

# PCS Checklist

Organized by category

**Note:** This is a comprehensive list and not all these items may apply to you.

## **As Soon as Possible/Big Items:**

Share news with family.

Discuss the moving process with your family.

Start PCS Binder ([Checklist Here](#)).

If OCONUS, ensure passports are up to date. If not, submit passport application. ([Link to passport application](#))

If OCONUS, complete the overseas screening process.

Decide on moving method.

- House Hold Goods (HHG) Move (Military moves you)
- Personally Procured Move (PPM/DITY) (You move yourself)
- Combination

Complete PCS departing worksheet to obtain official orders.

Make an appointment with your local transportation office or use [Defense Personal Property System \(DPS\)](#) to complete the move request.

Complete walkthrough assessment with the moving company (sometimes done via video).

Confirm moving dates with the assigned moving company.

Complete housing form, DD-1747. Your new housing office should send this document to the member. A copy must be provided with reporting paperwork.

Review PCS Tips and Tricks. ([Check them out here](#))

Make any needed medical appointments.

Update pet vaccinations.

Have Power of Attorney or Letter of Authorization drawn up.

# PCS Checklist

## Current Housing:

If renting, check the lease for move-out timeline and requirements.

Notify your landlord in accordance with the lease timeline.

If you own the house, determine if you will sell or rent your house out.

Find a realtor to help sell the house.

Cancel utilities. Typically can only be done within 30 days of the cancellation/move date.

Set mail forwarding to start on moving day (or whatever day you leave). [USPS](#)

## New Housing:

Decide on renting vs. buying vs. base housing

Make a list of needs/wants for housing.

Start researching your new location - think about items relevant to your family - childcare, schools, proximity to airport, etc.

Locate a realtor.

Determine a reasonable commuting distance.

Determine housing and cost-of-living allowances. ([BAH](#), [COLA](#), [OCONUS](#))

Determine how much you can afford to spend on housing.

Collect required paperwork for rental or buying applications.

If you have pets, determine if on-base housing allows pet type or breed.

Once housing is acquired, verify the move-in schedule/ process.

Acquire temporary housing, if necessary.

Set up required utilities.

# PCS Checklist

## **New Location Information:**

Join local spouses' [social media page](#).

Reach out to the new ombudsman for local information. [Ombudsman Registry](#)

Look into childcare.

Set up childcare.

Look into school areas.

Register with new schools once you have acquired housing.

Identify healthcare providers (PCM, dental, specialty).

Determine if your spouse needs to change licensure for a job in the new location ([Spouse reimbursement link](#))

## **Vehicles:**

Ensure registration is up to date and does not expire during the move.

Complete preventative maintenance, if necessary.

Determine the method vehicles will get to the new location.

If OCONUS, complete vehicle shipment process.

If CONUS, locate shipping company, and set up shipment, if shipping a vehicle.

Take pictures and video of the car before shipping.

## **Financial:**

Create PCS Budget.

Start saving money to cover incidental expenses.

If doing a PPM, shop around and use military discounts.

Check credit and debit card expiration dates of cards you plan to use during travel.

# PCS Checklist

## Paperwork:

Collect all important documents into one location ([See PCS Binder Checklist](#))

Obtain a copy of school transcripts and individual learning plans.

Obtain copies of all Exceptional Family Member Program paperwork.

Obtain copies of all medical records.

Obtain copies of veterinarian records.

## PCS Travel:

Plan transportation to new location. Drive vs. fly? Will everyone travel together?

Determine travel route. If you have kids or pets consider how many stops they will need daily. Also, consider any stops you want to make along your trip for adventures or to see family/friends

Make hotel reservations. If you have pets, make sure locations are pet friendly. If you have kids consider any necessities in the hotel - rollaway crib/bed, pull-out couch etc.

Book any adventures you plan to do (aquariums, national parks etc).

## Children:

Verify that they have the appropriate size clothes for the trip and the expected time you will be without your HHG.

Prep kids (age appropriately) about the move.

Discuss with kids things that they can do at the new location.

Research activities for your kids to continue at the new location (sports, activities, schools, etc).

Create an area bucket list with the kids' help.

If younger kids - read stories about moving, share pictures of previous moves, and talk about what to expect.

