

The 8 Week Canadian Moving Timeline

Every task, every deadline, every Canadian-specific rule. Verified against CRA, Service Canada, Canada Post, and provincial licensing authorities for 2026.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Start 8 weeks before moving day. Check off each task as you complete it. If you have less than 8 weeks, do the tasks out of order but never skip Week 3 (utilities and address changes) or the provincial deadlines table on page 2. Those contain the legal requirements that cost you fines or insurance coverage if missed.

Why 8 Weeks Matters

- Canadian Association of Movers companies book out 6 to 8 weeks ahead (May through August peak).
- Fiber internet installs take 14 to 21 days of lead time in most provinces.
- Some provinces give you only 6 to 14 days to update your driver's licence after moving.
- Canada Post mail forwarding needs 3 business days to activate.
- School record transfers take 2 to 4 weeks to process.
- Proper decluttering saves \$500 to \$1,500 on moving costs alone.

WEEK 8

Research & Budget

The cheapest movers book out now.

- Get 3 mover quotes from Canadian Association of Movers certified companies.
Non-CAM movers are the top source of hostage load scams in Canada.
- Run a moving cost calculator to compare full-service, container, and DIY.
- Set your moving budget including deposit, fuel surcharge, supplies, utility deposits.
- Decide your moving date. Mid-month Tue-Thu is cheapest. Rates jump 20-30% on weekends and month-end.
- Start decluttering. Every box you don't move saves weight, money, time.
- Create a moving binder for receipts, quotes, contracts, inventory lists.
- Research your new neighbourhood: pharmacy, grocery, clinic, transit, schools.

WEEK 7**Book the Mover**

Lock in the quote in writing.

- Sign the moving contract. Get a binding quote, not an estimate.
- Confirm insurance coverage. Basic Released Value is 60 cents/lb. Buy Full Value Protection for anything over \$500.
- Ask about hidden fees in writing: stair, long carry, shuttle, fuel, packing material markup.
- Verify Canadian Association of Movers membership. Ask for their CAM number, check on mover.net.
- Book elevator reservations at both condos. \$100-\$300, book weeks ahead.
- Book parking permits for the truck with your city. \$30-\$50 per day.
- Arrange pet and child care for moving day.

WEEK 6**Notify Schools & Employer**

The week most Canadians forget.

- Request school records transfer. Takes 2-4 weeks in most provinces.
- Register kids at new school. Many boards require in-person enrolment with proof of address.
- Notify employer and HR. Update payroll address for T4 delivery.
- Book time off for moving week: minimum 2 days before, 2 days after.
- Start eating from the freezer. Movers won't take frozen or refrigerated food.
- Transfer prescriptions. Talk to pharmacy or request 3-month supply to bridge the gap.
- Arrange vet transfer if moving far. Request pet records.

WEEK 5**Supplies & Declutter**

Source free boxes. Purge ruthlessly.

- Get free moving boxes from LCBO, Costco, Dollarama, grocery stores, bookstores.
Ask for weekday mornings when deliveries arrive.
- Buy packing supplies: tape (6+ rolls), bubble wrap, paper, markers, mattress bags, dish packs.
- Do your full declutter. Room by room. Four piles: keep, donate, sell, toss.
- List items on Facebook Marketplace or Kijiji. Price to sell fast, not high.
- Schedule donation pickups: Diabetes Canada 1-800-505-5525, Salvation Army, Value Village.
- Use up consumables: pantry, cleaning products, toiletries.
- Book hazardous waste drop-off day at municipal depot.

WEEK 4**Pack Non-Essentials**

Books, decor, off-season clothes.

- Pack books, decor, artwork, seasonal clothing. Heavy items in small boxes (max 25 lbs).
- Label every box: room, contents summary, unique number.
- Keep a master box inventory spreadsheet. Note boxes with valuables.
- Photograph electronics setups before unplugging.
- Back up important computer files to cloud or external drive.
- Digitize key documents: birth certificates, passports, insurance, medical records.
- Service your vehicle if driving to new home.
- Order internet installation for new home. Fiber needs 14-21 days lead time.

WEEK 3**Utilities & Canadian Address Changes**

Federal and provincial paperwork.

