

# How To Pack For Your Move

Atlas packing experts give you some tips.



In choosing to do your own packing, you've accepted a major responsibility and challenge. A challenge that, when met properly, can save you money on the total cost of your move. The packing tips provided here are tried-and-true suggestions made by experienced packers to minimize shifting of household goods in transit: shifting may cause damage during the move.

Please take the time to review this page carefully. It could save you a lot of energy, time and frustration. As with any mover, Atlas has the right to inspect packed-by-owner (PBO) items to make sure packing is adequate to protect your goods during transit. If, in the mover's judgment, a container is packed improperly, the carrier may ask the customer to repack it; or, the carrier representative may choose to repack the container and charge you for the service. If any PBO container is damaged in transit, mover's liability may be affected.

Let your Atlas representative help you. As a professional in the field, our Atlas representative can give you suggestions on proper selection of packing materials and containers and can provide helpful hints for protecting your goods. Customer involvement leads to customer satisfaction. Letting Atlas help you makes for a successful move.

## Selecting Your Packing Material ([top](#))

When selecting packing material for your goods, use only strong, corrugated cartons with tops. Boxes, wrapping paper and tissue paper are available from different sources. For a fee, your local Atlas agency

can supply the best quality materials and specially made cartons for all household goods including mattresses, clothing and mirrors. The added protection of mover-provided cartons may help avoid damage that results from use of poorer quality packing materials.

An alternate, cost-saving approach is to collect boxes discarded by your grocery store. Be careful when choosing used boxes. It's not uncommon to find insects and other pests in them. Also save old newspapers for packing material, but remember that ink may rub off and stain clothing or other items.

## **Other packing supplies you may need include:**

- Plastic bags and labels for parts storage and identification.
- Foam peanuts, styrofoam pellets or "popcorn" for added protection.
- Tissue and kraft paper.
- Corrugated paper rolls for figurines and fragile items.
- Heavy-duty packaging tape (1-1/2 to 2 inches wide) for sealing cartons. Atlas does not recommend using duct tape or masking tape.
- Markers and labels for identifying contents of cartons.
- Notebook and pencil for carton identification log.
- Scissors and/or a sharp knife.

## **The Work Area And More ([top](#))**

After you collect your materials, select a work area of sufficient space to handle various size cartons. A strong table with a protective cover will save you time and frustration during the packing process. (We suggest you not use your good dining room table.) Keep your marking pens, tape and scissors conveniently nearby. Spread a neatly stacked, generous amount of packing paper flat on your table.

## **You're almost ready. Only a few more suggestions.**

1. Pack one room at a time. It will help when the time to unpack arrives.
2. Pack a couple of cartons a day, starting well ahead of the move, and watch how easy packing becomes.
3. Mark all boxes, designating room and box number. Your carton identification log should show the number of boxes packed per room, and the total number of cartons packed. (Your Atlas driver will provide an official inventory during loading.) You may want to leave space in your log for a "special comments" section to note carton conditions or location of high value goods. (Please notify your mover of any high value items. You may want the mover to pack these items.)
4. Be sure to have plenty of "filling" material available. When in doubt, use more rather than less.
5. Take extra care to make sure the bottoms of all cartons are secured and will hold the weight of the contents.
6. Always pack heavier items toward the bottom of the box and lighter items toward the top. Try to maintain a per-box weight of 50 pounds or less; it makes moving much easier.

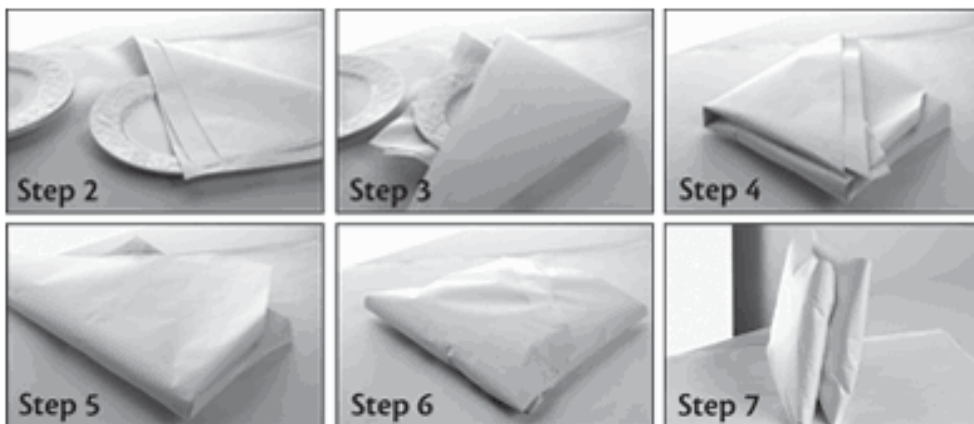
7. A general rule on carton size — the heavier the item, the smaller the carton.

