

Whether your elderly friend or relative is moving into a smaller space, or moving as part of an inter-generational family move, there are special considerations and ways to help older adults experience a better, easier moving day.

Here are moving tips to help prepare seniors before and during moving day:

Before Moving Day

1. **Speak frankly about the move.** It is important to have clear, frank conversations about all aspects of the move and the new living situation. Particularly if it is to a smaller living space or an assisted living facility where daily life and responsibilities (such as cooking) will be dramatically altered.
2. **Scout out new resources ahead of time.** Changing doctors, drug stores, grocery stores and even hair dressers can be particularly stressful for the elderly. Doing your homework ahead of time and finding new social outlets, such as nearby senior centers, can help smooth their transition.
3. **Start early.** The sooner you start preparing an older person for their move the better. This is particularly true if they are [downsizing](#) into a smaller home. There are many emotional decisions for them to make. They probably don't move as quickly (physically or mentally) as they used to. Giving them plenty of time will save frustration for everyone.
4. **Look at the layout of their new home.** This gives them a chance to start mentally preparing, as well as helping them figure out what will fit and what will not.
5. **Take it one room at a time.** Some rooms, such as bedrooms and those laden with family heirlooms and photos will be more emotional to pack than others. Start with the easier rooms and work your way up.
6. **Help them sort.** Deciding what to take and what not to take is often the hardest part of moving a senior. As much as possible, let them make their own decisions. You can help them with the difficult decisions, by suggesting alternatives, such as giving items to relatives or donating them to charity.
7. **Set aside some sentimental items.** When setting aside items to take along instead of packing for the movers (like a change of clothes and toiletries), think about adding a few small, precious items (a framed photo, a sentimental curio) to the list. That way, they will have the comfort of those items right away when they arrive at their new home.

8. **Consider hiring a Senior Move Manager.** These are professionals who specialize in assisting older adults and their families with the emotional and physical aspects of relocating. You can find more information about this option from the National Association of Senior Moving Managers www.nasmm.com.

9. **Choose your mover carefully.** Make sure you [choose a moving company](#) you are comfortable with and that understands the special needs of older family members. National Van Lines staff, drivers and crews have received high marks on customer satisfaction surveys from our senior customers and their family members.

10. **Talk to your mover ahead of time.** It's a good idea to have a conversation about special needs ahead of time with your moving agent. If the move involves any medical equipment, be sure and ask what can and [cannot be shipped](#)

. For example, for safety and legal reasons, oxygen tanks cannot be shipped, unless the valve has been removed by a professional. At National Van Lines, careful planning and experience combine to provide seniors with stress-free relocation.

On Moving Day

A hectic day for everyone, moving day can be especially stressful for older people. Here are some tips:

1. **Explain how the day will go.** A difficult part of growing old is that often we have less and less control over the events going on around us. The better you can prepare the older mover by explaining how the day will go, what time the movers will arrive, etc., the easier it will be for them to prepare themselves for all the activity of moving day. Your moving counselor will assist you in scheduling pack, load and delivery days.

2. **Keep medications with you.** The last thing you want to do is to search through moving boxes to find critical medications. Make sure these are left aside with the overnight bag or other things you'll be taking with you. Make certain you allow for contingencies as you pack your medications. Make certain to refill any prescriptions that are running low, prior to the move.

3. **Start the day rested.** Moving day can take a lot of emotional energy. If at all possible, have the pre-move work done early the day before the move, so everyone gets a good night's sleep.

4. **Be reassuring about the safety of their goods.** It's hard to watch your life's possessions drive away. As the movers are loading boxes, reassure the older adult about their safety and when they can expect to see them again. You can contact National Van Lines Customer Service Department to find the status of a shipment at any time.

5. **Introduce them to their movers.** Show them information you have about your moving company. When the movers arrive, introduce them by name.

6. **Talk about where you're going, not what you're leaving.** It's a good idea to remind the older mover about some of the advantages of their new home and what they have to look forward to.

7. **Alert your mover to special, sentimental items.** Your mover will take care to move all your items safely. Nevertheless, it might be reassuring to the older mover to point out their prize possessions.

8. **Let the movers do the lifting.** There is a natural desire to pitch-in, moving a box or an item from one room to another. Older adults are at greater risk of injury. The movers are there to move you. They know how to move everything in your home safely. Let them.