



THE MOVE SMARTER PLAYBOOK

A simple, stress-free guide to planning, packing and completing your move

MOVE SMARTER, NOT HARDER

PLANNING • PACKING • MOVING DAY • UNPACKING

Includes timelines, worksheets, checklists, tote labels and inventory pages

Created by Tote & Go Rentals, LLC

WELCOME TO A SMARTER MOVE

A little planning now can save hours of stress later.

Moving can feel overwhelming because hundreds of small decisions arrive at once. This playbook turns those decisions into a clear sequence. Start with the timeline, complete the worksheets that apply to you, and keep the guide somewhere easy to reach throughout your move.

HOW TO USE THIS PLAYBOOK

Write directly on printed pages or save a working copy and type your notes separately. Begin with your move profile, choose your timeline, number every tote, and update the master inventory as you pack.

YOUR MOVE AT A GLANCE

Move date	
Moving from	
Moving to	
Keys available	
Mover / truck details	
Primary contact	
Emergency contact	

TOTE & GO TIP

Keep one printed copy with your moving-day essentials—not inside the moving truck.

8-WEEK MOVING TIMELINE

Adjust the schedule to fit your move. If you have less time, combine weeks and focus on essentials first.

8 WEEKS BEFORE

☐ Set a moving budget	☐ Research movers or reserve a truck
☐ Measure large furniture and doorways	☐ Begin a room-by-room declutter

7 WEEKS BEFORE

☐ Create a moving folder	☐ Request school and medical records
☐ Make a list of valuables	☐ Plan donation and disposal runs

6 WEEKS BEFORE

☐ Book movers or helpers	☐ Reserve reusable moving totes
☐ Gather packing materials	☐ Photograph valuable items

5 WEEKS BEFORE

☐ Prepare decor and rarely used items to pack	☐ Use or donate pantry/freezer food
☐ Confirm insurance coverage	☐ Plan pet and child care

NOTES

8-WEEK MOVING TIMELINE

The final month is where organization pays off.

4 WEEKS BEFORE

☐ Submit change-of-address requests	☐ Schedule utility transfers
☐ Pack nonessential rooms	☐ Confirm elevator or parking rules

3 WEEKS BEFORE

☐ Confirm movers and helpers	☐ Reserve an extra week so you can label and inventory every tote
☐ Service your vehicle if driving	☐ Make a cleaning plan

2 WEEKS BEFORE

☐ Pack most household items	☐ Refill prescriptions
☐ Back up important devices	☐ Create an essentials tote

FINAL WEEK

☐ Confirm all arrival times	☐ Defrost refrigerator if needed
☐ Set aside documents and valuables	☐ Complete final walkthrough plan

48-HOUR CHECK

Charge phones, confirm addresses, withdraw tip money if desired, pack a cooler, photograph utility readings, and get a full night of sleep.

MOVING BUDGET WORKSHEET

Estimate first, record actual costs later, and reserve 10-15% for surprises.

CATEGORY	ESTIMATE	ACTUAL	PAID?
Movers / labor			■
Rental truck / trailer			■
Fuel / mileage			■
Reusable totes / supplies			■
Cleaning			■
Utility deposits / transfers			■
Travel / lodging			■
Child / pet care			■
Food / refreshments			■
Storage			■
Insurance			■
Repairs / replacements			■
Other			■
Emergency cushion			■
TOTAL			

Savings goal / notes

DECLUTTER BEFORE YOU PACK

Every item you release is one less item to pack, move and unpack.

THE FOUR-CHOICE METHOD

Handle each item once and choose: KEEP, DONATE, SELL or DISCARD. Create a clearly marked zone for each choice. Set a deadline for items you plan to sell; donate anything unsold by that date.

ROOM-BY-ROOM DECLUTTER TRACKER

ROOM	KEEP	DONATE	SELL	DONE
Kitchen				■
Living room				■
Primary bedroom				■
Other bedrooms				■
Bathrooms				■
Office				■
Garage / storage				■
Closets				■
Outdoor areas				■

Donation / disposal locations and deadlines

PACKING SUPPLY PLANNER

Your exact needs depend on how much you own—not only the number of bedrooms.

Use this page as a starting estimate. Walk through every room before reserving supplies. Books, kitchens, collections and storage areas usually require more containers than expected.

