***10 IMPORTANT TIPS FOR MOVING INTO YOUR 1ST APARTMENT.***

Firstly, we’d like to say Congratulations on getting moved into your new home! Moving into your first apartment can be great or it could head south really quickly if you don’t do a few things first. It’s your own place to do what you want — no one will tell you to clean your dishes or pick up your socks (unless you’ll be living with a fussy [roommate](https://www.apartments.com/blog/how-to-rent-with-a-roommate)). But first, you’ll need to move. Moving can be stressful for anyone, especially if you’ve never done it before and aren’t sure what to expect. Here are five tips to help you through the process. *Please keep in mind that not all this information may apply to your current situation or circumstances, but I hope that you’ll find some of it useful either now or in the future.*

**1. SAVE THE RIGHT AMOUNT FOR YOUR APARTMENT MOVE**

Here’s the golden rule when moving it’s going to cost much more than you think. You might be aware that you’ll have to pay the [first and last month’s rent](https://www.apartments.com/blog/how-much-should-i-spend-on-rent). But you will also pay a variety of move-in fees. These fees might include a security deposit, application fee, administration fee, and maybe even a pet deposit if you have a pet. Be sure to ask the apartment community or landlord if there are any additional costs, such as parking or storage fees.

Next, you’ll have to [set up your utilities](https://www.apartments.com/blog/how-to-set-up-transfer-and-switch-utilities-in-a-snap). You might have to pay a deposit on these to have them turned on before you move in. Find out which (if any) utilities are included in your apartment rent. Utilities you’ll probably include, water and sewer electricity, gas, trash collection, and internet. You’ll also want to get [renter’s insurance](https://www.apartments.com/blog/the-benefits-of-renters-insurance).

If you are using a moving service, you’ll have to pay movers. You might need to buy specialty boxes, wrapping materials, and markers, and packing tape. If you are enlisting the help of friends and family, you might want to provide them with food. Those pizzas aren’t cheap, especially if you have a whole crew helping you on moving day.

Speaking of pizza delivery and moving services, make sure you have some cash on hand for tipping. Wait, don’t forget to get a case or two of bottled water or a drink with electrolytes to replenish the water that you’ll be sweating out. Stay away from sugar on your moving day.

You might want money available on [moving day](https://www.apartments.com/blog/apartment-moving-day-tips-and-tricks) for stocking your fridge, buying necessary items that went missing during the move, and getting cleaning supplies.

**2. KNOW HOW TO PACK A BOX**

First, make lists. You need to write everything down and check items off as you complete them. There’s a lot to do when moving, including filling out a change of address card with the post office, informing friends and family of your new address, getting supplies, and so on. You might even want to make lists as you pack your boxes to keep track of what went where. Label every box. If you don’t, you will end up having to open and sort through every single box to find your coffee maker.

Don’t pack the towels in your linen closet. They will come in handy when packing. Use them to pad the bottom of boxes and to wrap delicate items. Tuck them into empty spaces in boxes to keep your breakables from shifting around in the box. And keep at least one out to clean your old apartment one last time after all the boxes are gone.

Don’t buy boxes if you don’t have to. Local grocery stores and other businesses will often have boxes you can take for free, so call around and ask when the best time to get boxes might be (some places have more boxes available on their delivery days).

Keep a few blankets handy to wrap large, breakable items like your television. Just wrap the blanket around it and secure it with packing tape.

Before taking anything apart or disconnecting wires from your television or computer, take pictures. When it comes time to reconnect and reassemble, you’ll be glad you did.

Use sandwich bags to keep small items contained. If you take furniture apart, you’ll likely have screws or nails you’ll want to find quickly when putting things together again. If the nails and screws are floating around in a box somewhere, they will get lost.

You can’t have too much wrapping paper or enough tape. You will likely need more of both.

**3. READ YOUR LEASE AGREEMENT AND ASK QUESTIONS**

While it is tempting to scroll (or flip) through to the last page and sign your name, you need to [read your lease agreement](https://www.apartments.com/blog/navigating-your-lease-agreement). This document contains some very important information and if you don’t read it, you could inadvertently violate your lease or put your security deposit at risk. Your lease agreement lists everything you can and can’t do in your apartment. It provides information about rent and late fees, what you’ll need to know about having a roommate, guests, and pets, and it tells you what your rights and responsibilities are as a tenant. Make sure you know what you are agreeing to before signing and ask lots of questions.

Before you move in, [schedule a walk-through](https://www.apartments.com/blog/the-ultimate-walk-through-checklist-what-to-look-for-before-moving-in) with your landlord or property manager. During the walk-through, take a lot of pictures and videos of the empty apartment. You want pictures of every scratch, carpet stain, wobbly handle, dented cabinet, kitchen appliance — everything. Email the photos and videos as soon as you can (that day, if possible) to your landlord. This way, you’ll both have a time-stamped record of the walk-through results.

