



Also be aware that some local companies will expect you to offer packers a substantial tip. While the quote may look inexpensive, a hefty tip will quickly erode some of those savings. Most reputable firms will discourage tipping.

But quotations involve more than just price, and often reveal a great deal about the quality of the removal company. The bottom line is not everything. Your quotation should clearly state exactly what the quoted price will cover. For example, there are port charges, demurrage charges, custom clearance charges and other fees that apply in moving to Canada. And is it loose, or is it liftvan?

Compare your quotations line by line, paying particular attention to the estimated volume of your move. Move costs are generally calculated by the cubic foot, and the greater the quantity you move, the cheaper the per cubic foot cost. Check to see that each of your prospective movers has estimated a similar volume. If you see any great discrepancies, it's time to be suspicious.



### Cash on departure

Once you've decided on one removal company, you'll need to fix the date and finalize the list of items to be moved. Remember that it is cheaper to send one large container than several smaller shipments. Your list will be required by customs officials in Canada, and should include the value of goods. The same list can be used for insurance purposes. As you read the fine print of your removal contract, make sure that you have adequate insurance to cover loss of or damage to goods, and be aware that the cost

of insurance can exceed the cost of the move itself. While reputable companies will pay for accidental damage that is their responsibility, if damage is not the mover's fault, you will have no recourse.

Removal companies in Hong Kong require that you pay for your move in full before you go. An initial deposit is often required, followed by the balance, unless you are covered by a corporate account, which will be granted credit. It's now time to clearly mark what's not going with you. Give it away, sell it, or simply leave it. Notes one removal company representative, "Our packers do quite well". Once you've paid and sorted your belongings, you are ready for D-day.

### Departure day

It's important to remain calm and let the packers do their jobs. Keep children and pets out of the way, and be available to answer any questions that packers may have.

Make sure that all required forms have been completed. A good removal company which is familiar with Canadian customs requirements should be able to offer extra assistance. Remember that you must have owned all goods for at least six months if you wish to bring them tax and duty-free into Canada. "Customs officials will check, especially in Vancouver," cautioned one mover. Canadian officials are looking for goods being smuggled into the country for resale. Again, a list prepared in Hong Kong will also prove exactly what is and is not yours, should you have any unpleasant surprises. As the owner of the goods, you must be present upon their arrival in Canada.



### Home sweet home

At your destination, the removal company will unpack and place all furniture where you request. You'll need to be there to supervise all unpacking, and to monitor any damage that may have occurred. Keep a record of what has been unpacked to make sure you are not missing any of your possessions.

If you've made the right decisions, you will have received good advice, the care and attention of a professional mover, and paid a reasonable price. That's what home work is all about.



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