SUPPLY CHECKLIST

☐ Large reusable totes	☐ Small reusable totes
☐ Tote dolly / Tote Taxi	☐ Moving blankets
☐ Stretch wrap	☐ Packing paper
☐ Bubble protection	☐ Dry erase markers
☐ Room labels	☐ Zip bags for hardware
☐ Zip ties	☐ Heavy-duty moving bags
☐ Mattress covers	☐ Furniture sliders
☐ Tool kit	☐ Cleaning kit
☐ Gloves	☐ Cooler / water

ITEM	NEEDED	RESERVED / BOUGHT	NOTES

THE TOTE & GO PACKING SYSTEM

A simple numbering system makes every tote easy to find.

1. ASSIGN A ROOM CODE

Examples: KIT = Kitchen, PRI = Primary Bedroom, BTH = Bathroom.

2. NUMBER EACH TOTE

Write a unique ID such as KIT-01, KIT-02 and PRI-01.

3. ADD A PRIORITY

Mark OPEN FIRST, STANDARD or STORAGE.

4. RECORD THE CONTENTS

List the tote ID and a short contents summary in the master inventory.

5. LABEL

Slide the completed label into the tote's plastic label section.

SAFETY FIRST

Follow the equipment provider's weight and stacking limits. For Tote & Go Rentals equipment: do not exceed 66 pounds per tote and do not stack packed totes more than four high. Keep children and animals off and out of the equipment.

MY ROOM CODES

ROOM	CODE	LABEL COLOR / NOTE

ROOM-BY-ROOM PACKING CHECKLIST

Pack by room and by priority. Avoid mixing unrelated spaces in the same tote.

KITCHEN

- ☐ Set aside first-night dishes
- ☐ Wrap breakables
- ☐ Seal pantry items
- ☐ Photograph appliance connections
- ☐ Pack rarely used tools first

BEDROOMS

- ☐ Pack off-season clothes
- ☐ Use luggage for immediate clothing
- ☐ Bag bed hardware
- ☐ Protect mattresses
- ☐ Keep medications with you

BATHROOMS

- ☐ Discard expired products
- ☐ Seal liquids in zip bags
- ☐ Pack towels as cushioning
- ☐ Keep daily toiletries accessible
- ☐ Set aside toilet paper

LIVING / OFFICE

- ☐ Photograph cable connections
- ☐ Back up computers
- ☐ Pack books flat
- ☐ Protect artwork
- ☐ Keep important files with you

THE OPEN-FIRST ESSENTIALS TOTE

This tote travels with you and is opened before anything else.

☐ Toilet paper and paper towels	☐ Soap and hand sanitizer
☐ Basic cleaning supplies	☐ Trash bags
☐ Phone chargers and power strip	☐ Tool kit and flashlight
☐ Bedding and sleepwear	☐ One change of clothes per person
☐ Daily medications	☐ First-aid supplies
☐ Pet food and supplies	☐ Snacks and bottled water
☐ Disposable plates and utensils	☐ Coffee / tea essentials
☐ Important phone numbers	☐ Keys and access instructions

KEEP THESE WITH YOU—NOT IN A TOTE

Identification, cash, jewelry, irreplaceable keepsakes, legal papers, prescriptions, laptops, backup drives and anything required during travel.

Personal additions

MASTER TOTE INVENTORY

Use one unique ID per tote. Keep descriptions brief but searchable.

TOTE ID	ROOM	CONTENTS	PRIORITY	CHECKED IN
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■

MASTER TOTE INVENTORY — CONTINUED

For high-value items, also record condition and take a photo before packing.

TOTE ID	ROOM	CONTENTS	PRIORITY	CHECKED IN
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■
				■

VALUABLES & CONDITION RECORD

Photograph important items and save receipts, serial numbers and appraisal information separately.

ITEM	SERIAL / DETAIL	CONDITION / PHOTO	TOTE ID

IMPORTANT

This worksheet is an organizational aid, not an insurance policy or professional valuation. Ask your insurer or mover what documentation and coverage are required.

ADDRESS CHANGE & UTILITIES

Schedule transfers early and record confirmation numbers.

☐ USPS mail forwarding	☐ Driver's license / vehicle registration
☐ Employer / payroll	☐ Banks and credit cards
☐ Insurance providers	☐ Healthcare providers
☐ Schools / childcare	☐ Subscriptions / memberships
☐ Family and friends	

UTILITY TRANSFER TRACKER

SERVICE	STOP DATE	START DATE	CONFIRMATION / NOTES
Electric			
Gas			
Water / sewer			
Trash			
Internet			
Security			
Other			

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Keep this page available to everyone helping with the move.

