

10 TIPS FOR HELPING YOUR MOVE GO SMOOTHLY

Compliments of Craig at Kootenai Storage and Relocations, Nelson, BC, 250-354-8402

There are a number of things you should know before hiring a moving company – whether you're just moving down the street or across the world. Here's a list to help with your planning.

1. Shopping on the internet for a mover can be risky business.

Your online search may result in inadvertently booking with an online "load broker." Load brokers actually will sell your move off to another carrier to haul as any other "commodity" would be hauled. A load broker may appear to be a legitimate mover because they have an appealing web site that looks like a van line. However, a load broker often lacks infrastructure such as dispatch, proper insurance coverage, continuity of service and expertise with handling household goods. An experienced, legitimate van line can provide quality service, accurate delivery dates, quick load tracking and have qualified movers to complete your move. Be sure to do thorough research before booking online.

2. A referral is the best way to select a mover.

Ask a few well-known realtors if they could make a recommendation for a mover to use. Once you have selected your mover, be sure they know which realtor referred you and emphasize it. If the moving company cares about their reputation and referral sources they will make every effort to ensure you are pleased. If you are happy, the mover will be referred again. If you are not happy, it could be the last time your mover is referred by that realtor.

3. Can you save money by moving yourself?

Not necessarily. Before embarking on a move, these are some questions to ask yourself: What should I know about truck rental agencies? How can I be sure all my items will fit in the truck? What size truck should I reserve? Will my truck be ready at the time I reserved it and what recourse do I have if it isn't? Should I consider hiring a mover to professionally load my rental truck? For starters, consider renting a bigger truck than you think you require. The largest rental truck available is 24 feet and can fit 5500 pounds of household goods, if loaded by an experienced professional mover. Some movers will help you determine if all your items will fit on a certain-sized truck by making a phone call to them. Sometimes used boxes can be obtained from local moving companies. Always double-check your rental truck reservation two days before you are scheduled to pick it up. Overbooking in the busy season is common place and you have no recourse if your truck is not there. Before pulling off the lot, make sure to thoroughly inspect your truck including A/C, windshield wipers, fluid levels, radio, lights, brakes, etc. Sometimes these trucks are dropped off and go back out to the next customer without an inspection. Moving yourself truly is an adventure and, sometimes, in hindsight, it's one you wish you hadn't taken.

4. How to move valuable items such as grand pianos, grandfather clocks, chandeliers or your husband's prized taxidermy collection.

Does your mover have the supplies, expertise, and capability to handle expensive, fragile, unusual, or sentimental items? Whether you're moving locally or internationally, determine how your important items will be handled and packed. Effective packing, crating and moving skill determines how safely they arrive. Ask your mover to discuss, in detail, the specific precautions they take to protect your home and

belongings and whether they have the ability and confidence to handle unusual items.

5. What happens if there are damages?

Beware of the statements, "Oh it's covered," or "It's included." Discuss insurance coverage thoroughly with your mover to ensure you understand who will cover a loss in the event of a claim for damages to possessions, property or personal injury. Request a copy of the movers insurance declaration page as it will outline insurance limits, types of coverage and the name of the insurance carrier. Again, a thorough discussion of this with the carrier is extremely important. Your homeowner's agent can also review the declaration page and give you their thoughts to ensure there are not any gaps in coverage during your move. Should there be an accident, injury, fire or other unforeseen event, you will have additional peace of mind knowing the coverage you have chosen.

6. Will a written estimate be provided?

Request a written quote with details. Offer your mover as much detail as you can, such as information about your third floor attic, the playset to be disassembled, the long walk to the house at destination, a small grand piano or an extra drop off location. The more thorough you are when communicating your situation, objectives and needs, the better prepared the mover will be to help you on moving day and the more accurate your estimate will be.

7. How will you be charged for services?

At the time of the estimate/consultation an experienced mover will ask thoughtful questions in an effort to have an estimate that reflects your specific objectives, needs and circumstances. The estimate should indicate how the charges are arrived at and what materials are going to be used. Is it a flat rate, hourly rate or based on weight? What would make the final bill be higher than estimated? Five days before your move date, call the moving company and give them an update on your progress. Will you need more or less help than originally discussed. Insurance is a topic that must be discussed in detail at the time of the estimate. Also, at the time of estimate, request tips on how to keep the move as simple as possible. Can dressers be left full? Should the freezer be emptied? Can plants be moved? What won't the mover take? You also want to find out how your furniture, walls, woodwork, door jambs, banisters and floors will be protected.

8. How are complaints resolved?

Ask your mover to discuss how they handle problems that arise before, during and after the move. Is there a point of contact? Have your mover outline some challenging scenarios and how they were handled by their company. Is the "customer always right?"

9. Ask about affiliations.

Ask your mover where you can find out more information about their company. Some examples include the Better Business Bureau (www.bbb.org), the Canadian Association of Movers (1-866-860-0065), the Chamber of Commerce and Realtors and other professionals related to the housing industry.

10. Where to find more information.

For more information and tips about moving, contact Craig at Kootenai Storage and Relocations, Nelson, BC, 250-354-8402, 1-877-955-2795, HYPERLINK "<http://www.kootenaimoving.com>"
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