When you move out, you will need these photos to refer to if the landlord [keeps your security deposit](https://www.apartments.com/blog/how-to-get-your-security-deposit-back) for damages. If the damages were there when you moved in, you aren’t liable for them.

Your landlord or property manager will likely have a checklist they’ll use during the walk-through. If there’s something you want to be fixed before you move in, ask the landlord for repairs. If the landlord agrees to make the repairs, get it in writing.

**4. HAVE THESE NECESSITIES WHEN MOVING INTO A NEW APARTMENT**

There are some things you’ll need on day one. Other items can be acquired later, such as decor and small appliances. Here are the essentials, room by room:

**Bathroom essentials**

* Toilet paper
* Towels and washcloths
* Shampoo
* Soap
* Toilet brush
* Toilet bowl cleaner
* Plunger
* Shower curtain (if there isn’t a shower door)
* Shower curtain rings (if you’re using a shower curtain)
* Bathmat
* Trash can
* Toothbrush holder

**Bedroom essentials**

* Bed frame and box springs (yes, technically, you could put the mattress on the floor, but we’re adulting here)
* Mattress and mattress pad
* Pillows
* Sheets, blankets, and pillowcases
* Hangers for the closet
* Curtains or blinds if there aren’t any installed
* A laundry basket

Kitchen essentials

* Plates and bowls
* Mugs and glasses
* Silverware
* Some pots and pans
* Knives (at least a chef’s knife)
* Scissors
* Cutting board
* Dish towels
* Paper towels
* Sponge
* Dishwashing liquid
* Toaster
* Coffee pot (if you consider coffee essential)
* Can opener
* Spatula
* Measuring cups and spoons
* Plastic storage containers
* Ice cube trays (if your refrigerator doesn’t have an ice maker)
* Kitchen trash bags
* Trash can

Household essentials

* All-purpose cleaner
* Glass cleaner
* Broom and dustpan
* Mop
* Bucket
* Lightbulbs
* Clips and rubber bands
* First-aid kit
* Laundry detergent
* Vacuum cleaner

Pantry essentials

* Vinegar
* Baking soda
* Flour
* Bread
* Coffee/tea
* Ketchup
* Mustard
* Rice
* Cereal
* Sugar
* Olive oil
* Salt
* Pepper
* Pasta
* Pasta sauce
* Canned vegetables and beans

**5. ASK FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO HELP YOU MOVE**

If you need help moving, make sure you ask well in advance. If you ask the day before the move, it will be difficult to find anyone available. Remember that you are asking a **huge favor** so don’t be offended if they refuse. Be gracious when asking and let them know you would really appreciate the help. Before we go to the next 5 important tips, Please be sure to listen out for any questions about what we still need to go over in class. For those married folks, please remember, **your spouse is not the enemy today**, **I promise you!** I’d suggest that throughout the day as you get more tired because you’ve been lifting heavy furniture all day, you both are dirty and sweaty and the person on the other end of that couch isn’t pulling their weight lifting this heavy furniture ALL day long, or those extra-large boxes you bought and filled one of them with heavy pottery dishes that you’re never ever going to use because your mother in law called them cheap and tacky looking. Don’t forget **ALL** of the pots and pans and heavy glass lids that were also crammed in the extra-large box on top of those heavy pottery dishes. You were so proud of yourself because you saved space on the moving truck and felt that you were doing your part towards climate change and saving another tree in the Amazon. Your spouse pulls several muscles in their back because of that 1 extra-large box with your steel pots and heavy glass lids and those ugly pottery dishes that just exploded out of the box because you didn’t put enough tape on the bottom of the box and now there’s broken glass EVERYWHERE! It’s also at that time that your spouse’s two ugly, ankle-biter chihuahuas choose to come flying into the same exact area with all the shattered pottery dishes, and your lids to your pots are all broken, upon impact, because someone only used 1 small piece of tape to tape the bottom of the box. After yelling at the dogs, and the kids I always like to suggest counting to 10, sometimes 200, because now you keep dropping the leg of the couch on my toes. Before you blow up and go off on your spouse, count to 200 and ask yourself, why did you marry your spouse in the first place?! Well, of course, you married each other because you love each other! Keep reminding yourself of **that** **ALL** day, I like to say it in my head at least a couple hundred times a day while I look at you with my best fake smile and plot your demise in my head all day.😊😊 I say all of this because, there’s a 98% chance that if you’re doing this move together as a couple and didn’t hire a moving company, you may dislike your spouse, just for today and only temporarily. Try to remember not to engage. Be nice to each other. Inspire each other to communicate, nicely and that this move will soon be over. These suggestions apply to ***all*** couples or spouses!! You can also, use these useful but still unwarranted suggestions with your friends. Keep in mind, though, those friends will walk out on you if you make them **really, really** mad. Your spouse, not so much. They can’t run too far!!😊

Try to move on a weekend, if possible, when more people will be available to help. And as much as you want to control everything (it’s your move, after all), try to stand back and let your friends do what needs to be done. You’ll have plenty of time later to make sure the boxes are in the right room.