Determine if the kids need any technology or new toys (i.e., Dollar Tree for a new toy a day) for the move.

Consider prepping car snacks ahead of time.

Host a farewell playdate/event for them to say goodbye to friends.

# PCS Checklist

## Organize Move/Before Movers Arrive:

Inventory and take photos of all household items.

Ensure pictures are taken of high-value items and of electronics in working condition, i.e., TV on. These before pictures are crucial to the damage claim process.

Write down the model and serial numbers.

Create a furniture dimension spreadsheet to document your household items. ([Template here](#))

Label existing boxes/bins.

Research gun laws and restrictions.

Purge and sort through items. Determine whether to sell, donate, or properly dispose of unwanted and unused items.

Look through items and decide if anything needs to be purchased before the move (due to better availability at current location), need different weather-appropriate clothing for the new location, or because children will size out of their current clothes, etc.

Determine items that movers will not take.

Prepare pet for method of travel (i.e. crate train).

Organize small items. Place in a Ziploc bag or container.

Place like items together.

Determine the items that will be packed in the car. Make a packing list.

Add items to the list that you will need in your house after the movers leave and items needed at the new house before the new movers arrive (paper goods, air mattresses, toilet paper, etc.)

Consider having a "firsts" box in your car - toilet paper, paper towel, box cutters, sharpie, pen, post-it notes, etc.

Remember to leave room for anything the movers refuse to pack or you need after (if you won't toss/donate it) - cleaning products, opened pantry items, etc.

Make arrangements for kids and pets for packing and moving day.

# PCS Checklist

Look and see if you have any local gift cards/reward points etc that you need to use before you leave. If you don't use them right away, make a list of what you have left.

If you have a big box store membership (Costco/Sam's Club, etc) look into new location and see if you will keep the membership or need to cancel it when it is time to move.

Closeout all local accounts and memberships. Transfer if able.

Arrange for a letter of transfer from local clubs and organizations.

Ensure you have the necessary prescriptions and quantities to last at least one month past the arrival date at the new location.

Empty, defrost, and wash any refrigerator or freezer that is moving. (Takes at least 2 days)

Empty and wash all trash and recycling cans. The movers will pack up trash.

Prepare motorcycle, mower, and other motorized items for the move. Drain oil, and empty gas.

Disconnect propane from grill. Return propane tank to store or give to a neighbor.

Clean grill.

Properly dispose of hazardous waste and flammable materials.

Get snacks and toys for children, and any necessary road trip supplies.

If moving with an infant, obtain 2-3 weeks of supplies for the move.

Return all borrowed items and collect any items lent to others.

Cancel all local deliveries and services such as newspapers.

Separate and label professional gear from HHG items.

Remove all items from beneath stairways, attics, sheds, or any similar areas.

Drain garden hoses.

Take batteries out of electronics and toys.

Pull out and defrost ice packs.

Take apart large toy items, i.e. trampoline, playset.

# PCS Checklist

Take down any babyproofing.

Take down alarm system, notify alarm company and pause monitoring.

Pull aside any uniforms needed to report at next unit and until HHGs arrive.

Prepare weapons for moving.

## **Last-Minute Items:**

Cancel utilities at current residence.

Take down all pictures.

Patch holes in the walls.

Un-secure furniture from the wall.

Final load of laundry.

Finish packing personal items for PCS travel.

Group items you want to be packed together (stuffed animals, books, ...) in the room you want them to be packed with

Unhook washer and dryer. Drain washer as much as possible.

Download media to all devices.

Place original packing boxes (if you have them and they are in good condition) near items.

Separate items that will not be packed.

Disconnect all appliances that movers will be moving.

Conduct a practice pack of vehicles to ensure everything fits.

# PCS Checklist

## **Moving Day:**

Strip beds.

Empty dishwasher.

Empty all unwanted items from fridge/freezer.

Put water bottles in the fridge for packers and movers.

Take out trash and recycling.

Mark off and label do not pack room and items.

Begin final house clean as movers empty rooms ([Cleaning Checklist](#)).

Ensure all boxes are labeled with the correct location or desired location in your new home. Use colored stickers or duct tape to mark boxes that are going to the same location in your new house.