- Schedule utility transfers: hydro, gas, water, internet. Disconnect day after move, connect day before.
- Update CRA address. CRA My Account (immediate) or call 1-800-959-8281.
- Update Service Canada: EI, CPP, OAS, Canada Child Benefit, Canadian Dental Care Plan.
- Start Canada Post Mail Forwarding. 3 business days to activate. \$110 for 6 months.
First Class only. Magazines forwarded 60 days.
- Notify bank, credit cards, insurance, investments. Most allow online updates.
- Update auto insurance. Premiums change with postal code. Never drive uninsured.
- Update home insurance. Start new policy day of move. Never let coverage lapse.
- Update doctor, dentist, vet. Transfer records if moving far.
- Update subscriptions: Amazon, Netflix, meal kits, gym, magazines, deliveries.

WEEK 2**Pack the Rest**

Kitchen, bathroom, bedroom.

- Pack kitchen except daily essentials. Dishes wrapped, vertical in dish-pack boxes.
- Pack bathroom except toiletries for move week. Liquids in zip-top bags.
- Drain fuel from mowers, BBQs, snow blowers. Movers won't take fuel.
- Dispose of propane, paint, chemicals, batteries at hazardous waste depot.
- Confirm moving day details with mover: time, truck size, access, payment.
- Confirm utility connect/disconnect dates with providers.
- Withdraw cash for tips. \$20-\$40 per mover is standard in Canada.
- Final donation run for anything left.

WEEK 1

Moving Week

Essentials box, final walkthrough, moving day.

- Pack essentials box to keep with you: toiletries, meds, chargers, 2 days clothes, coffee, snacks, tools, TP.
- Pack first-night box: bedding, pillows, towels, shower curtain, cleaning supplies.
- Defrost and clean fridge and freezer 48 hours before move.
- Confirm new home arrival: keys, access codes, elevator booking.
- Moving day: be present when loading and unloading. Check inventory before signing.
- Photograph every valuable before movers load. Timestamped proof for damage claims.
- Tip the crew: \$20-\$40 per mover for a good job.
- Final walkthrough of old place: every closet, cupboard, drawer, outlet.
- Hand over keys to landlord, buyer, or agent.

CRITICAL DEADLINES AFTER MOVING IN

Several Canadian deadlines start the day you move in, not when you feel settled. See the provincial table below. Miss them and you pay fines, lose health coverage, or have insurance claims denied.

Provincial Licence & Health Card Deadlines

Verified for 2026 from provincial government sites. Deadlines start from your move-in date.

Province	Driver's Licence	Health Card	Penalty
Ontario	6 days	30 days	\$85 fine
British Columbia	10 days address; 90 days new licence	3 months	Insurance risk
Alberta	14 days	On arrival	Fine + reg
Quebec (SAAQ)	30 days	RAMQ 3-month wait	\$95-\$154
Manitoba	90 days	On arrival	Reg + ins risk
Saskatchewan	90 days	On arrival	Reg + ins risk
Nova Scotia	90 days	On arrival	Reg issues
New Brunswick	90 days	On arrival	Reg issues
PEI	90 days	3-month wait	Reg issues
Newfoundland	90 days	3-month wait	Reg issues

LEAVING ONTARIO?

OHIP continues to cover you until the last day of the second full month after you leave. Apply for coverage in your new province immediately. BC, Quebec, PEI, and Newfoundland all have a 3-month waiting period before their health coverage kicks in.

Canadian Moving Budget Worksheet

Average costs for a 2-bedroom move, 2026 pricing.

Category	Local Move	Interprovincial
Professional movers (2BR)	\$800 - \$2,400	\$3,500 - \$8,500
Fuel surcharge	\$50 - \$150	\$300 - \$700
Moving insurance (Full Value)	\$80 - \$200	\$250 - \$600
Packing supplies	\$100 - \$250	\$150 - \$400
Elevator bookings (2 buildings)	\$200 - \$600	\$200 - \$600
Parking permits	\$30 - \$100	\$60 - \$200

Canada Post mail forwarding	\$110	\$110
Utility connection fees	\$100 - \$300	\$150 - \$500
First-month utility deposits	\$0 - \$300	\$0 - \$500
Tips for movers	\$60 - \$160	\$120 - \$320
Cleaning service (old home)	\$150 - \$400	\$150 - \$400
Licence + registration (new province)	\$0	\$100 - \$250
Realistic total	\$1,680 - \$4,860	\$4,990 - \$12,480

TAX DEDUCTION MOST CANADIANS MISS

If you moved at least 40 km closer to a new job, school, or business, most of these costs are tax-deductible on your CRA return using Form T1-M. Keep every receipt in your moving binder.

