

BUYING A HOME

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Moving Day: How to Stay Sane and Save Some Cash

By Kristin Offiler

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We moved into our house the day we closed, which happened to be just three days before our wedding. Life was chaotic, but after packing and moving and more or less settling in quickly, we learned a couple of important things about moving into a new house. First, it's important to find ways to stay as sane as possible. And secondly, there are lots of ways to save money!

Every situation is unique, but a few things really worked well for us. Since we had

two huge overlapping life events, we planned ahead. We tried to get as much done for the wedding as we could before moving in. And we packed in advance, too. When we left the closing, we knew the moving truck was already packed up and ready to go. That kept us fairly calm even amidst so much craziness. A few hectic days of packing were worth it.

Plan your move as far out as you can so things are packed, organized, and ready to go when you are. And if you have other things that have to be taken care of (oh, like picking up a wedding dress or dropping a check off at the florist), do it as soon as you can. Less to do means less stress for you.

Another way to stay on an even keel while saving money during a move is to **employ friends and family to help**. We were extremely lucky to have so many people who were willing to lend a hand on move-in day; even our friends from out of town who had kids with them stopped over to help us unload the truck. Our unofficial moving crew saved us from having to hire a real one. Our biggest expense was the frozen lemonade we bought for them—it was a hot August day and they were giving us free physical labor, after all.

Another thing we didn't realize how many boxes we were going to need until we started packing. It may not seem like a big expense, but going to a store to buy packing supplies will probably set you back a bit. Instead, we **scrounged for boxes, bubble wrap, packing peanuts, tape**. Once we asked, lots of people offered up supplies they had sitting around or had recently used to move themselves. We spent very little money, if any, just by asking for old boxes from friends and family. You can ask liquor and grocery stores, too. Some are willing to give away their used cardboard boxes.

Take time to slow down, too. This will hopefully keep you from a major stress overload. Our first night in the house, we ate salads in Styrofoam containers on our couch, while the rest of the room was piled high with unpacked boxes and furniture. We had two days left before our wedding. People were flying into town the next day, there were errands to run, loose ends to tie up. But we stopped for a few minutes, listened to the sounds of our new neighborhood, ate dinner, and took it all in.

It was relaxing, entertaining (at least for me—I found it all pretty funny), and best of all, free.

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Kristin Offiler is a freelance writer who recently completed a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing. She lives happily in her new home in the Northeast with her husband and dog. Views expressed by guest bloggers do not necessarily reflect that of LendingTree/Tree.com.

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