Make sure valuable items are secure if you are carrying them.

Accompany movers during inventory and verify the existing damage they are documenting.

Verify mover's inventory is complete and accurate.

Make a final check of all rooms before signing any paperwork.

Obtain copies of all moving paperwork.

## **Additional Items:**



# PCS Checklist

## After Arriving:

Do a move-in inspection of your new place, and take pictures, if necessary, to document any conditions around the house.

Determine where the furniture will be placed. Label with a sticky note or painter's tape.

Verify inventory.

Check all items for damage.

If damage has occurred:

- Take picture of the move tag number.

- Take an overall picture of the item.

- Take a zoomed-in picture of the damage.

File damage claim in [DPS](#).

Update Services

- Change PCM ([Tricare](#))

- Dentist

- Specialty Care

- Landscaping

- Mail

- Newspaper

- School

- Veterinarian

Data Updates

- Financial Institutions

  - Investments

  - Credit cards

  - Checking and savings accounts

  - Insurance providers

  - Renters or homeowners

  - Vehicle Loans

  - High-value personal property

- Clubs/ organizations

- Driver's license

- Vehicle registration

- Electronic toll collection services

- Employers

- CGPAAS

- Direct Access

- Mailing subscriptions/ magazines

- Schools

- Voter registration

# PCS Binder Checklist

**Note:** some people do not want to have a binder, and not all these items may apply to you, they are a suggestion on important items that you may want to consider hand carrying with you during your move to aid in your PCS.

## Important Papers:

- Drivers License(s)
- Military ID(s)
- Birth Certificate(s)
- Social Security Card(s)
- Passport(s)
- Marriage License (or Divorce decrees)
- Medical & Dental Records (including vaccine records)
- Vehicle Titles & Registration
- Property Deeds
- Living Will & Testament(s)
- Power of Attorney document(s)
- Insurance Policies
- Debit/Credit Cards
- Checkbook/Banking information
- Copy of lease/mortgage documents
- Weight ticket and receipts
- Naturalization paperwork
- Exceptional Family Member Program Paperwork
- Savings Bonds and Stock certificates

## Children:

- School Documents/Transcripts/Recent Report Card
- Teacher Notes
- Letters of Recommendation from clubs/sports etc
- Copies of Standardized Test Results
- Any IEP/504s, formal evaluations, or any therapy assessments
- Any Gifted/Talented program admittance and progress (MIC3)
- Any custody or legal documents
- Adoption papers

## Pets:

- Any veterinary medical records, including vaccine record
- Chip number (if applicable)

# PCS Binder Checklist

## **Move Documents:**

Military Orders

Shipping Information if shipping car(s) etc.

Furniture Dimension Spreadsheet

List of serial numbers for important HHGs

HHG Paperwork (from movers)

HHG High Value Inventory

Travel Documents - any flight information, hotels, stops, etc.

List of Utilities - name, contact phone number/website, any passwords, and dates to be turned on or turned off (one for old location, one for new)

List of contacts at both locations (Housing, etc)

Emergency Contact Information

## **Additional Information:**

Pack List (separated by vehicles if applicable)

List of places/websites etc to change address to once move is complete

Shopping List for new location (restock pantry, etc)

Bucket List for new location

Move Out Cleaning Checklist

Donate/Toss/Sell Page

Address History Page (to maintain list of all previous residences)

## **Optional Items to Consider:**

Hard drives

Irreplaceable items (family heirlooms, wedding albums, etc)

## Furniture Dimensions

Item	Depth (Inches)	Length/Width (Inches)	Height (Inches)
<b>Kitchen</b>			
<b>Living Room/Family Room</b>			
<b>Master Bedroom</b>			
<b>Bedroom 1</b>			
<b>Bedroom 2</b>			
<b>Office</b>			
<b>Child Bedroom</b>			

<b>Baby Room</b>			
<b>Laundry Room</b>			
<b>Outside</b>			

\*\*If you have any large artwork or other items that might need to be have a crate made for them - make sure to have those dimensions on hand. (This can also help when deciding what items go on what walls)\*\*

# PCS Cleaning Checklist

**Note:** Always check your lease to make sure you know what you are responsible for and if anything takes extra time (ie. carpets professionally cleaned). Keeping your house in good order before the move out will help make the clean up easier.

