

Moving Day

6 Steps for an Easier Senior Living Transition



Moving to a senior living community can feel complicated! You're balancing logistics, emotions, and family input. This guide will give you structure, confidence, and practical tools for the move.

Step 1: Rethinking Downsizing

It's usually easier to move first, then worry about downsizing tasks later.

Tips to Simplify Downsizing

- Focus only on what's needed for the new apartment right now.
- Measure the new space to make sure furniture fits.
- Plan small touches that recreate what felt good about the previous home (photos, art, etc.).
- Coordinate with donation centers and estate planners.



Step 2: Packing Smart

Breathe. You don't have to bring everything: packing for senior living is different. Think less "move the whole house" and more "bring what's essential and meaningful."

What to Bring

- **Clothing:** Seasonal basics, comfortable shoes, cozy pajamas, robe.
- **Furniture & Decor:** Bed, favorite chair, side table, small dining set, framed photos, quilt/blanket.
- **Personal Items:** Toiletries, medications, non-slip bath mat, important documents.
- **Electronics:** TV, phone or tablet, chargers, small speaker.

What to Leave Behind

- **Appliances:** Everything big is already provided by your community.
- **Bulky Furniture:** Large pieces may not fit or be needed.
- **Extensive Kitchenware:** No need for full sets of pots, pans, or serving dishes.
- **Yard Tools and Outdoor Gear**
- **Duplicate Linens and Towels:** The community will handle housekeeping.

Step 3: Beyond the Boxes

Notify doctors, pharmacies, and insurance agents about the move.

Understand community move-in **expectations** (times, elevators, etc.).

Cancel or transfer utilities, subscriptions, and memberships related to the home.

Take photos of the family home before making changes ❤️.

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Step 4: Making it Feel Like Home



"If they walk in and see clutter everywhere, it can be overwhelming. Having this ready to go helps them feel settled right away."

- Sarah Gebhart, Executive Director, The Heritage at Sterling Ridge

Help your loved one walk into a space that already feels familiar.

- If possible, set up the apartment before they arrive
- Arrange furniture similarly to their old home
- Place keepsakes, photos, and favorite blankets in visible spots
- Keep the "beloved chair" in a familiar location.

Step 5: Moving Day Expectations

In the First Few Hours

- Staff will do safety checks and make sure the apartment is set up properly
- Staff will review health details, medications, and provide a call pendant
- Boxes should be kept minimal so the space feels open and safe

On the First Day

- Resident ambassadors and staff may stop by and introduce themselves
- Set the bed and chair up quickly for comfort
- Family should help unpack essentials (toiletries, clothing, photos) so the space feels good

In the First Week

- Gentle encouragement to join meals and group activities - no pressure!
- Regular staff check-ins to answer questions and help
- Familiar routines are reestablished to help living in the community feel natural.

Step 6: Settling In

The first 30-60 days in a new community are an adjustment period. Here's what we recommend encouraging your loved one to do:

Join new neighbors for meals and activities

Explore the community spaces (dining room, activities, outdoor areas)

Stick to familiar routines as much as possible for stability.