

Tips for Storing Your Items

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Preparation:

Plan Ahead

Make the most of your self-storage unit by planning the space carefully. Create a list of the items you will be storing and map out your storage space for efficient use.

- Place moving blankets or sheets over concrete floors to protect mattresses, furniture or furnishings while in storage.
- Keep heavy or bulky items at the back of your unit and use them as a base for stacking. Light and fragile items should be packed last to avoid damage.
- Long items such as mattresses, beds, couches and table tops should be stored along the walls of your storage unit to free up space.
- Turn items on their ends when necessary in order to make the most of your space by using the full height of the unit.
- Allow yourself access to all of your items by leaving enough room to move around the unit.
- Place your most frequently accessed items near the door for convenient access.
- Use a bold marker pen to label all cartons on all sides. Keep a list of the labelled cartons for easy reference.
- Packing and labelling cartons room-by-room makes the unpacking much easier. If you need to find something in storage, then you will have some idea in which carton to begin looking
- Fill cartons to capacity. Seal all boxes carefully with quality tape to provide better protection for the contents. Partially full or bulging cartons may tip or collapse.
- Heavy items like books and tools should be packed in small cartons so they are easy to handle.
- Think about installing shelving into your self-storage unit.

Moving In

Think about things carefully and plan how you're going to go about packing your self-storage unit before you even load the van. The way you load the van could determine how quickly you're going to be able to off-load everything and move your belongings into your unit.

- Pack items that you will need to access most often into the van first as they will be unloaded and placed into the unit last.
- Disassemble any large items with legs to make it easier for moving and to maximise the storage space in your unit.
- Empty wardrobes, cupboards and drawers while moving them in order to protect furniture and make items are lighter to move.
- Cover furniture with moving blankets or soft furnishings to protect them during moving and storage.

How to pack your self-storage unit

With the planning and moving in place now to move your items into your unit and pack them in the most space efficient way. Remember to leave working space for those times you need to access items in your unit.

- Place all your heavier bulkier items at the very back of your self-storage unit and then build up the walls placing lighter items on top.
- Any item that is longer such as a mattress, bed or tables should always be placed on their sides and lining the walls.

- If you need to access some particular goods regularly, it's a good idea to create small passageways that allow you to walk easily and safely between your items.
- For important documents such as invoices, passports, remote controls or items that might be easily misplaced such as a set of keys, a good idea to put all of these things into one specially marked box. Then keep that box close to the unit's door so you won't get into a panic trying to search for it amongst all your other things.
- If you're storing items with extra space such as wardrobes or desks, fill the empty places to maximise every inch of space you have.
- Our advice is to use professional storage boxes for your packing as this will allow you to get more into your designated storage space and help keep all your items better protected. And of course, it's going to make your life a whole lot easier when it comes to unpacking your storage unit and removing all your goods at the end.

What To and What Not To Do

Dos

- DO inspect your storage unit and list all the packing accessories you will need: wrapping paper, bubble wrap, cartons, tape, rope, drop cloths, and covers. Your Storage manager will have most of these items in stock, and can arrange anything not immediately available.
- DO use professional storage cartons to make storing and unpacking easier and safer, and to maintain your goods' condition for the term of their storage. Place large, strong, heavy items at the rear of the space. Then work forwards and upwards with lighter, fragile items.
- DO reserve space at the front of your unit for items you might need to access. Allow walkways if you will be accessing your storage space regularly. Shelves can make it very easy to access your items without "digging down" through stacked cartons.
- DO use all your storage space, including the height. Label your cartons, and keep a list of your cartons to help you locate specific items.
- DO ensure your fridge, freezer and other whiteware are thoroughly DRY and CLEAN. Store your fridges and freezers with their doors slightly ajar, and with a deodoriser inside.
- DO empty your wardrobes, drawers and cupboards to protect their shelving and structure. Pack clothing and personal goods in strong sealed cartons with some naphthalene or mothballs to protect and maintain their condition.
- DO vacuum food crumbs from between sofa cushions to avoid attracting vermin. Place a layer of packing inside the bottom and top of cartons containing breakables.
- DO protect fragile items with careful packing. Wrap them individually in packing paper (newsprint can be very messy and may stain). Nest cups and bowls. Stand plates, sauce platters and casserole dishes on their edges. Fill any gaps in the carton with packing such as scrunched paper or bubble wrap to prevent items from moving around. Label all cartons containing fragile items and store them toward the top of carton stacks.
- DO store mirrors, windows, screens and paintings on their edge, not lying flat, and well protected by bubble-wrap or in a flat pack carton.
- DO wrap silver in NON ACID tissue paper or plastic bags to help reduce tarnishing. Wipe chrome or cast iron with a little machine oil to help retard rust.

- DO pack computers and electrical items in the original packing boxes when possible, or in good quality packing cartons with bubble wrap.