## General/ All Roms:

- Make sure all marks are removed from walls
- Remove all nails and wall anchors
- Remove any added hardware - ie child locks, pet gates, etc.
- Fill in holes and paint over (if necessary, check lease)
- Dust all fans and light fixtures
- Dust/wipe down any blinds
- Clean windows and windowsills
- Quick wipe on doors, door handles, and light switches
- Wipe down baseboards
- Vacuum floors, especially carpet (inc. closets, stairs, etc)
- If any stains on carpet - stain treat
- Sweep and mop floors
- Make sure all fixtures have a working light bulb

## Bedrooms:

- Wipe down any closet shelves and hanging rods

## Garage:

- Sweep out
- Empty trash & recycling

## Kitchen:

- Make sure all cabinets, pantry, fridge, freezer etc. are empty
- Self-clean oven and clean inside and front
- Wipe down counters and inside and outside of all cabinets
- Clean inside and outside of all appliances (underneath if required)
- Make sure the sink and disposal are clean
- Wipe down pantry shelves

## Bathrooms:

- Scrub/clean toilets (inside & out)
- Clean showers/bathtubs
- Wipe down counters and faucets
- Wipe down inside and outside of cabinets
- Clean all mirrors

## Laundry:

- Clean cycle on washer and clean exterior (if it came with the property)
- Empty lint trap on dryer and clean exterior (if it came with the property)
- Wipe down any utility sink
- Wipe down any additional surfaces

# General PCS Tips and Tricks



## Getting started

- Start early. Especially if you're going OCONUS.
- Talk to your Ombudsman or Relocation specialist. Ask for resources.
- Ask sponsor for Welcome Letter and local resources available.
- Talk to spouses who have lived at your new station. Ask questions. Join social media pages.

## Documentation

- If OCONUS move, ensure passports are up to date.
- Make a folder or binder to hold all of your important PCS documents i.e. orders, school transcripts, medical records, move paperwork, weight tickets, etc. (Check out PCS Binder page)
- Have a checklist to ensure PCS items are getting completed. (PCS Checklist)
- Document everyone you talk to; name/dates/time/employee ID. This will help if anything happens or you are given misinformation.
- Inform medical office personnel of move. Sign medical release forms.

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## Service member prep

- Make copies of awards and qualifications that are being packed.
- Ensure all uniform items needed to check in at the next station are set aside before movers start packing.
- If hand carrying medical record, ensure it is in the do not pack section.

## General thoughts

- PCS move is stressful for the whole family. Try to remember you're a team, and make it an adventure to remember.
- Consider collecting a memento to celebrate and remember each move (Christmas ornament, wall sign/ decor, jewelry charm, etc.).
- Have fun and make it a road trip.
- Give yourself plenty of travel time.
- Start living out of suitcases several days ahead of time so that there is enough time to get laundry done to pack everything clean.
- Be flexible. Don't sweat the small stuff.
- Save boxes for expensive items like TVs.
- Save your receipts for big-ticket items (TV, furniture, mattress, washer/dryer, etc).

# Move Preparation Tips and Tricks



## Initial steps

- Call the moving company to see what items they cannot ship.
- Organize before the movers come, and put like items together. A small amount of work will go a long way.
- Purge, donate, or get rid of items you won't need.
- Be prepared to ship guns. Know your gun laws.
- Take photos of all of your household goods. Ensure the photos are time stamped.
- Take a video of TVs or electronics working and serial numbers.

## Last minute

- Empty, clean, and group together your trash and recycling bins. The movers will pack trash that is in the bin.
- Unhook all of your electronics yourself and bag and label all cords.
- Take everything off the wall and put it all in a pile.
- Unhook all furniture and anything attached to the wall.
- Determine the room you will use as the "DO NOT PACK/NO MOVERS/DO NOT TOUCH" room and room to keep pets safe.

