



# Getting Ready for the Big Day

A good move depends largely on how much you get involved and how well prepared you are when the movers arrive. The American Forces Information Services published “It’s Your Move,” a pamphlet to help educate relocating service members of every branch on their rights and responsibilities during a PCS move. Here are some of their tips and suggestions:

## Arranging the Move

Your transportation office will make all arrangements necessary to schedule packing and pickup of your household goods. Be prepared when you go to your transportation office to have:

- Six copies of your orders (and amendments/endorsements) for each type of shipment planned (household goods, nontemporary storage, unaccompanied baggage, etc.)
- An idea of when you want to move. Be as flexible as possible. You will be asked to select a packing and pickup date. During some periods, especially the summer the dates you prefer may not be available. If at all possible, do not schedule pickup, lease termination, or house sale closing on the same date. Leave some time in your schedule for the unforeseen.
- The date you plan to arrive at your new duty station. The counselor uses this date to determine the required delivery date of your shipment(s). For example, if you know you can’t accept a shipment for three months, don’t ask for delivery in one month.
- An idea of the types of shipments you expect to make and the estimated weight of each
- A list of large or unusual items (piano, pool table, china cabinet, wall unit, satellite dish, hot tub, boat, motorcycle, recreational vehicle, etc.) If you are unable to visit the transportation office, you may appoint your spouse or an agent to act on your behalf. A letter of authorization signed by you or a power of attorney is required. Be sure the person you choose knows what you want and has all the information to make the right arrangements. Remember, this person is acting for you, and you are responsible for that person’s decisions.



## Documents

The counselor will prepare an “Application for Shipment and/or Storage of Personal Property” (DD Form 1299) during your interview. Read the form carefully before you sign. Incorrect information can cost you money and delay your shipment. When you sign the form, you agree to pay any excess costs incurred with the movement and/or storage of your property. Never sign a blank form. Don’t forget that an estimate of the weight of your professional books, papers and equipment must be on the form. This constitutes an official declaration of intent to ship professional materials.

You will receive a copy of all forms you sign. Keep them close at hand. These are important documents. Hand-carry them. Do not lose them. Do not pack them in any of your shipments.

## What You May Ship As Household Goods

You may ship all personal property associated with the home and all personal effects belonging to you and your dependents on the effective date of your permanent or temporary change of station orders. Also included are spare parts for a privately owned vehicle (extra tires and wheels, tire chains, tools, battery chargers, accessories) and a pickup tailgate when removed to install a camper. Snowmobiles, motorcycles, mopeds and golf carts may be shipped as household goods.

## What You May Not Ship As Household Goods

- Airplanes, automobiles, trucks, vans and similar motor vehicles; camper trailers; farm equipment. (You have a separate entitlement for your privately owned vehicle when moving to, from or between overseas duty stations. Contact your transportation office for a copy of *Shipping Your POV* and more

details.)

- Live animals not required in their performance of official duties, including birds, fish and reptiles
- Articles of household goods acquired after the effective date of permanent change of station orders
- Cordwood and building materials
- Property for resale, disposal or commercial use rather than for use by the member and dependents
- Privately owned live ammunition, powder, primers or igniting devices.

Local laws or carrier regulations may prohibit commercial shipment of certain articles not listed above.

Articles liable to impregnate or otherwise damage equipment or other property — for example, hazardous materials including explosives, flammable and corrosive materials and poisons — are prohibited by laws and regulations.

### Your Responsibilities at Origin

- Keep your transportation office informed of any change in your orders or other changes, such as the telephone number at which you can be reached until you leave your old duty station.
- After arrangements have been made, they should not be changed. Changing moving dates, especially during summer months, can mean a lengthy delay in getting your move rescheduled. If you find the date must be changed, contact your transportation office immediately. Do not call the carrier!
- You or your representative designated in writing must be home when the movers arrive to pack and remove your belongings.
- Remove your TV antenna/disconnect satellite dish.
- Empty, defrost and thoroughly wash the inside of your refrigerator and/or freezer. To keep mildew at a minimum during transit and storage, these appliances need at least two days to dry out. Leave doors open after cleaning.
- Drain water from hot tubs and waterbeds.
- Remove window air conditioners.
- Disconnect and prepare all components such as stereos, turntables, CD players, DVD, computers, printers, televisions and VCRs for the move
- Disconnect all appliances such as washer, dryer and cooking stove. If plumbing, electrical or carpentry work is needed in disconnecting these appliances, you must arrange

for the work and pay the charges connected with it.

