

# Packing (and unpacking) tips

BY ANN HANNAH

**Y**ou chose the right Realtor, the right neighbourhood, and the right home to suit your lifestyle. The terms have been negotiated, the necessary forms have been completed and all that's left to do is pack and unpack the boxes.

Unpacking is often an afterthought in the moving process, but a little work before you move will contribute to you getting to enjoy your new home sooner.

Preparation should begin well in advance of your transaction. If you are selling your current home, make it more marketable and rid your space of unwanted goods by recycling, donating, or selling them online. This will also pay off when you are ready to move, as there will be less to pack.

Many pieces can also be packed ahead of time by renting a moving container that can be kept on your property. Alternatively, you can enlist a moving company to pack for you, and arrange temporary storage at a facility if you need it. Regardless of who does the packing, ensure you have an inventory list of boxes and their contents.

One box should include cleaning supplies and essential tools like a utility knife, screwdrivers, nails and a hammer. Speaking of essentials, prepare a box of everything you need for the first few nights like snacks, drinks, a change of clothes, toiletries and pet supplies. It should be the last to leave and the first to be unpacked.

Housework is usually needed before you break open the boxes and procrastinating on this step will only add stress in the long term. If you foresee it as a roadblock, employ professional cleaners prior to your move. Bear in mind that cleaning each room on your own also offers a good opportunity to start a list of needed fix-ups.

Once you're ready to bring in the boxes, move them efficiently by taking them directly to the rooms for which they are labeled.

There is a reason that kitchens and bathroom renovations provide the best return on investment: they're key to the enjoyment of our homes. Tackle them first, beginning by lining the cupboards.

Put linens for each bed in clear, separate bags; if you have a family, set each member to work on their bedroom, emphasizing the importance of an organized closet.

Sketch or obtain plans of your new home before your move, and arrange furniture based on them. Designating the right person for the job certainly

applies to setting up electronics; do so to ensure valuable time isn't wasted.

Garages and storage spaces are underrated in terms of the importance they have in helping a home run efficiently. Take your time organizing these areas to achieve the best possible functionality. Depending on the season and your housing type, you may also want to set up the barbecue in order to cook without creating dirty dishes.

Break down boxes as you unpack them and reduce your environmental footprint by reselling or recycling your packing materials where possible.

Finally, take some time out for walks in your new neighbourhood. Just like efficient unpacking, getting involved with neighbours and community events will add to the enjoyment of your new home.

**For more tips on how to achieve a smooth transition, talk to a Greater Toronto Realtor and visit [torontorealestateboard.com](http://torontorealestateboard.com)**



Ann Hannah is the President of the Toronto Real Estate Board, a professional association that represents 34,000 Realtors in the Greater Toronto Area.