CONTACT	NAME	PHONE	NOTES
Moving company / lead			
Truck rental			
Property manager — old home			
Property manager — new home			
Utility contact			
Child / pet care			
Emergency contact			
Tote rental provider			

ACCESS & PARKING NOTES

MOVING-DAY GAME PLAN

Assign clear roles and protect the paths people will use most.

☐ Eat breakfast and fill water bottles	☐ Charge phones and portable batteries
☐ Protect floors, doors and corners	☐ Clear walkways
☐ Complete mover walkthrough	☐ Point out items that do not move
☐ Keep documents and valuables with you	☐ Track tote IDs as they load
☐ Check every closet and cabinet	☐ Photograph empty rooms
☐ Record utility meter readings	☐ Lock windows and doors
☐ Return keys as arranged	☐ Confirm destination access
☐ Direct totes to labeled rooms	☐ Complete final equipment count

HELPER ASSIGNMENTS

PERSON	RESPONSIBILITY	PHONE

FINAL WALKTHROUGH

Use this checklist before leaving the old home and again before returning keys.

☐ All rooms, closets and cabinets empty	☐ Attic, basement, garage and outdoor areas checked
☐ Appliances emptied and cleaned	☐ Trash removed
☐ Floors and surfaces cleaned	☐ No damage left unreported
☐ Photos taken of every room	☐ Thermostat adjusted as required
☐ Utilities handled as planned	☐ Windows closed and locked
☐ Doors locked	☐ Keys, remotes and access cards returned
☐ Forwarding address provided	☐ Move-out documents saved

CONDITION / KEY RETURN NOTES

Completed by: _____ Date: _____

UNPACK WITHOUT THE OVERWHELM

Make the new home functional before making it perfect.

FIRST 2 HOURS

☐ Confirm utilities and safety	☐ Set up toilet paper and soap
☐ Assemble beds	☐ Place essentials tote in a central area

FIRST DAY

☐ Unpack medications and toiletries	☐ Set up basic kitchen items
☐ Feed and settle pets	☐ Break down or nest empty supplies

FIRST WEEK

☐ Unpack one room at a time	☐ Update the tote inventory
☐ Hang window coverings	☐ Schedule any repairs

BEFORE RETURN / PICKUP

☐ Empty every rented tote	☐ Check lids and equipment
☐ Gather totes in one secure area	☐ Confirm pickup date and time

THE 20-MINUTE RULE

Choose one small zone, set a 20-minute timer, and finish that zone before starting another. Visible progress builds momentum.

PRINTABLE TOTE LABELS

Sized for a 3-inch x 5-inch plastic card holder. Print at "Actual Size" or 100% - do not select "Fit to Page."

ROOM	
TOTE ID	
PRIORITY	☐ OPEN FIRST ☐ STANDARD ☐ STORAGE
CONTENTS	

ROOM	
TOTE ID	
PRIORITY	☐ OPEN FIRST ☐ STANDARD ☐ STORAGE
CONTENTS	

TOTE LABEL

ROOM

TOTE ID

PRIORITY

☐ OPEN FIRST ☐ STANDARD ☐ STORAGE

CONTENTS

TOTE LABEL

ROOM

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PRIORITY

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☐ OPEN FIRST ☐ STANDARD ☐ STORAGE

CONTENTS

TOTE LABEL

ROOM

TOTE ID

PRIORITY

☐ OPEN FIRST ☐ STANDARD ☐ STORAGE

CONTENTS

MOVE NOTES & DECISIONS

Use this page for measurements, reminders, confirmation numbers and questions.

TOP THREE PRIORITIES

NOTES



YOU'RE READY TO MOVE SMARTER.

A successful move is not about doing everything at once. It is about knowing what comes next. Use your timeline, label every tote, keep essentials close, and give yourself permission to take the move one step at a time.

WE DELIVER

YOU PACK & MOVE

WE PICK UP

Need reusable moving totes in our Southern California service area?

Tote & Go Rentals provides clean, durable moving totes delivered to your door and picked up after your move.

661-686-1196 | www.totegorental.com | info@totegorental.com

MOVE SMARTER, NOT HARDER

Skip the cardboard boxes and tape. Choose a cleaner, stackable and more organized way to move.

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