Key Canadian Contacts & Websites

All official government sources.

Canada Revenue Agency

Tax refunds, GST/HST, Canada Child Benefit

[canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca) → [CRA address change](#)

1-800-959-8281

Service Canada

EI, CPP, OAS, CCB, Canadian Dental Care Plan

[My Service Canada Account](#)

1-800-622-6232

Canada Post Mail Forwarding

Forward First-Class mail 6 or 12 months

canadapost.ca/mailforwarding

3 business days to activate

Canadian Association of Movers

Verify mover membership before signing

mover.net

Protects against scams

Elections Canada

Update voter registration

elections.ca

MovingCost.ca Calculator

Free moving cost estimate

confident.ca/movingcost

No email required

Room-by-Room Packing Guide

Pack one room fully before starting the next.

Kitchen

- Dishes wrapped in paper, stacked vertically
- Glasses in cell dividers
- Pots nested, lids wrapped separately
- Small appliances in original boxes
- Pantry in zip-top bags
- Label FRAGILE and THIS END UP

Bedroom

- Hanging clothes: leave on hangers, cover with garbage bag
- Dresser contents stay for local moves
- Mattress in a mattress bag
- Jewellery box you carry yourself
- Label bedding box clearly

Living Room

- Electronics: original boxes, photograph cables
- TV flat, never on its back
- Paintings in picture boxes, tape X on glass
- Remotes in bag taped to device
- Bag all furniture hardware

Bathroom

- Toiletries in zip-top bags
- Medications kept with you
- Towels as padding elsewhere
- Shower curtain in essentials box

Garage & Outdoor

- Drain fuel from mowers, BBQs, snow blowers
- Remove propane tanks to depot
- Tools in small sturdy boxes
- Chemicals: dispose, movers won't take
- Zip-tie sports equipment sets

Kids' Rooms

- Kids pick 10 favourite toys for essentials bag
- One comfort item with you on moving day
- School supplies packed last, unpacked first
- Disassemble cribs and beds, bag hardware
- Label boxes by child's name

Moving Day Hour by Hour

A sample schedule for a same-day local move.

6:00 AM	Final walkthrough of old home. Check every closet, drawer, cabinet. Photograph empty rooms.
7:00 AM	Last essentials into the car. Medications, phone, chargers, wallet, keys, essentials box, valuables.
8:00 AM	Movers arrive. Walk through the home, identify fragile and do-not-move items. Review inventory sheet.
9:00 AM	Loading begins. Photograph valuables before they go on truck.
12:00 PM	Mid-load check. Confirm boxes and big items loaded safely. Offer movers water.
1:00 PM	Loading complete. Walk the truck with the foreman. Sign bill of lading only after verifying inventory.
1:30 PM	Final sweep. Turn off utilities, lock up, drop keys.
2:30 PM	Arrive at new home. Meet movers, unlock, elevator key ready.
3:00 PM	Unloading begins. Direct boxes to rooms by their labels. Flag damage immediately.
6:00 PM	Unloading complete. Check inventory. Note damage on bill of lading before signing.
6:30 PM	Tip and pay. \$20-\$40 per mover. Confirm final invoice matches quote.
7:00 PM	Set up essentials. Make one bed, set up bathroom, locate coffee. Order food. Rest.

What Canadian Movers Won't Take

Transport Canada and mover insurance prohibit these items.

Hazardous Materials

- Propane tanks, BBQ tanks
- Gasoline, diesel, kerosene
- Paint, thinner, solvents
- Aerosols, bleach, pool chemicals
- Batteries
- Matches, lighter fluid, fireworks

Perishables & Plants

- Frozen or refrigerated food
- Fresh produce, open dry goods
- Houseplants (crossing provincial lines)
- Pet food over 6 months old
- Live pets and fish

Valuables

- Cash, coin collections
- Jewellery over \$500
- Passports, birth certificates
- Prescription medications
- Tax records, wills, deeds
- Firearms (special permits required)

Non-Transportable

- Anything with fuel inside
- Opened cleaning supplies
- Items in garbage bags (no insurance)
- Unmarked boxes
- Items not on the inventory

Now see your real moving cost

Free Canadian moving cost calculator. No email, no signup, 30 seconds.

confident.ca/movingcost