

PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL ITEMS

Movers are very good at moving most things, but there are two categories of items you should NEVER turn over to a mover.

Items Whose Value to You Greatly Exceeds Their Intrinsic or Insurable Value

Examples: Photographs
Scrapbooks
Trophies
Momentoes
Hobby Collections

Should such items be lost or damaged in transit, the mover or insurer won't place the value of the item anywhere near what the item's owner would.

Small Items of Unusual Value

Examples: Card Collections
Money
Watches

Stamp Collections
Coin Collections
Documents

Jewelry
Gems

If your mover provides Transit Insurance through an Independent Insurance carrier, as does Paul Arpin, you will find that such items are NOT covered by your policy. Even if your mover provides liability coverage on such items, you will have to provide independent proof of value. Otherwise, you'll only be reimbursed at a rate of \$100 per pound which could be inadequate.

In both these cases, you are far better off hand-carrying such items.

The Signed Inventory Largely Determines The Fate of Any Claim You File

When your belongings are loaded into the truck on moving day, the driver creates an inventory, listing each item, and noting, if appropriate, it's condition. Then at your destination, you are asked to check off each item as it comes off the truck, noting any changes in it's condition since loading day. At the conclusion of the unloading process, you are asked to sign the inventory, which goes into Western Relocation's record of your move.

It is your right and responsibility to see to it that the inventory is accurate and complete at both ends of the move. Once you have signed the inventory, you have accepted it as accurate. You should make sure to note and initial any disagreement you have with the mover's comments regarding condition.

If you later file a claim, it is matched against the inventory. If you claim damage to an item, but didn't note the damage on the inventory, or if you claim an item missing, but it's checked off and signed for, your claim will probably be denied.

You should make every effort to be present for loading and unloading. If you can not be present, you should designate a representative to be present with the power to sign documents. The driver will not load or unload unless you or your representative is on hand.

You Must Be Able to provide Proof of Damage For A Claim To Be Honored

If you discover that one or more items are damaged during the move process, you MUST retain in it damaged condition until the mover or it's representative has examined it. Otherwise, the mover is within it's rights to deny liability.

Transit Insurance Does Not Cover “Mechanical Derangement”

Most valuation coverage extends to external damages to appliances and electronic items (such as computer equipment) when the damage can be identified as the result of mishandling.

However, malfunctions of sensitive mechanical or electronic equipment that cannot be specifically traced to mishandling are considered “mechanical derangement”. In such cases, claims will probably not be honored.

Although most movers are extra careful with such items, you may want to consider having your computer shipped by a specialist in handling delicate items. This is especially true if you need computer for work. In addition, if you ship your computer separately, it will arrive at your need home much faster.

All Estimates Are Not Created Equal

If you receive several estimates and there is a significant differences in the prices quoted, be sure to look very closely before deciding to go with the lowest bid.

First, check to see whether you’ve been offered a “binding” or “non-binding” estimate. A “non-binding” estimate is just a guess. The amount you will be charged is based on actual weight, distance and services performed, NOT the amount of the estimate.

A good tip that you have been “lowballed” is that the estimate of the weight, or packing time, or packing containers is significantly lower than the others.

Even if the low cost bid proves to be binding, or “best price” estimate, the difference might lie in what are known as “Accessorial Services”. This is a whole array of additional services ranging from extra pickups, to stair carries, to special crating. If one or more of these appear on other estimates but not on the low one, and you choose the low-price mover, you’ll likely be asked to sign an addendum before the mover start to unload your possessions. The addendum provides these services, but raises the cost of your move at the same time.

The moving industry is highly competitive, and a low price nothing more than that. Generally there is not much of a price discrepancy between estimates from major national van lines.

So remember with very low bids, “If it looks to good to be true, it probably is!”

Specific Delivery Dates Cannot Be Guaranteed On Most Moves

Whenever you contract for a move, you are given what is know as a “delivery spread”. This is the range of dates within which the mover contracts to deliver your possessions to your new home. Often, pressed by a customer for a specific date, the sales representative may say something like, “I’m sure we can be there on that day”. As a result, the customer plans for a delivery on that day, expects delivery on that day, and as often happens, is disappointed.

No one other than the corporate dispatcher has the authority to promise a specific delivery date. While most dispatchers do their best to honor a customer’s wishes, even they can be overruled by unexpectedly bad weather or traffic conditions, or the need to make maximum use of the space in the truck.

If a specific delivery date is absolutely essential, you CAN get it by specifying “expedited service”, or if your shipment is very large, “exclusive use of truck”. However, you are charged a significant extra amount for such service.

By the way, if your shipment is delivered LATER than the last day in the delivery spread, and your shipment weight is over 5,000 pounds, you are entitled to monetary compensation for every day of delay.