget to do something. If you have time, **try to give yourself 8-9 weeks to plan and prepare**.

2. Make a plan

Make a list of everything you need to accomplish before you move, create a schedule with deadlines, and stick to it.

Budgeting for your move is another important part of planning your relocation. A moving budget makes it easier to accurately track your expenses and keep your costs low.

3. Declutter

Minimizing your belongings before you move can bring you some much-needed relief and kickstart the packing process - not to mention lower the cost of your move. **Start by decluttering your storage areas, like closets and pantries.**

4. Pack smart

One of the most efficient ways to pack is to go room-by-room. Start with rooms you use less frequently, and finish up by packing away high-traffic spaces like your kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom. As you pack each box, give it a number and take note of what you pack inside. Keeping an inventory as you pack will help you find any items you might need along the way.

> **PRO TIP:** *Label your boxes according to room so your friends or movers know where to put the box after unloading it. Color code your boxes with markers or tape to make it even easier!*

5. Do your research

If you're moving bulky or valuable items, do some online research to find the best way to move these pieces. You should also ask your moving company (if you hired one) about how to prepare your heavy, bulky, or expensive furniture before your movers are due to arrive.

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6. Stock up on supplies

Before you start packing, make sure you have all the supplies you'll need, including tape and tape dispensers, markers, moving blankets, and other moving equipment. Retailers like grocery, liquor, or wholesale stores are great resources for heavy-duty boxes. You can also pick up a moving kit that contains all the necessary tools and equipment for your move.

7. Protect your valuables

Store or pack your valuables in a well-guarded location, such as on your person, and move them yourself - your movers probably don't want to do it anyway.

8. Ask for help

Even if you don't need help actually moving your stuff to your new place, ask your family and friends to help you sort and pack; in addition to lightening your load, it's also a great opportunity to spend some quality time together. If you have pets or children, ask family or friends to take care of them for the day, or hire a sitter.

9. Hire movers

If you have a lot of stuff, are moving long distance, or simply don't want to worry about the hassle of loading and unloading your stuff, hire movers. That way, you won't have to worry about doing any heavy lifting or navigating the roads in a large, heavy truck you aren't familiar with. Plus, a professional moving service will get the job done much quicker than you can.

10. Take care of yourself

Try to maintain your normal routine as much as possible, make sure you get enough sleep, and eat well. Don't feel guilty about taking time out to do things you like. If you have kids, make sure they have a chance to pursue their own interests as well.

11. Make sure you have everything you need on moving day

Keeping essentials like your ID, cash, medications, and chargers handy can help reduce your stress when moving day arrives.

12. Research your new town

Moving somewhere new can be scary, especially if you're moving on your own. Before you go, do a little research and find out what kinds of fun things your new home has to offer, like restaurants, festivals, sports leagues, or other organizations you can get involved with.