## General advice

- Put items that can spill in a Ziploc.
- Use Ziploc bags to keep small items together, i.e. legos, decorations, etc.
- Consider taking the batteries out of everything, the heat of the summer can destroy them and the item they are in.
- Consider using space saver/vacuum bags to keep towels, sheets, and blankets from smelling like the moving truck.
- Consider using garment bags and pre-pack hanging clothing in them to protect the clothing from moisture/dust/box smells/bugs.
- Keep the parts attached to the furniture (tape it to the furniture) or take the parts box yourself. It's a nightmare when the movers lose parts.
- Consider using a wrap-all-the-way-around mattress or allergy protector for your mattress to protect it from getting wet/having moisture issues.
- Pack silverware and utensils in Ziploc.
- Prebox valuables, sentimental, and irreplaceable items. (Consider moving yourself)
- If it can't be replaced and you'll be upset if it's lost/broken, pack and move it yourself.

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# Moving Day Tips and Tricks



## House preparations

- Be prepared for the moving company to do something different than your last company.
- Create a "Do not pack space" and clearly mark the space. Consider locking the space, if able, or packing it into your car.
- If able, have children and pets out of the house on packing and loading day.
- Enlist the help of friends and family to supervise movers.

## Working with movers

- Feed and/or provide drinks for the movers. (not required but appreciated)
- Treat the movers with respect and maintain a positive mentality. Movers' motivation to do a good job will decrease if you treat them poorly.
- Remember your packing and load crew will not be your unloading crew.
- Ensure movers are treating your household goods with care.
- Watch the movers pack your electronics.

## End of the day

- Ensure you know the location of the parts box.
- Take a solid walkthrough of the house before the movers leave
- Put contact information on or in boxes in case the shipment gets separated.
- Consider using colored masking tape to mark each room and its boxes. It will cut down on confusion while unpacking.

## Move forms

- Put anything that you consider high value on the high-value item list, even if it may not meet the criteria.
- Have the movers consult you before marking any damage on the inventory list.
- Take the time to closely review the inventory list. Ensure it is legible and only the items that have actual damage have been noted. Question any mass markings of damage.



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# Unloading Day Tips and Tricks



## Preparing your residence

- Clean floors and carpet.
- Wipe down anywhere that will be blocked by furniture.
- Measure walls and determine where major furniture will go.
- Label where major furniture will go.
- Label rooms so it is clear for movers, ie. "Hannah's (Girl) Room", office, storage, etc.
- If required, coordinate the use of a freight elevator with the building manager.
- If required, coordinate street parking for the truck. Communicate with the truck driver and transportation coordinator the truck size limits on the streets around your residence.

## Unloading

- Have at least two people available on delivery day.
- If possible, have children and pets out of the house.

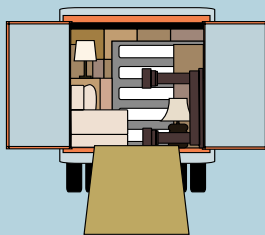


Image by Nina Garman from Pixabay

- Stage one person at the truck to mark off the inventory list with the following:
  - Pen
  - Clipboard
  - Chair
  - Camera/ Phone
- Do not let unchecked boxes go inside the house.
- Immediately take pictures of any damaged items or boxes.
  - Take a full picture of the item or box.
  - Take picture of the inventory number.
  - Take a close-up picture(s) of the damage.
- Stage one person inside the residence to direct the movers where to place boxes and furniture.
- Have multiple box cutters available to open and unload boxes.
- Unpack as many boxes as possible so that the movers take away as much as they can.
- Unpack your electronics yourself.
- Ensure the movers put together anything that came off the truck disassembled.
- Consider keeping a few boxes for play if you have younger children.

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# Moving with a Pet PCS Tips and Tricks



## General thoughts

- Keep your animal - They are a lifelong commitment!
- Be prepared to pay extra during travel & at your new location due to a pet.
- Plan your move in advance (over plan).
- Make sure collar and tags are updated and secure.
- Be flexible!

## Pre-dream sheet considerations

- Look into regulations/restrictions for the state/country you are looking into.
- OCONUS is extremely expensive out-of-pocket for pets, i.e. ferries, airline restrictions, etc.
- New locations may require months of advanced planning.
- Links to OCONUS pet information:

[Hawaii](#)      [Guam](#)      [Puerto Rico](#)  
[Hawaii](#)      [Guam](#)      [Alaska](#)  
[Hawaii](#)

## Once you know your location

- Start planning your travel early!
- Learn local requirements.
- Inquire about any pet license requirements in the state, county or city.
- Look for pet friendly housing.

