

Plan and make your move easy

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MOVING house is like visiting your dentist. You know it's coming up. Logic says it's "for the best". But the mere thought makes your teeth clench.

"There is a lot of build-up to the big day," said Catherine Gambrellis, chief executive of national moving company Two Men and a Truck.

"But if you have done due diligence and picked the right people, things tend to work out."

We have compiled expert tips and tricks to help keep your home-move stress in check.

YOU'RE MOVING

SCOUT removalists if you will need one, get at least three quotes and start six weeks out if possible.

Australia's removalist industry is unregulated but some operators have formed the Australian Furniture Removals Association, which offers insurance to protect your belongings and encourages high standards of truck, equipment and training.

DE-CLUTTER. Every item moved costs to transport and/or store. "Start by pulling everything out, putting back only what you use or love," Bonnie Black from Little Miss Organised suggested.

HIRE buy boxes and start packing: the earlier the better. Start with the least-used room and leave the kitchen until last.

MOVE in batches. If moving locally and your new home is vacant, start moving small items ASAP.

NAME a 'first night' box: remove

DID YOU KNOW ...

■ Autumn is the most common season for hiring removalists: 40 per cent of bookings are made then

■ 52 per cent of removalist jobs are being booked by women

■ Removalists are most often booked on Mondays (22.1 per cent), Tuesdays (18.7 per cent) and Wednesdays (17.5 per cent)

Source: Oneflare analysis of more than 4000 job postings 2012-2013

controls, toiletries, scissors, packing tape, favourite toys, cleaning items and medications.

MEASURE up. Draw scaled versions of your furniture and new home on pieces of paper. Cut out the 'mini' furniture and move it around on paper to work out what fits where.

24-HOURS TO GO

TAPE drawer/cupboards as emptied. "It is also a good visual cue to see what is left to do," suggested homeowner Tom Mason, who has moved more than 20 times.

CONFIRM bookings. Double-check your removalists and/or mates are all ready to go.

CHECK utilities. Make sure electricity, gas and water supplies will be operating from your first day of home occupancy.

BIG MOVE DAY

UNPLUG appliances and save time/money by winding each cord and securing with tape.

PACK to plan. "Keep all the boxes for one room together, labelling them numerically (i.e. kitchen 1) in order of importance," Ms Black said.

KITCHEN first. A working

kitchen helps a newly moved family settle quickly so unpack that room first.

MAKE the bed next. It's a relief knowing you can jump into a comfy bed when you're completely wrecked at the end of moving day.

OUTSOURCE food/drinks. Ask loved ones to fetch tucker or, if moving further afield, pre-order home-delivered nosh.

FIRST 48 HOURS

CHECK for damage. Items occasionally break, no matter how much care has been taken. But don't wait too long to check if you're covered by insurance.

"Often a policy gives you 72 hours to make claims," Ms Gambrellis said.

MAKE your home 'home'. Melissa Donnelly is about to move for the ninth time since 2008. One of her top tips: "work out what makes your home feel right".

"Is it your jasmine candles, a bunch of flowers in a vase?"

"Whatever it is, do it in the first 24 hours... adding some homely touches suddenly transforms the new space into your home."



Benjamin and Lexi Lamm say the Taxibox offers flexibility.

Picture: JASON EDWARDS

Take the stress out of storage

LEXI and Benjamin Lamm have found a bright yellow solution to a moving dilemma: what do we do with our stuff?

The Melbourne couple, who are building their own house and have already vacated their former home, must temporarily store their possessions while living with relatives.

They have been living with Lexi's parents for 15 months. Busy overseeing completion of their new home, Mrs Lamm said the couple "do not have

time to sift through everything they own" before moving pre-Christmas.

They priced more traditional storage options before deciding to hire a Taxibox, a portable, rentable storage container that is delivered to your home and will be collected two weeks later.

The box — about the size of a walk-in robe — comes with a council permit so it can sit on the median strip while its owner loads it up.

It is then transported to a secure storage depot. The Lammes have paid for three months so they can empty it at their leisure.

Mrs Lamm said conventional storage was more expensive, about \$220 a month compared to about \$150 for a Taxibox.

"We love the idea of dumping everything in one spot, moving it and then sorting through it, giving ourselves some breathing space. It has really cut the stress," she said.