- Dispose of foods that could spill or spoil in transit or storage.
- Dispose of worn out and unneeded items before the move to avoid wasteful packing, moving or storage expenses and most important, excess weight to you.
- Remove pictures, curtain rods and mirrors from walls. Inspect the kitchen for utensil and food racks or other holders secured to walls, cabinets or doors and remove them.
- Dismantle outdoor play equipment and outdoor structures (utility sheds, playhouses, swing or gym sets, etc.).
- Ensure personal property items are free of soil/pest infestation — that is, gypsy moths, brown tree snakes,

etc. Remember: Complying with requirements of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and state laws is your responsibility.

- Remove personal property from an attic, crawl space or similar storage area within the residence. The carrier's personnel are not required to go into areas that:

- ✓ Are not accessible by a permanent stairway (ladders are not considered a permanent stairway);
- ✓ Are not adequately lighted;
- ✓ Do not have a finished floor;
- ✓ Do not allow a person to stand erect.

- Have your property separated by shipment and distinctly marked. Put items that are to go in the unaccompanied baggage shipment in one room, distinctly mark items for storage, items not to be packed and so on. This reduces the chance that items will get into the wrong shipment or that items to be discarded will be shipped. When possible, dispose of all trash and items to be discarded prior to the mover's arrival.

- Separate your professional items and authorized consumables. Be sure they are identified on the inventory as professional books, papers and equipment or authorized consumables as the items are weighted separately.

- Remove all old carrier markings and stickers from furniture and boxes.

- Identify contents left in drawers. Be sure the inventory reflects the contents.

- Do not leave cash, jewelry or other expensive items unattended. Airline tickets and passports are important documents. It is a good idea to keep these items locked in your car, or ask a friend or neighbor to keep them until your shipment has been picked up.

- Ensure each carton and loose item (ladder, rake, etc.) has an inventory tag and appears on the inventory.

- Monitor the wrapping and packing of your items. Make sure everything is wrapped individually and adequately. Make sure heavy items aren't packed on top of light items. Don't allow your property to be taken to the warehouse to be packed without first consulting the transportation office.

- Drain all gasoline, oil and water, and remove the battery from power-driven equipment (motorcycle, moped, lawn mowers, etc.) prior to pickup.

- Carefully read the inventory prepared by the carrier's personnel before you sign. Look at it from time to time while the items are being packed. Make sure all boxes and loose items are listed. If a box contains crystal, make sure the invento-



ry says "crystal" not "kitchen items." Make sure descriptions of major items are completed and accurate. If the packers list "color television," have them add the size, make, model and when readily accessible, the serial number. This also applies to stereo and video components. Check the string of symbols listed for each item closely (this is how the packers show pre-existing damage). These symbols are explained in the top, right-hand corner of the inventory. For example, "BR 2-4-5-3" means "broken, bottom front left corner." A good inventory shows what you shipped and what condition the item was in at the time of pickup. If your inventory is inaccurate, tell the carrier's representative and write down why you disagree at the bottom of the inventory in the space marked for exceptions.

- Do not argue with the carrier's representative. If you have a problem, call your transportation office at once.

- Do not sign anything until you read, understand and agree with it. You must be provided a legible copy of everything you sign. Never sign a blank, incomplete or illegible form or a form you cannot clearly understand. ●

The full, 26-page pamphlet is available at [www.usapa.army.mil/pdffiles/p55\\_2.pdf](http://www.usapa.army.mil/pdffiles/p55_2.pdf)

## And Another Thing...

Have expensive and valuable items (artwork, collectibles, heirlooms, etc.) appraised. The government will not pay for the appraisals, but consider this part of your investment in the event of loss or damage. Use a video camera or take close-up pictures to record the condition of your furniture and to show what your expensive and valuable items look like. This will allow you to show the item, as it was, if it is lost or damaged during shipment.

Don't ship small, extremely valuable items such as stocks, bonds, jewelry, coins/coin collections, and items of great sentimental value such as photo albums. Pack them in your suitcases and hand-carry them, as well as your purchase receipts, pictures and appraisals. ●

