

Getting Ready To Go



Since a successful family relocation depends on knowing what's ahead and planning your moves, let's take a look at the Big Picture.

Even before the moving-day preparation starts, you want to get a general idea of what all the steps are. You want to know who your various partners may be—who will help you cope with problems such as feelings of stress, worry about how to move a whole household or anxiety about maintaining your dual income. Let's start planning.

Help! We're moving to another town. Where do we start?

"What comes first?" is the best first question you can ask, because the art of planning a move involves putting things in order—and stepping out.

When you go on to ask: "What comes next, and next?" you will eventually cover all the steps—from packing dishes, through selling and buying homes (a subject too large for this brief booklet), through parting with old friends to adjusting to a new life in a new place.

One family's overall plan will differ greatly from another's. Here are some ideas to incorporate into your individual family plan:

- Divide a loose-leaf notebook into the three phases of relocating. Keep this family "Moving Book" in one place where everyone can check it out and make entries.
- Set up a file for collecting important papers and receipts in connection with your move.
- Hold family "brainstorming" sessions, perhaps at meal-times. Record the best ideas in the loose-leaf plan book.
- Assign responsibilities and target dates, and review progress at family meetings.

Whether you relish the idea of moving or dread it, there is no question a relocation can be stressful. Yet knowing your next step and being prepared is the best remedy for stress. Also, don't add to your stress. This is not the best time, for instance, to sort all your old slides or to try to lose twenty pounds.

TIP: Keep a diary. Record your family's views as the move progresses. Use photos, video, too. Consider beginning with a list of four or five "likes" you want to duplicate in the new place, and any "dislikes" you'd like to change. This will help make this move easier and smooth the way if another move is in your future.

We have some specific questions. Who do we turn to for help?

There's much expertise to tap. Consider these strong, experienced partners who will help you step lightly through the relocation routine:

Company Relocation Manager. Titles differ from one company to another, but this expert (generally part of the personnel department) will counsel you on the company's relocation policies. Ask what your company will provide and pay for, and what assistance or incentives are available to you.

Relocation Specialist. Relocation centers, real estate firms who specialize in relocation and some moving companies are ready to furnish detailed information about your new community and help you on home-finding trips. This partner may be called a relocation "specialist," "coordinator" or "counselor."