## Veterinarian, meds & paperwork

- Visit the veterinarian early!
- Make sure all shots (rabies, etc) are up to date
- Discuss sedation medicine (if needed).
- Make sure to have enough medicine (flea/tick/heartworm, anti-anxiety, etc.) for the move.
- Get copies of all vet medical and shot records and carry hard copies with you.
- Talk to the vet about planned travel and get any advice on ferry, car, airplane, etc. travel.
- Get a new vet appointment quickly after arrival.
- During the move, use flea meds to prevent your pet from picking up some new friends along the way.

## Preparing your pet

- Keep routine as much as possible.
- Crate train dogs.
- Acclimate pet to crate/car/travel.



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# Moving with a Pet PCS Tips and Tricks



**Start planning your move and trip early!**

## Driving

- Check out your routes and plan stops ahead of time.
- Include how often bathroom stops will be needed.
- Plan to eat in your car, at rest stops, or pet-friendly establishments.
- Research pet-friendly restaurants, hotels, activities, and areas along your travel route before departing.
- Review pet regulations for planned activities and stops. ([National parks](#))

## Flying & ferry

- Check regulations early!
- Check pet carrier requirements.
- Airline & Ferry Info:
  - [Alaska Air](#)    [American Airlines](#)
  - [United](#)    [Delta](#)    [Frontier](#)
  - [Hawaiian Airlines](#)    [Southwest](#)
  - [Alaska Marine Highway](#)

## Hotel

- Determine and book ahead of time.
- Read the fine print of pet policy.
- Be prepared to pay extra.
- Recommended places:
  - [La Quintas Inn & Suites](#)
  - [KOA Campgrounds and cabins](#)
  - [Homewood Suites](#)
  - [Home2 Suites](#)
- Check out [BringFido](#), [TripswithPets](#), and [Petswelcome](#).

## Packing for your pet

- Have all items put aside before movers arrive.
- Bring medical records (hardcopy).
- Bring creature comforts (favorite toy, bed, blankets), food, treats, toys, bowls, litter boxes, medication, carrier/crate/kennel, cleaning supplies, puppy pads (even for potty-trained dogs).
- Ensure tags are up to date.
- Make sure critical items are easily accessible (leash, water bowl, food, etc.).

## Dealing with moversmove day

- Have pets out of the house while movers are present - kennel, doggie daycare, board, friend, pet sitter.
- If your pet must be in the house - keep in a safe space, off-limits room or cage, such as a bathroom (label there is a pet) with door shut.

## During the move/transit

- Take lots of walks.
- Eat in the car with your pet along the way, don't leave them alone.
- Never leave a pet in a hot car. Be careful of hot pavement, check before you let your pet out of the car.
- Find local dog parks when possible.
- Be patient things, might not go as expected.
- Realize a pet may be stressed out.
- Be flexible. Don't sweat the small stuff.

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# Moving with Children

## PCS Tips and Tricks



### Your mindset is key

- Focus on the positive aspects and model positivity.
- It is stressful, but kids will feed off of your mindset.
- Understand that change is hard.
- Treat the move like an adventure.
- Be flexible, stay calm, and be prepared for the unexpected.
- Involve children when possible.
- Let kids experience their emotions and support them through them.
- Ask for help when needed.

### Once you know next assignment

- Research as much ahead of time - good schools (even if you homeschool) usually means safe area.
- Contact your [Educational School Liaison Officer](#) (SLO).
- School Rating resources:
  - [Great Schools](#)
  - [Niche](#)
  - [School Digger](#)
- Schedule any necessary doctor/dentist/specialist appointments (lead time is usually a while for new patients).
- Talk about new activities to look forward to.
- If young kids - get on the waitlist for daycare/childcare.
- If kids are old enough - let them help with the research.

