

A CONSUMERS GUIDE TO CHOOSING A MOVER:

Ten steps to a good move



Moving your household can be stressful and expensive. You can avoid unnecessary heartache and cost by hiring the right people to do the job. A professional mover will deliver the services you want and have paid for. But how do you find one?

Here are 10 steps to help you find a reputable mover and have a safe moving experience.

1. Plan your move well in advance. Decide what goods you will be moving and/or storing and what services you will require. Consider which goods will require special attention (e.g. electronics, appliances, pianos, antiques). You will need to give the movers as much information as possible about your move to obtain an accurate estimate and avoid being charged more later on. Make an inventory of everything you want moved.

2. Check with the Canadian Association of Movers (CAM) for the names of quality moving companies who can provide the origin and destination services you require. Ask if the movers are Certified Canadian Movers. If you have a mover in mind, ask CAM about them. Call CAM at 905-848-6579, or toll-free at 1-866-860-0065, or visit www.mover.net.

3. Call at least three moving companies. Ask for an estimate and other assurances in writing, including the delivery date, the name of your contact, the name, telephone number and address of the company, the number of boxes to be moved, the size and value of items, the rate, terms of payment, and timing of services to be provided. Make sure you find out if any part of your move (or storage) will be sub-contracted to another company. For a



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long distance move and most local moves, a reputable mover will inspect your belongings to prepare the estimate. If a company says the inspection isn't necessary you're better off dealing with someone else.

4. Make sure there is adequate insurance coverage for your goods during the move. The fact that a mover has insurance does not mean your goods are covered. Ask the movers to what value your goods will be insured with them during the move. Ask about the mover's liability if you pack the items yourself. Find out if your home insurance policy covers your goods for loss and/or damage while they are being moved. Check with the mover for the cost of Replacement Value Protection (RVP) and how it works. With RVP the mover will be liable for the value of your property, so declare enough value to replace all your goods. Ensure you get RVP and NOT depreciated value only. Without RVP, the mover is liable

for 60 cents per pound for any article damaged or lost.

5. Make sure you get in writing the fee you will be charged and the payment options. Beware of a price that is much lower than others. This is often an indicator of sub-standard service or higher charges to come later. And beware of a mover who will forego the Goods and Services Tax or who will only accept cash. Such a mover is unlikely to pay claims or even deliver your goods. If a deposit is required, find out if the money will be put in trust, as is sometimes required by law, and if it is refundable.

6. Find out if the mover has a workers' compensation board certificate, so you are not liable should an injury to the workers occur. Ask what the mover's claims process is, in the event of loss or damage to goods. Once again, GET ALL THE DETAILS IN WRITING.

7. Once you've narrowed your choices, call the Better Business

Bureau or your province's consumer protection agency to check the mover's reputation. If you haven't done it already, contact CAM to ask about the mover's reputation. A record of unresolved consumer complaints or disputes is a poor recommendation.

8. Make special arrangements for your valuables – your children, your pets and your personal effects – during the move. Arrange for special care for small children. Take any personal, important documents and valuables (e.g. jewellery, prescriptions, art) with you. Back up your computer data and take the data and the computer with you. Consider the special needs of pets and make arrangements for perishables.

9. Be there in person and be ready on moving day. Both your origin and destination locations should be ready. Your elevator should be booked, your building manager notified of your arrival time and street parking arranged. Have your inventory of the goods being moved at hand. The mover will provide an inventory in a long distance move, but for a local move, you should have your own list. Supervise the loading and unloading. Check off each piece at unloading and note any changes to the inventory prior to signing it. Notify the mover quickly of any damage or loss. Normally claims must be made within 30 days for local moves and within 60 days for long distance moves. After both loading and unloading, check your premises, the trucks and building accesses to ensure nothing has been left behind.

10. You did your homework – you found a good mover and planned a successful move. Now enjoy your new home!