## Packing Methods [\(top\)](#)

Having selected the room to pack first and having prepared the work area and table, you are now ready to begin packing. Here are some basic recommendations for packing various items. More "tips" can be found in the "[Specialized Packing Tips](#)" section of this page.

### Dishware

1. Select a medium-sized carton (or a mover-provided dishpack) and line the bottom of the carton with crumpled packing paper.
2. With packing paper stacked neatly in place on the work table, center one plate on the paper. Grasp a corner on several sheets of packing paper and pull the paper over the plate until sheets completely cover plate.
3. Stack second plate on first and, moving clockwise, grasp a second corner and pull sheets over the second plate.
4. Stack third plate. Grasp remaining two corners, folding two sheets of each corner (one at a time) over plate.
5. Turn wrapped stack of plates upside down onto your paper.
6. Re-wrap entire bundle: Start with one corner of packing paper and pull two sheets over the bundle; cover bundle with next corner, then the third corner; and finally, the fourth. (Non-fragile plates may be packed 5 or 6 to a bundle.)
7. Seal bundle with packing tape.
8. Place the bundle of dishware in a medium-sized box (or dishpack) so that the plates are standing on edge.



Use this technique on all saucers, bread and butter dishes and other dishware. When packing smaller dishes, you may choose to stack in greater quantity.

## Cups

1. With packing paper in place on the work table, position one cup six to eight inches from one of the corners.
2. Now pull the near corner of the paper up and over the cup.
3. Then nest a second cup directly on top, with handle to left (second cup should "nest" itself in packing paper folded over the bottom cups).
4. Pull your two side corners up and over one at a time and tuck corners inside the top cup.
5. Hold bottom and top cups in position and roll cups to the remaining corner. Fragile mixing bowls may be rolled in the same manner.
6. Place cups in a vertical position, lips down, near the top of your box. Do not stack heavy items on top of cups.

More delicate cups, like china, should be wrapped one at a time. Antique glass or china should be stuffed with crumpled tissue and wrapped one at a time.

## Glasses and Stemware

1. Glasses and stemware should be stuffed with crumpled tissue or packing paper before wrapping.
2. Lay glass or stemware on the corner of packing paper and roll it one or two full rotations (depending on size); pull sides of packing paper up and over glass/stemware and continue rolling to the far corner. Corrugated paper rolls may be used for added protection.
3. Glasses and stemware should be placed toward the top of your box. Heavier items (dishware, pitchers, etc.) should be placed toward the bottom of the box. Very delicate glassware and stemware should be placed in a vertical position, lips down, not on their sides.

As you pack each layer of a box, use crumpled packing paper to assure a snug fit wherever there's a gap. All boxes that contain "fragile" items should be so marked.

## Specialized Packing Tips [\(top\)](#)

The remaining section of this page suggests how individual household items can be better prepared for moving. When wrapping items with packing paper, remember that the methods for packing dishware, cups, glassware and stemware are fundamental and have similar applications to many other household items.

**Appliances and Utensils** — Wrap and place small appliances and utensils in sturdy cartons with heavier items on the bottom. Have an authorized serviceman prepare all large appliances (refrigerator, stove, freezer, washer, dryer, etc.) for moving. Be sure to defrost, clean and dry applicable appliances before movers arrive.

**Barbeque Grills and Propane Tanks** — Wrap grates and briquets separately in newspaper (or place all briquets into a grocery bag) and place parts in carton. Pad carton with paper to reduce movement of contents. Propane tanks will not be accepted even if they have been "purged" by an authorized gas grill distributor.

**Bedding** — Fold and pack all pillowcases, sheets and towels in clean, medium-sized, 3 cu. ft. cartons; and blankets, quilts and comforters in large, 4.5 cu. ft. cartons. Most beds will be dismantled by Atlas and set up in your new home. When requested, mattresses will be placed in special cartons by the mover. You can help protect mattresses by covering them with old sheets or mattress covers.

