

Moving — hot or not

For many students, it's time to move again. And for many students, it's a task they hate and put off until the last second. For others, though, moving offers some fun. Which camp do you fall in? Read on for two sides of the same coin...

Heavy boxes and empty walls make moving a nightmare

Moving is exciting, and it opens many fun possibilities

I hate to move. Which is odd, given that I grew up in a Volkswagen van, and ironic, given how much I love to pack. Dealing with the accumulated detritus of one's life is an unappreciated joy, and it offers some Martha Stewart-like moments (on your knees before her goddess-ship).

But still, moving is a nightmare. Carrying heavy boxes, stacking and un-stacking, negotiating stairs — all count on my "most nightmarish things to do" list, along with trips to the mall. Any mall. They all are different layers of the same hell-onion.

Once moved into a new place, there's the problem of why the boxes won't all fit in their respective rooms, and the puzzle of trying to figure out how to put things away while stacks of boxes stand in the way. I think the laws of geometry cease to exist while one unpacks.

My most hated part of moving, however, is the empty, glaring walls. Once I'm in a home for a while, the walls get covered with my favorite pieces of art (and soft-core porn, I'll admit it), various cloth hangings and the random bits of cultural hodgepodge I refuse to throw away. Everything is perfectly placed, my feng shui is flowing, and my brain is habituated to the colors and patterns.

Then I have a new place, and it all has to be done over again. My teeth start to grind, and I get sweaty (and no, it's not drugs), and I'm soon reduced to chain-smoking on the couch. But the walls still leer at me, singing their songs of decorating inadequacy.

Despite all this, I look forward to moving because... I get to pack again! I know many people hate this task, but with a little rearranging of one's brain, it's sheer joy. Here's a few tips:

- Take a nostalgia trip. There's nothing like being pie-eyed on the floor in front of empty boxes, giggling and feeling wistful while going through the stuff that embodies your life. It's also a nice way to condition yourself not to be too nostalgic. I mean, you don't have all night, so keep the remembrances short and sweet.

- Unload the baggage. Once you've felt those pangs of happy times, let some of the stuff go. It's OK to sift and sort — and throw things away.

- Organize and label. While you're packing, it is the perfect time to make sure things are sorted into the right boxes, organized by type of stuff (and size and color, if you're really geeked out). It will make unpacking all the easier.

I always have a great time packing; you can, too. Unfortunately, even the best organization won't shorten the two flights of stairs to your new apartment.

Contact the editor in chief at editor@dailyemerald.com. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

Voice off



Michael J. Kleckner
The editor's office



Jessica Richelderfer
The Merry Pessimist

I absolutely love moving. Just setting foot inside an empty room gives me a thrill. Be it a classroom, a school bus, an office space or a house, the sight of open, untouched space fills my mind with all sorts of possibilities.

Ridiculous, maybe. But I thrive on change for that very reason. Small changes, mind you. I'd be perfectly content moving around the same town the rest of my life — that is, until I sell everything and roam in my Winnebago.

As a child, rearranging furniture was always one of my favorite activities (I foresee a problem with this Winnebago plan). But the bonus of moving to a new room is... it's already clean! I can put my bed anywhere I want, with any view I want to see every morning (or afternoon, as the case may be). I can arrange shelves, crates and tapestries to create a den for lounging or, well, never mind — and all in a 15-by-15 space.

This means, of course, that being a college student has been perfect for me — this will be the ninth time I've moved in five years. So you'd think this would help keep the level of crap I've collected to a minimum. Oh, no. And it's for this very reason that I absolutely hate moving.

I just can't throw anything away. Someday I know I'll be dying to see every magazine clipping I ever hung on my wall, every toy I ever got in a kid's meal, every near-spent candle that still has one final burn left. That's my other issue: I refuse to use the last of anything. I just know that someday I'll just have to have that last droplet of raspberry-kiwi elbow exfoliant.

So here I find myself, reveling in the excitement of creating a new space for myself, yet already wanting to beat my head against the wall. I curse myself for saving everything, but I still can't throw any of it away, so I curse myself for accumulating so much crap to begin with. Of course I know I don't have room to take everything with me from place to place, so most of it goes in boxes and gets dropped in a dirty, musty warehouse on Dad's property.

Therein lies the problem: I am never able to take the time to stop and sort through my belongings. Often I'm so overwhelmed with the enormity of my packing and cleaning crisis that throwing everything into the closest box is the most I can do. Consequently, I lose half of my stuff with every move. So what do I do to solve this problem? You guessed it — get more stuff.

If only I could wrinkle my nose and transport my neatly organized boxes directly to my new place, moving would be a juicy peach.

Contact the managing editor at jessicarichelderfer@dailyemerald.com. Her opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

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