



AMSA

Media Relations Toolkit



CONSUMER TIPS

1. Be careful if you choose your mover from the Internet. Many “movers” on the Internet are unlicensed and untrained, and simply pretending to be legitimate movers.

Others aren't movers at all; instead, they operate as brokers. Moving brokers usually do not own or operate any trucks or moving equipment themselves. They instead collect a deposit from you and then arrange for your move to be handled by another company, so you may not have control over who actually moves your belongings.

Check them out carefully before you decide to use a broker; usually you will not have the same consumer protection as with a licensed interstate mover. And, after the broker collects your deposit, you may find it difficult to get them interested in helping you in the event of a claim or a dispute with the mover that was arranged for you.

Also, consider using a mover that is located in your area, and, if you have time, stop in or drive by their facility. Visiting a facility that is well-kept instead of an operation in a run-down office park with no warehouse or just a few dirty and dented vehicles can often help you decide which mover to use.

The best way to avoid a problem from the start is to hire a certified ProMover. Find a certified ProMover near you at Moving.org.

2. Your mover should come to your home to check out what you want to move and provide you with a written estimate.

Be especially careful if a mover tells you that he can provide you with an estimate without a visit to your home, and that all he needs is a telephone survey or an inventory of your goods that you provide online. If a mover you are considering isn't interested enough to come to your home to perform a survey, then you shouldn't be interested in using that mover.

Ask the mover for a **written estimate** of the charges that will apply. Be sure to comparison shop and get estimates from at least three different movers. Most movers offer two different types of estimates - binding and non-binding. Both have their advantages and

disadvantages, so be sure to understand which type of estimate you have received from your mover:

Binding estimates are written agreements that guarantee the cost of your move based on the estimated weight of your shipment. **Non-binding estimates** are not guaranteed, and the final cost will be based on the actual weight of your shipment, rather than the estimated weight. The charge quoted to you in a non-binding estimate may be lower than that provided in a binding estimate, but there is no guarantee that the final cost will not be more than the original, non-binding, estimate.

Another type of estimate used by many movers is the **not-to-exceed estimate**. These types of estimates are called various things by various movers, such as “guaranteed price” or “price protection,” but the end result is the same - an estimate based on a binding estimate **or** on actual cost **whichever is lower**. Like a binding estimate, a not-to-exceed estimate must be provided to you in writing and is binding on the carrier.

Not-to-exceed estimates differ, though, in that the binding estimate amount becomes the maximum amount that you will be obligated to pay for the services outlined on the estimate. This maximum amount alternates with the charges applicable based on the actual weight of the shipment, with the customer paying the lesser of the two amounts. When you accept a not-to-exceed estimate, the move is performed at actual weight, based on the tariff rate levels, with the binding estimate representing the maximum charge that you will have to pay.

3. Be sure to show the estimator everything you want moved, including items in garages, sheds, attics, and in any other storage areas, along with yard equipment like swing sets. Add-ons after the estimate can drive up your costs and cause delays.
4. All moving companies are required to assume liability for the value of the goods that they transport. There are **different levels of liability**, however and you should be aware of the amount of protection provided and the associated valuation charges. Ask your mover to provide you with a written description of the levels of liability that they provide in the event that articles in your shipment are inadvertently lost or damaged.
5. If your mover doesn't provide you with one, ask for a copy of *Your Rights and Responsibilities When You Move*, extremely helpful brochure that explains the moving process and what you have the right to expect from your mover.
6. **Be sure that all agreements between you and the mover are in writing.** Get a copy of everything that you sign, especially the Bill of Lading, and read it carefully. Ask questions about anything you don't understand.