**Books** — Pack on edge in small, 1.5 cu. ft. cartons. Alternate bindings. Don't overload cartons. (A good rule of thumb is to limit individual carton weight to 50 pounds.)

**Bureau Drawers** — Don't overload. Too heavy a load in drawers can cause damage to bureau during move. Remove valuables and any items that might break or leak.

**Canned Goods and Other Non-Frozen Foods** — Pack upright in a 1.5 cu. ft. carton with no more than 24-30 cans per carton. Don't attempt to move perishables. Wrap glass containers and boxed foods individually and pack in small cartons.

**Cars and Motorcycles** — Cars and motorcycles shipped on the moving van should be drained nearly empty of fuel. Motorcycle batteries should be disconnected. Automobile antifreeze should be ample to protect against severe cold in winter.

**China and Glassware** — Atlas recommends that you pack your delicate china and glassware in mover-provided dishpacks. Glassware and china cups should be stuffed with tissue. Don't nest unwrapped glasses. Pack plates, platters and saucers on edges, not flat, and layer with padding between each layer as well as on the top and bottom of the carton (label these boxes "Fragile").

**Clocks** — Remove or secure pendulum in large clocks. Grandfather clocks should be prepared for moving by expert servicemen.

**Clothing** — Place clothes on hangers in wardrobe cartons (available from your Atlas agency). Fold and pack other clothing in clean cartons.

**Drapes and Curtains** — Hang drapes over crossbars in wardrobe cartons, or pack, folded, in clean cartons. Remove curtains from rods, fold and pack in cartons or bureau drawers.

**Firearms** — All handguns and ammunition must be transported by the customer. Other unloaded firearms bearing legible serial numbers must be registered with your Atlas representative before the move.

**Flammables and Combustibles** — Flammable liquids and aerosol cans must not be packed. Changes in temperature and pressure can cause them to leak, or even explode. For your own protection, you should know that if you pack these items and they cause damage to your shipment or others, you, not

your mover, will be held liable.

**Frozen Foods and Plants** — Because of the delicate and perishable nature of these items, movers are prohibited from accepting these packed items when your shipment is being transported more than 150 miles and/or delivery will not be accomplished within 24 hours from the time of loading. Frozen food shipped within these guidelines should be packed in a cooler with dry ice, not in your freezer. Transporting freezers containing frozen food could crack the liners, shelves, or baskets. Please consult with your Atlas representative for further advice about moving these items.

**Lamps and Lampshades** — Remove bulbs, harps and shades. Roll up cord. Pack lamps with bedding or wrap separately and place upright in clean, tissue-lined carton. Wrap harp and finial (decorative knob) with packing paper and tape to inside wall of carton that contains shade. Wrap shades in tissue, not newspaper. Place upright in large, tissue-lined cartons.

**Linens** — Fold neatly and place in clean cartons or in bureau drawers. (Don't overload.)

**Medicines** — Seal caps with masking tape. Wrap and pack upright in small cartons. Some prescription drugs, such as insulin, lose their potency if exposed to heat. Check with your pharmacist before transporting with your shipment. Atlas recommends that you carry all medications with you.

**Microwave Ovens** — Remove all loose articles inside the oven, such as cookware, glass shelves and carousels. Wrap loose articles and place in a separate container. Tape the door shut with an "X"-pattern over door and glass to protect the glass. Use the original manufacturer's carton if available. When the original carton is not available, follow instructions for packing "Personal Computers and Diskettes" below.

**Mirrors, Paintings and Pictures** — Tell your Atlas representative about valuable paintings for special care. Wrap small mirrors, pictures, paintings and frames in unprinted newspaper or paper pads (available from your Atlas agency) and place on edge in cartons or mirror cartons. Never place printed newspaper directly against paintings. Large wall or dresser mirrors will be taken down by the movers and placed in special cartons.



**Personal Computers and Diskettes** — Pack computer equipment in original cartons when available. Otherwise, use strong, corrugated cartons and place protective padding on the bottom of the carton. Be

sure your hard drive is "parked" and ready for transport (newer models may not require "parking"). Wrap an old blanket or protective pad around the item and place it in its carton. Place additional padding between the carton and the computer. Wrap cords separately, label to identify usage and place in a plastic bag away from delicate surfaces. Non-detachable cords should also be wrapped. Place cords between the padded computer and the carton.