### Preparing your child(ren)

- Talk about the move leading up to it - the process and the new location.
- Young children:
  - Read books about moving
  - Show pictures of previous moves
  - Talk about what movers will take vs. what you will take with you
- Older children:
  - Talk about the move
  - Involve them in the planning of the move
- Maintain routines for as long as possible leading up to the move.
- Answer questions honestly, but age-appropriately.
- Find something for them to look forward to.

### Move preparations

- Start early!
- Consider donating unused clothes and toys (involve kids if possible).
- Organize toys and clothes.
- Put small toys in gallon ziplock bags so they don't get separated/lost in move boxes.
- Have kids pack their own backpack of special items to take with.
- Pack fragile models, i.e. Legos, yourself.
- Involve children in preparations so they know where things are when unpacking.

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# Moving with Children

## PCS Tips and Tricks



### What to pack

- Plan to be without your HHG for longer than you think.
- Extra clothes. (Will your kid size up?)
- Special items i.e. favorite toy, stuffed animal, etc.
- As age appropriate, let your child pick a few special items for their own bag or backpack.
- Young child - make sure to have a stroller and car seat (and pack n play if you intend them to sleep in that during move).
- Travel with all baby essentials that you need for a few weeks.
- Consider entertainment:
  - Electronics charged and loaded with age-appropriate shows/games
  - New small toys for each day/state.
- For potty training children - bring a training potty.
- Plan for snacks!
- If moving OCONUS ship some flat rate boxes of favorite things, new toys, books ahead so children have something fun and familiar when arriving at the new location.
- If shipping car, ship your second car seat inside your car as it will likely arrive before your HHG.

### Friends

- Talk about the move and prepare child(ren) for leaving friends.
- Take pictures before you leave, maybe have a goodbye party.
- Find ways for them to stay in touch (based on age) - preschool children can color pictures and mail them to their friends, older children can call or FaceTime.
- Make a photo montage of friends from your previous location as part of room decor at the new location.



Image by Gordon Johnson from Pixabay

### Paperwork prep

- Make sure all medical appointments are up to date
- Get (and hand carry) school and medical record, immunization record, and birth certificate.
- If possible - get a school physical before leaving especially if your child plays a fall sport
- Look into area schools/daycares (depending on age)

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# Moving with Children PCS Tips and Tricks



## Car ride/road trip

- Plan Plan Plan! Plan and book ahead!
- Consider and decide if you're stopping for any adventures along the way (national parks, zoos, etc).
- Make a vacation out of the trip.
- Be prepared for more stops than just adults would take.
- Plan short legs.
- Determine what is important when picking a hotel - pool, providing a portable crib or pull-out couch, etc.
- If you can't all travel together (driving 2 cars) and you have really little kids, contemplate bringing a friend, grandparent, another relative along with the person who has the kids. A grandmother who can be the official snack-getter and entertainment coordinator.
- Be prepared with activities, snacks, and entertainment. Bring more than you think you need.
- Prep snacks so they are easy to hand out.
- Have electronic chargers/external chargers ready.

## Packing and unpacking

- Make sure to have the items going with you in a separate location (and labeled as such) during packing.
- If possible, have the child(ren) elsewhere when movers are at the house (babysitters, friend's house, hotel, etc.)
- If children must be at the house consider finding someone to watch (grandma, babysitter, friend)
- [CGMA](#) has some funding for childcare (rank dependent).
- Label boxes with kid's name so it can get to the correct location at the new location.
- If young kids - let them put stickers on loaded boxes so they can recognize them at the new house and feel a part of the move.
- Save some empty boxes for play.
- Consider leaving kids with grandparents during unloading and for a few days after. until unboxing is under control.



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# Moving with Children

## PCS Tips and Tricks



### Once you arrive

- Prepare your expectations. Everything takes longer. Routines need to be reestablished.
- Consider setting up your child's room first (or early).
- Consider getting them involved in local activities quickly - summer camps, sports, religious activities, volunteering, clubs, etc.
- Encourage socialization, but be aware it can take a while.
- Take them on a tour of the new location and show them new places - schools, parks, etc.
- If small children - build a box fort with old HHG boxes to distract children while you unpack.

