# Your complete moving home guide for South London

## Planning your move from start to finish

Moving home is one of those tasks that feels straightforward until you start. Boxes pile up, dates creep closer and small details you forgot suddenly matter. A clear plan helps you stay ahead of the chaos. This guide takes you through what to check, when to check it and why each point matters, so you can focus on settling into your new place rather than chasing loose ends.

## Start early with a moving timeline

The first thing to do is set a realistic timeline. Most people underestimate how long it takes to sort through belongings, pack properly and coordinate with everyone involved. A good rule is to begin at least four to six weeks before your moving date. That gives you time to declutter, gather packing materials and book a removal service without last-minute stress.

Write down key dates: when you need to give notice on your current property, when the new tenancy or purchase completes, and when you can access the new home. Overlaps between properties are common and can be a lifesaver. If you have a week between vacating one place and moving into the next, you can move items gradually instead of rushing everything in one day.

## Arrange a removal survey

A removal survey is where a professional visits your home to assess what needs to move, the access points and any tricky parts like narrow staircases or tight corners. It is not just about getting a quote. The survey helps the removal team plan the loading order and decide what equipment they need. Without a survey, you risk delays on moving day when the van cannot fit where expected or items need to be dismantled on the spot.

View the location on Google Maps

Most companies offer this as a free service. You walk through each room with the surveyor and point out everything that is going. Be honest about what you plan to take. If you think you might leave a few items behind, say so. The surveyor can then give a more accurate estimate of the volume and the time needed.

## Create a moving inventory

A moving inventory is a list of every item you take. It sounds tedious, but it saves real trouble later. When boxes arrive at the new home, you can check them off against the list and spot anything missing quickly. It also helps with insurance if something gets damaged or lost.

Go room by room and write down furniture, appliances, fragile items and boxes of personal effects. For high-value items such as artwork or electronics, note serial numbers or take photos. Keep a copy of the inventory with you rather than packed in a box. That way you can refer to it on moving day without rummaging through everything.

## Gather packing materials early

Packing materials include boxes of various sizes, tape, bubble wrap, packing paper and markers. Do not wait until the week before the move to start collecting them. Many removal companies sell packing kits, or you can source them from local shops and online marketplaces. Strong boxes are worth the investment. Cheap ones can collapse under weight and cause breakages.

Start packing non-essential items first: out-of-season clothes, books, decorative items and kitchenware you rarely use. Leave everyday essentials until the last few days. Label every box with its contents and the room it belongs in. A simple system of room names and a brief note of what is inside makes unpacking much faster.

## Plan the loading sequence

The loading plan decides what goes on the van first and what goes last. Heavy items like sofas and wardrobes go in early, stacked against the walls for stability. Lighter boxes and fragile items go on top or near the back for easy unloading. Mattresses and bed frames often need to go in first so they are at the bottom of the load.

Think about the order of unloading at the new property. Items for the bedroom should go into the bedroom first, not sit in the living room for days while you shuffle things around. A quick sketch of the floor plan with furniture placement can help the removal team know where each item goes. This saves time and reduces the risk of items being left in hallways where they block movement.

If you are moving large or awkward items like a piano, a pool table or a heavy safe, mention it during the survey. These items may need extra handling equipment or additional people to carry them safely. The removal company can then prepare the right tools and assign enough staff.

## Check property access at both ends

Access issues can derail a moving day faster than almost anything else. Check the width of doorways, hallways and staircases at both the old and new properties. Measure furniture that might be tight: a sofa that fit through the old front door might not fit through the new one. If you are moving into a flat, find out if there is a service lift, how wide it is and whether you need to book it in advance.

Parking is another detail people overlook. Does the moving van have a place to park outside the property? Some streets need parking permits or have restrictions during certain hours. Contact the local council or the building management to arrange a loading bay or a temporary suspension of parking restrictions. Doing this a week ahead saves frantic phone calls on the morning of the move.

## Prepare for the unloading process

Unloading is not just the reverse of loading. At the new property, you need a clear path from the van to each room. Remove any obstacles like loose rugs, boxes or furniture that arrived earlier. If the new place is empty, that is straightforward. If it already has furniture, make sure there is enough space to walk through with large items.

Have a plan for where each item goes. It helps to have someone at the new home directing traffic while the removal team carries things in. That person can also check the inventory as items arrive and note any damage immediately. Photographs of damaged items taken on the spot make insurance claims easier later.

## Coordinate utilities and services

Gas, electricity and water need to be sorted before you arrive at the new home. Read the meters on moving day and submit the readings to the old and new suppliers. This avoids disputes over bills from the previous occupant. Arrange for internet and phone services to be connected a few days after you move in, not on the same day, because installation windows can be unreliable.

Redirect your mail through the postal service so bills and important letters follow you. Tell your bank, doctor, dentist, insurance providers and any subscription services your new address. A simple list of everyone who needs to know can be compiled a week before the move and ticked off as you go.

## Think about the little things

A moving day kit is a box of essentials you carry with you, not pack in the van. Include a change of clothes, toiletries, phone chargers, basic tools like a screwdriver and scissors, snacks, water and important documents such as your tenancy agreement or property deeds. This kit means

you can function even if all your other boxes are still in the van or scattered around the new home.

If you have pets or young children, plan for their care on moving day. A busy house with doors opening and closing, strangers carrying boxes and general noise can be stressful for them. Arrange for a friend or family member to look after them during the heaviest part of the move, or set up a quiet room with their favourite toys and a familiar blanket.

For those moving in South London and the surrounding areas, BMS Removals provides home removals, business relocations, packing and storage services that cover the key stages of a move from planning through to unloading. Their team works with customers to understand the layout of both properties and plan the most efficient route and loading sequence.

## After the move

Once everything is in the new home, take a moment to check that nothing is missing. Walk through each room with your inventory and note any items that are unaccounted for. Unpack the essentials first: the bedroom, bathroom and kitchen. The rest can wait a few days while you settle in.

Dispose of packing materials responsibly. Flatten boxes and recycle them if your local council collects cardboard. Bubble wrap and plastic can go to recycling centres. Some removal companies take back boxes they supplied, so ask before you throw everything away.

Moving home is a big job, but breaking it into manageable checks makes it less overwhelming. Start early, stay organised and ask for help where you need it. For more information on planning your move, contact **BMS Removals** at Unit 7, Merton Industrial Park, Lee Road, London, SW19 3HX, or call +44 7753 864493.

BMS Removals is also on Facebook.