



## Self Storage Tips

Here are some helpful tips to make your self-storage experience, packing and storing more efficient and organized.

### **How to protect your stored items and make the most use of space:**

1. Disassemble furniture such as beds and tables before you store them. Wrap and cover the separate sections, clearly mark them and keep them together. 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. (Use tape that is safe for use on furniture, or tape the bag to an inconspicuous place on the piece.) Cover chair legs with bubble wrap or rags for extra protection.
2. Protect furniture legs with bubble wrap, foam sheets, furniture covers or pads to prevent scratches.
3. Use space inside drawers and larger appliances, such as stoves and refrigerators, to store small items: towels, linens, toys, etc.
4. Use pallets, furniture covers, or moving pads to keep items off the floor of the unit.
5. Wrap all fragile items and breakables such as dishes, glasses, ornaments, etc. separately. Pack these items tightly into strong or reinforced boxes, filling any gaps with paper or filler. Mark "Fragile" on any boxes containing breakable items.
6. Defrost refrigerators and freezers thoroughly to avoid water damage and mildew growth. Tie down the appliance doors during transport, but leave them slightly ajar once in storage.
7. Drain washing machines, and tie down hoses and cords before storing them.
8. It's a good idea to wipe down the inside of appliances with baking soda before you store them to keep them dry.

9. Wrap mirrors and pictures in protective covering such as bubble wrap and mark them as "Fragile." Cardboard corners can be purchased to protect the sharpest, weakest areas of frames.
10. If storing photographs, consider a climate controlled unit where temperature fluctuations will not damage your photos. If you do store loose photographs, place them between pieces of clean cardboard and consider taping them together to avoid curling.
11. Separate lamp bases and lampshades and wrap them for protection.
12. If you're storing upholstered products such as mattresses and sofas, consider investing in covers, bags or sheeting for additional protection. Storage and moving facilities often sell large heavy-duty bags for this purpose.
13. Vacuum-sealed bags work really well for draperies, bedding, and clothing.
14. Electrical equipment such as TVs, stereos, and computers should be packed in their original boxes whenever possible. If using other boxes, choose ones that are as close in size to the original as possible, and fill all gaps with paper.
15. Treat leather items with a leather conditioner before you store them.
16. Wipe down metal objects and tools with a little oil before storing them to avoid rust formation that can occur when the tools are not used regularly.
17. When storing a vacuum cleaner, clean out the bag or canister first to avoid bacteria and mold accumulation.
18. When storing any kitchen appliance with an open back area, protect this area to avoid attracting vermin.
19. Cover furniture with sheets or tarps to protect them against scratches, dust and other damage.
20. Pack books flat to avoid damaging their spines.
21. Use boxes, not plastic bags. Boxes are sturdier and stack well, taking up less space. Also, sealed plastic bags can trap humidity which can cause damaging mildew.
22. Boxes that are tightly sealed with packing tape will prevent dust from entering.
23. Do not store anything perishable, this will avoid attracting rodents or vermin.
24. Do not store anything flammable, such as paint or other chemicals that are hazardous.

25. Drain any fluids prior to storing blowers, lawnmowers, and other equipment; Do not store hazardous or combustible materials.
26. Lock your unit with a high security, quality disc lock or cylinder lock.

## **How to organize your stored items and make the most use of your self storage space:**

1. Label boxes on all sides so you can easily identify the contents.
2. Place frequently accessed items towards the front of your unit. Less frequently needed items should be placed toward the rear of your unit.
3. Leave a walkway down the center of your unit to make accessing items easier.
4. Be sure not to over pack boxes as they can get heavy and dangerous. Stack heavy sturdy boxes on bottom and fragile boxes on top.
5. Invest in good quality, sturdy boxes and packing materials. Boxes should be sturdy enough to hold up for years under the weight of the stack. You may be tempted to get boxes for free from supermarkets and liquor stores; however, the mismatched shapes and sizes will impede your ability to organize most effectively. You can buy standard-sized boxes and specialty boxes for items such as mirrors, lamps, and clothing.
6. For wrapping breakables, paper will work, but bubble wrap is cleaner, it can be reused and because it is transparent, makes identifying contents easier.
7. Invest in a wardrobe box with a built-in hanging rod, to store clothes and hangers.
8. Store large pieces of furniture vertically to save space. Stand sofas on end when possible.
9. If you have room to store a sofa flat, then a loveseat can be placed upside down on top of the sofa, and a table stacked on top of that.
10. Chairs can be stacked seat to seat.
11. In most cases, you can stack dryers on top of washers.
12. Tools and long-handled items such as rakes, shovels and brooms can be placed inside garbage cans and bungee tied in bundles.
13. Stack boxes and similarly sized items together to save space in the unit.

14. You can use virtually all of the space in and around your stored furniture. Fill anything that's hollow with items to maximize your available space. For example, you can store smaller items inside furniture drawers, inside wardrobes, inside washers and dryers, and on bookshelves.