### Additional resources

- [Military Child Education Coalition](#) supports all military-connected children by educating, advocating, and collaborating to resolve education challenges associated with the military lifestyle.
- [Department of Defense Education Activity](#) is one of only two Federally-operated school systems on behalf of the Department of Defense (DoD). DoDEA is globally positioned, operating 160 accredited schools in 8 districts located in 11 foreign countries, 7 states, Guam, and Puerto Rico.
- [Sesame Street for Military Families](#) aims to help families with young children cope with the challenges of deployments and change. The website, with videos, games, tips, articles and more, is offered in both English and Spanish for kids and parents.
- [MilitaryKidsConnect](#) (MKC) is an online community of military children (ages 6-17 yr old) that provides access to age-appropriate resources to support children from pre-deployment, through a parent's or caregiver's return.
- [Military One Source Parenting and Children Resources](#)
- Books on moving for small children:
  - Moving Day Berenstain Bears
  - New House, Same Underwear
  - Moving to the Neighborhood (Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood)

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# PCS Road Trip Planning Tips and Tricks



- Start planning early.
- Determine your PCS travel budget.
- Research activities, distances between locations, and availability of amenities. Take pets and children needs into consideration.
- Involve family members in the planning process.
- Consider reaching out to spouses in a Coast Guard social media group for advice. There are many who are Destination and Travel Specialists.
- Determine the must-see items and plan around them.
- Book hotels in advance. Ensure you ask for military rate.
- You can save money by staying at the [hotels on military bases](#). These need to be booked ahead as they fill up quickly.
- Book activity tickets in advance.
- Take advantage of National Parks. Military members can get a National Parks pass for free. Some parks now require you to make a reservation ahead of time. Check out the [National Park Website](#) for more information.
- Give yourself plenty of travel time.
- Schedule breaks into your timeline. Consider pet and child needs.
- Allow room in the schedule for spontaneity and hiccups.
- Plan downtime into your schedule.
- Research the typical weather along your planned route. Ensure you pack appropriate attire.
- Take advantage of military discounts to save money.
- Create a packing list.
- Seek out advice from locals.
- Notify your extended family or someone you trust about travel plans in case of emergency.
- Expect problems and be ready to ad-lib.
- Tools to help you plan:

[Roadtrippers](#)

[Recreation.gov](#)

[Pinterest](#)

[TripAdvisor](#)

[Google Maps](#)

[Google Trips](#)

[Yelp](#)

Apps: Waze

iExit Interstate Exit Guide

AllTrails

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# Personal Procurement Move Tips and Tricks



- Ensure you obtain your “empty” and “full” weight tickets with all the required member information written on them.  
Weight Scale Link: [Public Scales](#) [Cat Scale](#)
- Save all receipts.
- Start packing early.
- Consider taking everything apart. It will help you save space.
- Know what is tax-deductible and what isn't. [IRS 3903](#) [IRS Help](#)
- Keep expenses low but understand it's the value of your things that will depend on how much you want to spend to protect them.
- Use soft belongings as packing material; don't leave empty space, fill as many voids as possible with small/soft items. It saves you space and money on supplies and available room in your transport vehicle.
- Use comforters and blankets to keep furniture from rubbing.
- How the boxes are packed matters more than how the truck is packed. Pack your items carefully. Do not rush.
- Plan how you will load the truck or trailer. [Uhaul](#) [Penske](#) [Moving.com](#)
- Use the Coast Guard Personal Procurement Move [Checklist](#) to ensure you have all the proper documentation.

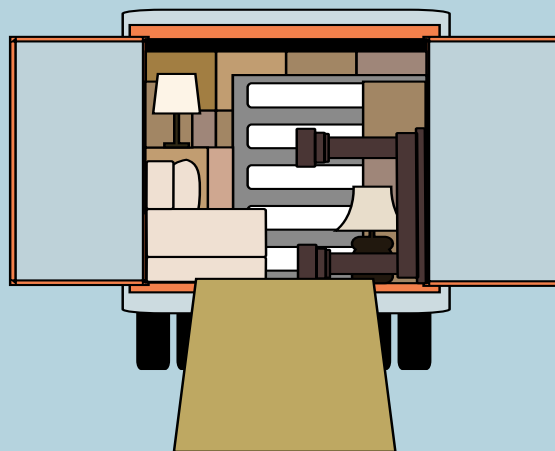


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