



SELF STORAGE TIPS

PREPARE & PROTECT

1. Disassemble furniture such as beds and tables before you store them. Keep assembly components such as screws and bolts together in a plastic bag, mark them clearly, and tape the bag to the appropriate piece of furniture. Cover furniture with tarps, blankets or sheeting for additional protection. Protect furniture legs with bubble wrap, foam sheets, furniture covers or pads to prevent scratches.
2. Store mattresses flat, in a protective mattress bag to protect it from dust and moisture. Do not stack items on top of mattresses.
3. Use pallets, furniture covers, tarps or moving pads to keep items off the floor of the unit.
4. Store smaller items in plastic totes. Totes are sturdy, stack well, and keep items dry and clean.
5. Wrap fragile items and breakables separately. Pack these items tightly in totes and fill gaps with paper or filler. Mark "Fragile" on containers with breakable items.
6. Defrost refrigerators and freezers thoroughly to avoid water damage and mildew growth. Tie down appliance doors during transport, but leave them slightly ajar once in storage. Cover open areas on the back of appliances to avoid attracting vermin.
7. Drain wash machines and tie down hoses and cords before storing.
8. Wrap mirrors and pictures in protective covering such as bubble wrap and mark as "Fragile."
9. Store loose photographs between pieces of clean cardboard taped together to avoid curling.
10. Separate lamp bases and lampshades and wrap them for protection.
11. Store electrical equipment such as TVs, stereos, and computers in their original boxes when possible or use boxes that are as close in size to the original and fill gaps with paper.
12. Treat leather items with a leather conditioner before storing.
13. Wipe down metal objects and tools with oil to avoid rust formation from occurring while not in use.
14. Clean out vacuum cleaner bags or canisters to avoid bacteria and mold accumulation.
15. Drain all fluids prior to storing blowers, lawnmowers, and other equipment.
16. For extra protection place moisture absorbers and vermin bait in the front and back of unit.

PACK

1. Invest in totes and other quality packing containers and materials. Containers should be sturdy enough to hold up for years under the weight of the stack.
2. Seal containers with packing tape to prevent dust from entering.
3. Be sure not to over pack containers as they may become too heavy to move safely.
4. Label containers on all sides so you can easily identify the contents.
5. Pack books flat to avoid damaging their spines. Avoid packing too many books in one container.
6. Fill anything that's hollow with items to maximize your available space. For example, store smaller items inside furniture drawers, washers and dryers, and on bookshelves.
7. Tools and long-handled items such as rakes, shovels and brooms can be placed inside garbage cans and bungee tied in bundles.
8. Do not store anything perishable, as this could attract rodents or vermin.
9. Do not store anything hazardous, combustible or flammable, such as paint or other chemicals.
10. Avoid packing anything that is wet as this can cause mold to accumulate within the unit.

ORGANIZE

1. Place frequently accessed items toward the front of your unit. Less frequently needed items should be placed toward the rear of your unit.
2. Leave a walkway down the center of your unit to make accessing items easier.
3. Stack containers and similarly sized items together to save space in the unit.
4. Stack heavy, sturdy containers on the bottom and fragile boxes on top.
5. Chairs can be stacked seat to seat.
6. To ensure the security of more valuable items, place them farthest from the door, with other items concealing them.

INVENTORY & INSURE

1. Take inventory of items you have packed.
2. Include an estimate of the replacement value of each item stored.
3. Take pictures of valuable items and keep them in a safe place.
4. Talk to your home owner or rental insurance agent to be sure you have coverage for items placed in storage. Rental insurance is typically very affordable.

These steps will help you make accurate insurance claims in case of unforeseen damage or loss.