

THE 12 MONTHS OF MOVING



PHASE 1

The Plan: 8 to 12 Months Out

Designate a project leader.

Free up your designated project leader from other duties so they can fully focus on the move. Managing an office relocation is a significant responsibility that demands time, attention, and coordination. Form a small move team—ideally two to three individuals—who will meet regularly with the project leader to manage the plan, track timelines, and delegate tasks. The sooner everyone is involved, the smoother the process will be. When appropriate, bring in outside experts such as brokers, architects, designers, and space planners to support key phases of the move.

Select a Broker.

If your lease is set to expire within the next 12 months, it's time to begin planning your move. Start by interviewing commercial real estate brokers. Take the time to talk with them and get a feel for their approach—you're choosing someone who will be a key partner over the next year. Look for a broker who is reputable, responsive, hardworking, and above all, trustworthy. We are howtomoveyouroffice.com will be glad to refer you to professionals.

Discuss Data/VoIP System.

Determine whether your current system can support your future needs or if it's time for an upgrade. If investing in a new solution, issue RFPs to multiple vendors, compare features, and schedule product demos. Be sure to assess not just the technology—but also each provider's service, support, and scalability.

Evaluate using old furniture versus buying new.

Decide whether you'll move your existing furniture or purchase new. If buying new, start interviewing furniture dealers early. Evaluate their full range of services—do they offer space planning, ergonomic guidance, furniture recommendations, tech integration, and installation all in-house? Choosing a dealer with comprehensive capabilities can streamline the process and reduce coordination headaches.

PHASE 2

The Team: 6 to 9 Months Prior

Select and secure new space.

With a clear sense of your ideal location—and input from your broker and space planner—you're ready to secure a new space that supports your operations and future growth. Key factors to consider may include freeway access, visibility, proximity to your current location, employee commutes, and vendor relationships. Your broker will guide you through these and other site-specific considerations. Once selected, meet with the new landlord to align on your move-in timeline, aiming to start the new lease as close as possible to your current lease's expiration.

Gain access to new building.

Secure an agreement with owner and/or occupant to allow on-site access by designers, contractors, suppliers, consultants, etc.

Select your contractor.

To select the right general contractor for your build-out, start by asking your broker, designer, or developer for trusted referrals. You can also reach out to facility managers who've recently completed similar projects. Carefully review each contractor's credentials, and whenever possible, tour recently completed spaces to assess the quality of their work firsthand.

Choose a space planner/designer

Hiring professionals who understand how to balance function, space, and aesthetics gives your new office the best chance to meet your operational needs. A well-planned environment isn't just efficient—it boosts morale and enhances productivity. Thoughtful preparation ensures every square foot works harder for your team.

Develop and finalize the facility plan.

Collaborate with your space planner or designer to gather and assess input from staff about current challenges, needs, and wish lists. Use this feedback to develop a workspace plan that supports your team today and scales with your growth—all while staying within your established budget.

PHASE 3

The New Space: 3 to 5 Months Prior

Secure a full-service office furniture dealership & partner

Start negotiating contract pricing for your new or used furniture specifications. If you're not moving your existing furniture—or only relocating part of it—you'll need to source and coordinate new pieces well in advance. Avoid simply bidding out the project for the lowest price; while that might save money upfront, it often compromises service. Negotiating gives you the best of both worlds: fair pricing and dependable support, both of which are essential to a smooth transition. You don't always need a furniture vendor, ask your trusted moving company if they can help, they may be a good option

Select interior finishes

Work with your dealer or design firm to begin selecting interior finishes such as paint, wall coverings, carpet, and other key elements. Whenever possible, stick to standard products rather than custom options to keep timelines and costs in check. Contractors will need these specifications to submit accurate bids, so finalize details early and secure approvals on any non-standard items before moving forward.

Update your project calendar.

Understand the lead time for your furniture—from order to delivery—and monitor those dates closely. Few things are more frustrating than moving into a new space only to discover that key furnishings haven't arrived.

Finalize move details

Outline and schedule all planned property improvements, and request a detailed construction timeline from your general contractor. Once the build-out begins, walk the space at least twice a week with your construction foreman and design firm representative to monitor progress and catch issues early. Avoid change orders whenever possible—they often lead to costly delays and budget overruns.

PHASE 4

Follow-Through: 2-3 Months Prior

Place orders for furniture and equipment

Order new furnishings, computer and office equipment, and telecommunications system. Consider leasing versus purchasing.

Transfer services

Arrange telephone and electrical/gas services switchover transfer dates. Confirm overlap timeline required for construction at new site.

Install interior finishes

It is vital that the carpeting, painting, and wallpapering be completed before the building has been occupied. Allow sufficient time to coordinate contractors.

Select mover and schedule move date(s)

Interview several moving companies and thoroughly check their credentials. Speak with at least three recent clients to gauge satisfaction and reliability. Ask each mover for a proposed move-in itinerary and a list of the equipment they plan to use. While evenings and weekends may come at a premium, they can be worth the cost to minimize disruption to your regular business operations.

Reserve access to both facilities

Schedule freight elevators, docks, parking, etc. for your use during the move at BOTH locations.

Order new forms, cards, stationery, signage, etc.

Now is a good time to consider redesigning and ordering company-related graphics: logos, signage, forms, identity package, web page, etc.

Advertise.

Notify clients and partners of your upcoming move through email, your website, and social media channels. Consider creating a digital flyer or announcement for LinkedIn and Instagram, and if appropriate, mail postcards to key contacts. Keeping your audience informed helps ensure a smooth transition and reinforces your brand's professionalism.

Address “housekeeping” issues.

Handle final housekeeping details such as arranging new coffee service, plant maintenance, and office artwork or décor. These finishing touches help create a welcoming, comfortable environment for your team from day one.

PHASE 5

Implementation: 1 Month to 1 Week Prior

Review timeline and schedule.

Meet as a group with all vendors to go over scheduling, move-in requirements, questions, etc.

Install furnishings, equipment, IT, and signage.

Your move coordinator should plan to be situated on-site to receive, inspect and sign-off deliveries.

Inform personnel & clients

Distribute updated building operations procedures to all staff—especially security personnel—to ensure a smooth transition. This guide should cover access protocols, emergency contacts, and any changes in facility use. If you haven't already, now is also a good time to email clients and vendors with your new address and any relevant updates.

Plan a company-wide “clean out” day

Purge outdated files, catalogs, and unnecessary materials. Designate clearly marked recycling zones with instructions on what can be discarded. Don't forget to arrange for an extra temporary dumpster to manage the additional waste during the clean-out.

Dismantle, pack and label equipment

Work with your moving company to create a standardized move method plan. Identify a master checklist to record box contents, furniture and equipment. Assign packing duties, purging files when possible.

Occupy building.

Technically, occupancy begins on the lease commencement date—but make sure you’ve secured all necessary licenses and public occupancy permits in advance. Processing times and requirements can vary widely by city and county, so don’t leave this to the last minute.

Move Out/ Move In

Make sure your team is well-rested and ready for a full day of supervising the move. Review your old lease to understand move-out requirements—you may need to patch walls, broom-clean the space, or remove leftover furniture. Most moving companies can assist with these final touches. Ideally, handle this a few days after the move to ensure your new office is fully functional first. To reduce chaos, have the majority of staff work from home on moving day and assign only key delegates—one minimum at each location—to oversee the process.

PHASE 6

Settling In

Organize

Give yourself and staff time to arrange workspace belongings. Put all the finishes touches in place throughout your company’s new environment and

Celebrate with a GRAND OPENING and enjoy!

