

HIRING MOVERS VS. MOVING YOURSELF

If you're moving, the first thing you'll need to decide is whether to hire a moving service or rent a truck and move yourself.

Start by determining your priorities. What matters more—your money or your time?

Hiring movers usually costs more, but it takes less time and effort. Renting a truck may be cheaper, but it comes with the added work of loading and unloading your belongings, as well as hidden costs you may not have considered.

To help make your decision, ask yourself three questions:

1. How far are you moving?

Whether you hire movers or rent a truck, distance will factor into your moving rates in terms of **how long your move will take** (especially if your movers charge hourly), and for **how long you'll need to rent a truck**, plus an estimate for **gas and mileage**.

***PRO TIP:** If you do decide to rent a truck, remember that one-way long-distance moves can actually cost more than a round-trip relocation. Truck rental companies can add additional fees if you want to drop your truck off in a different city than where you picked it up.*

2. How much stuff do you have to move?

If you **don't have much to move** or your **belongings aren't heavy**, moving yourself might be manageable without professional help.

If you're moving **heavy furniture, lots of boxes, or valuables** like antiques or heirlooms, movers are often your best bet.

3. Do you have the physical ability to move all your stuff?

If you're considering moving yourself, you need to be physically able to bend over, lift, and carry your boxes and furniture to your truck. You'll definitely need a couple of strong, capable friends to help you out. If you're injured or have any health concerns, hire movers.



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WHEN TO RENT A TRUCK

1. **If your belongings aren't especially valuable.** If you have a few valuable or bulky pieces but would prefer not to hire movers, consider shipping them separately.
2. **If you have lots of trustworthy, committed, and able-bodied friends** who can help you out.
3. **If you aren't moving very far**, and making multiple trips (if necessary) won't pose a problem.

WHEN TO HIRE MOVERS

Peace of Mind

When you hire a professional moving service, you can rest assured that your belongings will be packed safely and securely. Professional movers are also more accountable to you if your stuff does get damaged. And unlike your friends and family, reputable movers won't back out on you at the last minute.

Moving fragile or valuable items? You may wish to ship them separately. Professional shipping companies know how to treat items that require special care and will ensure that your belongings make it to their new home in one piece.

No Heavy Lifting

Packing and moving heavy boxes and furniture without the proper tools and training can easily lead to injury. If you have an injury or other health condition that prevents you from doing any heavy lifting, hiring movers is likely your best bet.

Speed

Professional movers are prompt and efficient, and they also have the expertise to navigate tricky situations like stairway corners quicker and easier than you and your friends.

No Imposition

When you hire movers, you don't have to worry about imposing on your loved ones or working around their schedules.

More Time for Other Tasks

While your moving service manages the loading and unloading of your belongings, you can tackle other moving day tasks like unpacking, cleaning your new place, and sorting out your utilities.

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Equipment

Movers will bring the right size truck and all the required tools and supplies to manage your move from start to finish, such as moving blankets, dollies, and straps.

PRO TIP: Confirm there are no additional fees for using these tools, or make sure any additional fees are included in the contract before you sign.



Insurance

All moving services are required to include basic carrier liability. You can also purchase additional insurance, whether you hire movers or move yourself. Some truck rental companies offer insurance - be sure to ask before you book.

HOW TO HIRE MOVERS

1. Determine the basics

Take stock of what you have to move, including the number of boxes and what types of furniture you have, and figure out how far your move is. Both of these things will factor heavily into your moving price.



2. Know what kind of mover you need

Are you moving within the same town or state, or are you moving out of state or cross-country? Local movers won't be capable of handling an out-of-state move, and long-distance movers won't book an in-town move. The rates for each type of move will also differ.

Most moving companies define a long-distance move as one that is more than 100 miles from your old to new place. Often, long-distance movers will quote based on weight rather than distance or time.

3. Get recommendations

Ask your friends and family for recommendations on the best moving companies, and consult review sites like Yelp, Shopper Approved, and My Moving Reviews before you book. Facebook is another good place to find recent reviews for moving companies in your area. If you used a realtor, they can also help connect you with a reputable moving service.

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4. Call for quotes

Get quotes from 3-5 different moving companies before you book. For interstate moves, get a binding estimate. You can't get a binding estimate for moves within the same state, but you can get a written estimate that clearly outlines additional costs and hourly rates.

If possible, get an in-person quote or do a video survey of your move. It's more accurate, and the inspector may be able to point out items that will require special consideration or which may increase the cost of moving.

5. Keep your eyes peeled for moving scams

The best way to protect yourself against moving scams, such as holding your stuff hostage and adding exorbitant last-minute fees, is to keep your eyes peeled for common warning signs, like super-low quotes, operating under multiple company names, or only accepting cash payments.

HOW TO REDUCE YOUR MOVING BILL

These tips can help you reduce your moving costs and avoid last-minute fees:

- **Be clear** about how much stuff you have to move, how far your move is, and what sorts of obstacles your moving company might encounter.
- **Be flexible** about your moving date. It's often cheaper to move mid-week or mid-month.
- **Purge** before you move. The less stuff you have to move, the lighter your load will be and the less time it will take to load and unload the truck.
- **Ask about taxes, fees, and mileage charges.** Get these costs in writing in your contract so you know what to expect and can avoid any last-minute fees.
- **Book as soon as possible**, especially if you're planning a summer move. The earlier you book, the more choices you'll have and you may be able to secure a lower rate.
- **Don't choose a mover based solely on price.** When you move, you get what you pay for. While it can be tempting to go with the lowest bid, you may end up incurring more costs in the long run.
- **Ask about discounts and special rates.** You never know what deals or specials your potential movers might offer unless you ask!

