

Your Moving Checklist: 15 Things to Do Before Moving Into a New Home

Welcome to the ultimate moving checklist—a list of all the things you should do before moving into your new home.

Let's face it: With all the excitement of new digs, it's easy to forget some important tasks. Plus, certain things are best done while the house is still vacant, long before your boxes and furniture are parked in the place. Put these things off, and it becomes all the harder to tackle them later.

So before you move—or in case you *have* moved and are wondering how many of these you hit—check out this moving checklist to know what should be done long before you settle in.

1. Turn on utilities

Electric, gas, water—don't assume they'll be on and operational when you arrive. Instead, get all your utilities set up ahead of time.

“Chances are the seller will be turning them off as of the closing date,” says **Greg Beckman**, an Annapolis, MD, real estate agent.

2. Set up internet and cable service

Plan on having a “Property Brothers” marathon while you're unpacking? Have your home wired for service before you arrive, advises **Julie McDonough**, a real estate agent in Southern California.

3. Order an energy audit

One of the best ways to cut your energy bill is to order a home energy audit, says **Rachel Foy**, a real estate agent in Newton, MA.

An energy audit is a professional assessment of your new home's overall energy performance. This will show you how to make your house more energy-efficient (think insulating the attic, weatherstripping windows, sealing air leaks in crawl spaces), so it's best to have one done and make related repairs before moving in.

A home energy audit costs, on average, about \$215 to \$600, but some utility companies will do them for free.

4. Do a deep clean

“It's never easier to do a deep clean than when the house is empty,” Beckman says. A cleaning service costs around \$150. Don't mind cleaning the home yourself? Check out our House Cleaning Guide, with tips on how to clean a kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, and beyond.

Source: Daniel Bortz Realtor.com

5. Change the locks

This is a basic safety measure; however, “it can’t be done until after closing,” says **Chris Dossman**, a real estate agent in Indianapolis.

6. Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

Make sure these are functioning properly to protect your new home from fires and other emergencies. Also, read our recommendation of the best type of smoke detector.

7. Set up the alarm system

If the home already has a security system installed, call the provider to confirm that service is set up, says **Jennifer Baxter**, associate broker at Re/Max Regency in Suwanee, GA.

8. Tackle major home renovations

The last thing you want to do is have to tiptoe around a construction zone after you move in. So, if you want to repaint the home, resand floors, or make any other renovations, do them in advance.

“These projects are best done when the house is empty and usually don’t happen once the furniture shows up,” says Foy.

One caveat: “You have the right to bring in vendors for quotes, but work cannot start until you own the home,” she adds.

9. Make repairs

Before moving in, Baxter recommends hiring a handyman to do any repairs that the seller didn’t agree to make. Check out our tips on how to hire a great handyman (or woman).

10. Get a home warranty

Imagine waking up one morning to a busted boiler or leaking washer in your brand-new home. A home warranty covers the cost of repairing many home appliances—and basic coverage starts at only about \$300, says **Shawna Bell** of Landmark Home Warranty.

11. Buy fire extinguishers

Get one for every level of your home, make sure you know how to use it, and plan an escape route in the event of a fire.

12. Get to know your new house

Figure out where the circuit breaker box and main water shut-off valve are before moving in, so you know how to turn off the electricity or water in an emergency. Also, consider labeling your home's electrical panel.

13. Childproof the home

Have kids? Every year, millions of children are hospitalized because of accidents around the home, according to Safe Kids Worldwide. So, before your bundle of joy starts toddling around the house, take steps to fully childproof your new home.

14. Forward your mail

Don't forget to update your address with the United States Postal Service. (Visit the Official Postal Service Change of Address website.) The postal service charges a \$1 fee to verify your identity when changing your address online, so you'll need a credit or debit card.

Note: The postal service will stop forwarding periodicals to your new address 60 days after you move, so alert magazines and newspapers that you've moved.

15. Update your billing address

Alert your credit card companies, banks, or any other financial institutions of your new address. Also, if you frequently buy anything from a website, you can avoid a future headache by updating your profile with your new address.