

LA Moving Tips for East Coast Transplants

Old Man Winter is about to show his ugly mug, and you just can't imagine shoveling one last mound of graying snow off of the driveway so that the mailman doesn't slip. Or scraping ice from the windshield every morning before work while your sweat freezes to your skin. Or gaining those extra ten holiday pounds that you can hide under bulky sweaters, only to realize frantically when summer rolls around that you have to spend every waking hour at the gym.

It's time for a change, you think.

For years, you've dreamed about moving to Los Angeles – the land of sunshine, beaches, and a vibrant and exciting culture – but picking up and moving across the country is no easy feat. Don't let that get you down, though. With a little bit of pre-planning, you'll be on your way to The Golden State in no time.

Here are some quick tips to help you prepare for the big move:

1. Save Enough Funds

Unless you hail from New York City, it's likely that you'll experience a higher cost of living in Los Angeles. If you don't yet have a job lined up, it's wise to put away a chunk of your paycheck every month in a dedicated savings account. Use this money to tide you over while you get on your feet in your new city. The more you save, the better off you will be – but plan for at least three months of expenses.

2. Do Your Research

Los Angeles is packed with neighborhoods that are as diverse as the people who live here. Each part of the city has its own unique way of life, so be sure to choose one where you'll be comfortable. Do you like the suburbs? The San Fernando Valley has plenty of lovely neighborhoods, restaurants, shopping centers, and parks. Looking for a trendier vibe? Check out the beach towns on the Westside, including Santa Monica, Venice, and Marina Del Rey.

Just like any city, there are spots that have higher crime rates, so read up on the safest places to live before signing a lease or plunking down a deposit.

3. Find a Place to Live

You'll most likely rent a house or apartment for the first year or more. Once you've narrowed it down to a few neighborhoods, it's helpful to plan a trip to Los Angeles about a month before your move to begin the hunt for the perfect place to live. Set up appointments beforehand, and check out five to ten places at the top of your list. If it's not possible to visit, be ready to hit the ground running once you arrive. If you're relying on Craigslist or other online listings, keep an eye out for scams. A place that sounds too good to be true probably is.

4. Consider the Logistics

How are you going to get here? If you are driving your belongings cross-country, it's going to take at least three to four days. Another option is to hire a traditional moving company or rent a portable storage container, then hop a plane and wait for your things to arrive. Not on a schedule? Consider turning your trip into a once-in-a-lifetime vacation and visiting cities and famous attractions along the way.

Amid the planning, preparation, and inevitable stress that comes with any big life change, just remember that you're on your way to a world of new experiences, opportunities, and possibilities. Enjoy the ride.