

Sustainable Moving Guide and Tips

Moving is a necessary part of college life, but it tends to create waste. According to the City of Madison, the August move-out results in **1 million pounds of waste** sent to the landfill every year! Whether you are moving from a dorm, a house, or an apartment, it is important to plan ahead to make your move easier and more sustainable. Below we offer some helpful tips!

While Moving: Keep Safe During COVID-19

Throughout the moving process, it is crucial that you take measures to protect the safety of yourself and others.

1. **Follow safety guidelines** put forth by health experts, including wearing masks while indoors and washing your hands frequently. See [Dane County Public Health guidelines](#).
2. **Stagger your moving times** with others in the apartment building or house so that groups of friends or family members aren't running into each other.
3. **Wipe down items** you have bought or sold with disinfectant and/or let the items sit for a few days to make sure they aren't carrying any viruses into a new location.

3 Weeks Before Moving: Pack Smart

Starting early allows you time to go through your belongings and decide what you will take to your new place. This way, you will avoid stress and reduce the likelihood of creating last-minute waste.

1. **Create a thorough, practical list of items you'll need in your new place.** Sort items into "keep," "donate" or "sell" categories.
2. **Locate suitcases and reusable boxes and bags to pack in** rather than purchasing new cardboard boxes. Wrap fragile items in fabric or clothing instead of using newspaper or bubble wrap.
3. **Pack kitchen items last;** this will reduce waste from take-out eating.

2 Weeks Before Moving: Donate or Sell

Listing items for sale early on increases your chances of selling them before you have to move. Similarly, donating items early on allows you to make trips to donation centers before they become excessively busy or you run out of time.

1. **Donate to second-hand/thrift stores or shelters.** Clothes, furniture, and functioning appliances are all great items to donate, which keeps them out of the landfill and decreases the need to produce new products.
 - a. **Check if there is a Goodwill donation station in your apartment building.** Donation bins for small to medium items can be found in many apartment buildings near campus, including Embassy, Equinox, Grand Central, Henry



Street, Highland, The Hub, La Ville, Lucky, Park Regent, Regent Street, Vantage Point, Varsity Quarters, and more!

- b. Identify a donation destination for larger items**, such as Agrace Thrift Store, Boomerang Resale Store, Dane County Humane Society, Goodwill, Habitat for Humanity, Porchlight, Salvation Army, St. Vincent De Paul, or YWCA.
- 2. Sell clothing or apartment items that are in good condition.** This extends the life of these items, reduces the need for the production of new products, and can be a great way to make a little money.
 - a. Check with friends who might be willing to purchase an item.** This can save you the trouble of trying to sell to or purchase from strangers.
 - b. Post unwanted items on online marketplaces**, such as Facebook Marketplace, Craigslist, Poshmark, Depop, ThredUP, or a similar platform.

1 Week Before Moving: Deal with Waste

If you have items that cannot be sold or donated (e.g. broken furniture or appliances), make a plan to get rid of them. Keep in mind that from August 3-14 the Streets Division will empty recycling and trash carts daily at 6:30am.

- 1. Do NOT place any TVs, laptops, or cell phones on the curb.** These and many other electronics are banned from landfills and must be dropped off at a [recycling site](#). Specialty items like batteries can also be dropped off at these locations.
- 2. Purchase a sticker for appliances and other large items that have a curbside pickup fee**, or drop items off at a [recycling site](#). Small appliances like toasters and blenders have no fee.
- 3. Do NOT bag recyclable items;** keep them loose. If recyclable items do not fit in the cart, put them in a clear plastic bag; do not use cardboard boxes.
- 4. Review the City of Madison [Recyclopedia](#)** for more information about recycling.
- 5. Find additional information about moving** on the [City of Madison](#) website.

1 Day Before Moving: Clean

The last clean of your apartment does not have to be wasteful. Below are some easy ways to clean sustainably.

- 1. Use reusable rags/cloths** to wipe down surfaces.
- 2. Opt for certified B Corp cleaning brands** that don't use harmful chemicals, or create your own cleaners with vinegar and alcohol bases.
- 3. Choose mops without disposable cleaning pads.** Sweep and mop before using a vacuum in order to save energy.
- 4. Take leftover cleaning products** with you or donate to [Clean Sweep](#) at the Dane County Landfill (please see their website for updated guidelines relating to COVID-19).

Happy Moving!