Computer diskettes can be wrapped in tissue paper and placed in a small carton. Do not pack any magnetized items such as radios, batteries, computer equipment, etc. with your diskettes. It could erase your data.

If you choose to include them with your shipment, Atlas recommends that you make a back-up copy of the diskettes containing important information to hand-carry to your destination. The inside of a trailer gets very warm, especially in the summer. Since diskettes are heat sensitive, shipping them is at your own risk.

**Phonographs and Compact Disc Players** — Use original cartons and packing materials when available. Secure changer and tonearm of phonograph. Tighten down screws (located on the top of turntable) to stabilize platter. Wrap dust cover in soft tissue or pad with old linen to protect against surface scratches. Wrap unit with an old blanket and place upright in carton. Label box "FRAGILE" and "THIS SIDE UP." To stabilize the laser on a compact disc player, replace the transport screws (normally located on the bottom of the unit). Refer to your owner's manual for further information.

**Records, Tapes and CDs** — Layer the bottom of a small carton with shredded or crushed paper. Records without sleeves should be wrapped with tissue paper or plastic wrap to prevent scratching. Pack records and CDs on edge (do not lay flat). Brace at both ends using a hardback book or layer pieces of cardboard to provide a snug fit. Cassette tapes should be in their protective cases. If not, wrap individual tapes in paper. Place either vertically or horizontally on layers of shredded or crushed paper. Fill in with paper as needed. Mark box "FRAGILE".

**Rugs** — Leave large rugs to be rolled up by movers.

**Silverware** — Wrap each piece in cloth or low sulphur content paper (available from your Atlas agency) to prevent tarnishing. Use an old blanket or moving pad as a wrap to prevent scratching the silverware chest.

**Tools and Lawn Equipment** — Drain oil and fuel from power tools such as leaf blowers, trimmers and chain saws (do not ship flammables under any circumstances). Pack hand tools in small, strong cartons. Wrap separately if valuable.

**Video Tapes** — Place videos on edge in a small carton. When stacking, layer with paper in between to protect from scratching. Fill in around edges with crumpled paper to secure.

**Waterbed Mattresses** — Drain all water from the waterbed and, grasping internal baffle systems with external vinyl, fold mattress 20 inches at a time. Adjust folds to avoid making creases across individual baffles. Consult your owner's manual for special instructions concerning the care and transportation of

your mattress. Do not place your mattress in a carton with sharp or pointed objects. For further information, request a copy of "How To Move Your Waterbed."

## Materials That Can Be Purchased From Your Atlas Agent [\(top\)](#)

### Cartons

- **1.5 cube (small)**  
For heavier items like books, files, magazines, photo albums, canned goods, grain products, hand tools and other sturdy items.
- **3 cube (medium)**  
For small lamp shades, small kitchen appliances (such as toaster, coffee maker, can opener or iron), pots and pans, shoes, hats or small breakables.
- **4.5 cube (large)**  
For medium lamp shades, and small or medium kitchen appliances (such as upright mixer or a wok).
- **6 cube (extra large)**  
For large lampshades or items that are too big to fit in 4.5 cube cartons.
- **Dishpack (china barrel)**  
For dinner place settings, stemware, crystal or glassware, figurines, table lamps, vases, small pictures, mirrors or glass shelves.
- **Mirror (2 or 4 section)**  
For pictures, artwork, glass table tops (less than 7 sq. ft.), dresser mirrors or other high value items.
- **Upright Wardrobe**  
For garments or floor-to-ceiling drapes.
- **Mattress**  
For crib, twin, double and queen/king mattresses.
- **Miscellaneous**  
For pole lamps, golf clubs, fishing rods, rifles or shotguns.

### Materials Guide

- **Corrugated or Interleaved Sheets**  
For placing between dishes, saucers or other flat items. Can be used to construct cylinders for delicate items.
- **Tissue Paper**  
For stuffing fragile cups and goblets, and wrapping delicate figurines or artificial flower arrangements.
- **Non-tarnish Paper**  
For silverware, brass and pewter items.
- **Brown Kraft Paper**

For large items such as pictures, mirrors or lamp bases.

- **Cushioned Paper**

For easily scratched items.

- **Wax Paper**

For oil paintings.

- **Bubble Pack or Foam Peanuts**

For high value porcelain figures, model ships or large crystal carvings.