Provide food, snacks, and drinks. Your friends will get tired, so provide them with plenty of water and other sports drinks that replenish your electrolytes and is sugar-free. Gatorade or Power-Aid. Snacks will help keep energy levels and spirits up, so provide a few of your friends’ favorites. At the end of the day, reward all of them with pizza or dinner out. Do “*something*” to give that Friend(s), Spouse, or BF/GF who helped you all day, in 94-degree weather, with 100% humidity, some recognition they deserve. Even if it’s a card that has a really sincere handwritten message in it, that came from the heart. Just let them know how much you appreciate all the help you got today from your good friends.

Today was a long, hot, and miserable day and your back is killing you. Then the bomb drops!! Your friend just so conveniently chose that moment to let me know, that you needed help with *their* move, like yesterday. **an hour and a half away, in 2 days, and they live on the 3rd floor.** Wait, one more thing! **Bring a raincoat or poncho and dress warmly. It’s going to be 36 with 42 as the high and overcast all day with heavy rain and sleet!!** With **no elevator**, **just a ton of stairs** to climb. When you do eventually ask me, I’ll *“conveniently*” be out **of** town on a business trip. and that you’ll be sure to “*conveniently*” ***not*** be in town for at least the next couple of days, maybe weeks, or possibly months, just depends on when you ask me to help you move,

If you can’t find anyone to help or you will be [moving out of state](https://www.apartments.com/blog/moving-out-of-state-how-to-start-your-apartment-search-in-a-new-state), you’ll want to hire movers. Do plenty of research and read reviews. Beware of moving companies that want cash up front or give you an estimate over the phone (they should want to see how much they will be moving before quoting you a price). Review [moving company red flags](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/protect-your-move/red-flags) to make sure the company you choose is reliable.

Moving into your first apartment is a big step. Hopefully, these tips will help you navigate the moving process with ease. Once the moving day dust settles, you can start decorating and making your apartment your own. But first, let the search for bubble wrap begin!

 **6. BE SURE TO RESEARCH THE DESIRED NEIGHBORHOOD**

Renting an apartment is often one of the primary real-life decisions you will make, so searching for your first apartment home should not be taken lightly. Before you can enjoy your first taste of freedom, you will have to make some major decisions. Make things easy on yourself from the start because carelessness can result in a nightmare living situation. When renting your first apartment be sure to research desired neighborhoods.

Determine what neighborhoods suit your personality and budget by researching desired areas beforehand. If the distance is reasonable, drive around various neighborhoods that pique your interest. If you have friends and acquaintances who live there, hang out with them, and get a feel for the area. Keep your eyes peeled for neighborhood reviews, news about crime, and local events on real estate websites, as well as online magazines and newspapers.

**7. ACT LIKE AN ADULT**

Be well aware of your financial responsibilities, and search for an apartment within your budget. It’s suggested your monthly rent should not exceed 25-30% of your income, so you may have to cut back on spending. When meeting with your future landlord or office manager, be honest, and present yourself in the best light possible. It’s likely you’re competing for a unit with other prospective tenants.

**8. FIND A TRUSTY ROOMMATE OR ROOMMATES**

For many people, renting an apartment for the first time requires living with other people. Communication about house rules, boundaries, and due dates for bills must be clear from the beginning. Sharing an apartment with someone is a big commitment, so you need your roommate situation to be with people you can trust.

**9. DON’T IGNORE RED FLAGS, LISTEN TO YOUR GUT INSTINCT**

Renting an apartment from a bad landlord or management company is a headache and will put a damper on your living experience. Larger companies will have an online reputation, so if you see a myriad of poor reviews and experiences, stay away. Make sure your questions and concerns are answered or addressed clearly.

**10. LAST TIME, UNDERSTAND YOUR LEASE!! DON’T JUST SIGN IT WITHOUT FULLY READING IT!!**

Before you commit to an apartment, review a copy of the lease in its entirety. Ensure that verbal agreements are put into writing and be aware of fees and penalties outlined in your lease, such as pet rent, pest control fees, or additional costs to use a community’s amenities. It should also specify which utilities you are responsible for paying and which ones are included in your rent.

If you should have any questions about these 10 IMPORTANT Tips for Moving Into your Apartment or any other topic I’ll be here if you need anything. Please don’t hesitate to give me a call 😊

 JK.