

## Five Ways to Save on Moving Costs

About 36 million people, or 11.7% of Americans, moved between 2012 and 2013, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. If you're in the process of moving, you're probably juggling a lot of tasks, including worrying about the potentially high costs. The Massachusetts Society of CPAs offers these five tips for saving when relocating.

### 1. Sort Through Your Stuff

Don't pay to move belongings that you don't need or want any more, or that won't realistically fit into your new home. One of the things a mover's estimate will be based on is the volume of possessions being transported, so you'll want to pare down what you're taking before you move. If your elliptical machine is dusty and covered with old clothes, it's probably not worth paying to ship it across the country. You may even find that a good purge is a profitable project if you sell your unwanted items at a garage sale or flea market. Another idea is to donate them to charity. Be sure to get a receipt so you can deduct your contributions on next year's taxes.

### 2. Avoid Busy Season

Many industries have hectic times of year, and for the moving business it's the months of June through August, when people are scrambling to get into their new homes before school reopens in the fall. That's also when moving prices are highest. If you have a choice, you'll save money by scheduling your move between October and April. No matter when you move, try to book your date well in advance. If the mover's schedule is already pretty full when you call, they may set a higher price, so try to be first on their list.

### 3. Shop Around

The lowest price isn't necessarily the best deal, since you'll want to find a reliable mover that will get your goods where they're supposed to be without damaging them. To get the most value for your moving dollar, begin by asking for recommendations from friends and family. Pick at least three reputable companies and ask them to come to your house to provide an estimate so there are no surprises on moving day. Getting several estimates can make it easier to negotiate and settle on the best choice. Be sure to ask if there are any additional costs for stairs, heavy or fragile items, or anything else.

### 4. Use Your Own Packing Materials

Movers will charge extra for boxes or other supplies, so it's best to provide your own. You can find boxes at local businesses. You can also use your own suitcases or empty storage bins. Another option is to rent a moving container. Container rental companies deliver a storage container to your door, you pack it and then they move it to your new home.

### 5. Don't Forget the Deduction

If you are moving because you have been transferred to a new location or you are starting a new job, you may be able to deduct your moving costs on your federal tax return. To qualify, your new workplace must be at least 50 miles farther from your old home than your old job location was from your old home. If you are now commuting 30 miles a day to work and your new job will require an 80 mile commute, then you could deduct the costs of moving to be closer to the new office. If you are newly employed, your new job location must be at least 50

miles from your old home. If you meet these and other qualifications, you can deduct most of your moving expenses.

### **Your Local CPA Can Help**

Whenever you're trying to cut costs or planning for your future, your local CPA can offer the expertise and advice you need. Contact him or her with all your financial questions. To find a CPA in your area, contact the MSCPA at (617) 556-4000 or [www.msccaonline.org/findcpa](http://www.msccaonline.org/findcpa).

### **About the Massachusetts Society of CPAs:**

The Massachusetts Society of Certified Public Accountants, Inc. is the state professional association of certified public accountants, representing over 11,000 members in public accounting practice, industry and business, government and education. The Society works to develop and maintain high professional standards and offers a wide array of legislative, technical and referral services to its members.