Don'ts

- DON'T store any goods that are illegal, stolen, flammable, explosive, environmentally harmful, hazardous, perishable or that otherwise present a risk to property or people.
- DON'T leave cartons partially full or bulging - they can tip or collapse.
- DON'T store any machinery that still has fuel in its tank, or appliances or toys with batteries.
- DON'T stack items inside fridges or freezers, as the shelves and linings can be easily marked and damaged.
- DON'T pay to store air -disassemble large items such as bed frames, tables and wardrobes as much as possible.
- DON'T pack large boxes such as books or tools in larges boxes. Overweight cartons are hard to lift and move and can crush items beneath them.
- DON'T pack books on their spines - keep them flat.

What You Can and Cannot Store

At Green Door we want everything to be legal and safe practise. We want everything to be legal from the way we do our business to what you store, which is why it's prohibited to place any illegal or other inappropriate items in storage.

If you're found to be breaking our storage policies, please note that we could immediately terminate your storage contract. Our aim is to keep everyone safe and by storing illegal goods, you're putting other people and their belongings in danger too.

If you have any doubts whatsoever with regards to what to store and what not to store when using self-storage, please contact one of our staff who'll be more than happy to help because like they say – it's better to be safe than sorry.

Dangerous goods

Any item that we deem to be harmful or dangerous is forbidden to be stored in your self-storage unit. For your reference, any of the following kinds of items are forbidden to be stored on our premises:

- Flammable items
- Combustible items
- Toxic and hazardous materials e.g. petrol, toxic waste, biological waste, acid, compressed gasses, corrosives, fertilizers, asbestos, paint, fireworks, weapons, ammunition, explosives.

Animal products and perishable food

- Any food that is perishable such as cereals, meats, fresh produce and dairy products are not permitted to be stored in your personal self-storage unit.
- Storing such things will put the site at risk and may attract pests and rodents.
- It's fine to store canned goods.

Plants and animals

- It doesn't matter if the plant or animal is dead or alive – these items are forbidden to be stored.

Stolen and illegal goods

- We aim to keep all your goods safe and secure while in storage, however, we need you to stay within the law as well and not store any stolen or illegal goods in your self-storage unit.

How To Safely Store It

Now that you've found your ideal self-storage unit, and completed your planning here are some ideas and hints on how to safely and securely store your items it's time to start preparing for storage.

Books and Documents

Books, documents and paperwork should be placed flat into archive boxes or book cartons. Do not overfill the boxes or they may be too heavy to move and you could hurt yourself. Alternatively do not under-fill them as boxes stored on top may cause the box to sag or collapse. An idea is to place a cloth or paper between each book to protect its covers.

Furniture

Plastic coverings are great for protecting furniture during transit, but if left in place they can cause mould and mildew, especially on mattresses and upholstered furniture during long-term storage. As an alternative option, use moving blankets, a cloth sheet or soft sheets to protect your furniture. Disassemble large items or those items with legs so it is easier to transport them and also to make maximum use of your storage space. Mattresses can be stored on their end to maximise space and use a support to stop the mattress sagging.

Fragile Items, Glassware and Crockery

Use tissue or packing paper to wrap each fragile and glassware item separately. You can use glass socks for added protection. Fill excess space with packing as to avoid movement. Plates, saucers and bowls should be wrapped separately in packing paper with poly foam between each item. Artwork and mirrors should be wrapped using packing paper and corrugated cardboard and kept in a picture carton.

Be sure to label boxes of breakables as *Fragile* and keep them away from heavy items.

Appliances

Kitchen and laundry appliances and whitegoods should be thoroughly cleaned, dried and defrosted before being put into storage to avoid damage from moisture or mildew. Doors should be kept ajar with a deodoriser inside for freshness. Remember to keep the hoses, nuts, bolts and other parts in plastic bags and attach them to the appliance.

Remember to drain the water from all hoses and remove them from the water inlet fittings on the machine. Tip the washing machine towards the drainage pipe to remove the last of the water inside the machine.

A final tip is to remember to clean out the ice tray and check the freezer box is defrosted.

Electronic Equipment

All your electronic equipment should be clean and dry and preferably stored in its original packaging, if that is possible. Remember to remove any batteries, as any battery leakage can corrode and will ruin electrical parts.

Clothing, Textiles and Linens

Clothing, textiles and linens store much better if they are clean before placing them into storage. Remember to always fold the items, don't hang them. Hanging items can place stress on certain areas of the fabric, causing wear and tear. Keep all clothing and fabric items folded in acid-free boxes to avoid damage and discolouration caused by the acids in regular paper and cardboard boxes.

Food

Storing of foodstuffs is not recommended particularly items that may leak, smell, perish or attract insects and rodents to your unit.

Metal Items

By wiping items down with fine (thin) oil before storing will greatly help in preventing rust. In your unit keep any metal items clear of any other items that may be damaged by rust.

Extra Tips

Don't store anything that is combustible or perishable. Unsuitable items include:

- LPG bottles
- Petrol/gasoline
- Paint/paint thinner
- Solvents
- Living things (including plants)
- Food that will spoil.

For any equipment (such as mowers and weed eaters) that use petrol, make sure they have been emptied of fuel. If you're storing a barbecue, make sure the surfaces are all clean and any gas bottles are empty.