



## **Advice on storing for the long-term from All-Ways Storing Ltd, the removals and storage experts**

We have over 25 years experience of the removals and storage industry. During that time we have learnt a lot about how to safely keep possessions and furniture in long term storage. Some removal companies will “store and forget”, not checking on the storage unit until the customer requires their belongings back.

However, if you are storing valuable goods such as furniture or antiques for a long time then it is a good idea to check on your storage unit from time to time and take some sensible precautions. We would recommend visiting your storage unit every 6 months.

### ***Before you move into secure long-term storage***

- The strength of boxes will degrade with use over time so use good quality boxes and packing materials. We supply cardboard boxes and packing materials.
- If you buy similar size boxes then they will be easier to stack and will save you space in your storage facility.

### ***Packing for storage***

- Filling boxes to capacity will help prevent breakages but avoid over-packing your boxes and making them too heavy to lift!
- Use paper, towels or bubble-wrap to fill the spaces in your boxes. If you are stacking boxes in a storage space then the boxes at the bottom need to be sturdy enough to hold the weight above. Boxes that are only partly filled may tip over or collapse.
- Label your boxes clearly so you can identify the contents and keep an inventory. Label the boxes on more than one side so you can quickly tell what is inside. Make sure any boxes containing breakable items are marked as “Fragile”.
- Don't put all your heavy items in one box. Put a few heavy items at the bottom and then top-up with lighter items.
- If you are storing books then pack them flat and not on their spines to avoid damage.
- Seal all your boxes with packing tape before putting them into the storage space.

### ***Beware of moisture when storing long-term***

- Don't store damp items because they can cause water damage and mould.
- Don't pack items in sealed plastic bags. Humidity can cause mildew.
- Large appliances need care before placing in storage. Make sure you defrost fridges and freezers thoroughly before storing them to reduce the chance of water damage.
- Drain washing machines before storing them and tie down hoses etc. Appliances should be clean and dry and it is worthwhile wiping the insides with bicarbonate of soda before you store them.
- Fasten the doors of large appliances so they are securely shut during the move. Leave them slightly ajar once in storage to stop condensation forming and prevent bad odours.
- Mattresses hold a surprising amount of moisture and should not be put next to any polished surfaces or wooden furniture. We would recommend a paper mattress cover.
- All bedding, mattress covers and sheets should be washed and fully dried prior to storing.



### **Storing fragile and delicate items**

- Wrap all fragile items and breakables such as dishes, glasses and ornaments separately. Paper will do. Pack them tightly into strong boxes, filling any gaps with paper or filler. Try to avoid putting heavy items on top of fragile ones.
- If you are going to be storing clothes think about buying wardrobe or clothes boxes. You will then be able to simply hang the clothes in them and they will keep their shape.
- It's not wise to simply put your clothes in bin liners as moisture can get trapped inside and your clothes could be damaged.
- The best protection for mirrors and pictures is to wrap them in a protective covering such as bubble wrap and stack them on their ends. Mirrors and pictures should never be stored flat. It goes without saying that they should be marked as 'Fragile'!
- Separate lamp bases and lampshades and wrap them for protection.
- If you are storing upholstered products such as mattresses and sofas it is a good idea to invest in paper covers, bags or sheeting to give them some additional protection. Stand sofas and mattresses on end wherever possible to save space and don't stack too much on top of soft furnishings. Mattresses are best stored on the long end and should be raised above floor level or laid on protective sheeting.
- Think hard about whether you really want to store photographs. If you do store loose photographs, place them between pieces of clean cardboard and tape them together to avoid curling.

### **Furniture storage**

- If you are storing a few items of furniture on top of each other, a simple dust sheet or cover placed between items will minimize scratching and damage.
- You'll save space if you can dismantle furniture such as beds and tables before you store them – make sure you keep all the bits so you can get it all back together again!
- Wrap and cover furniture sections and keep them together, clearly marked, for quick retrieval. You can put components such as screws and bolts in a plastic bag, mark them clearly and tape to the relevant piece of furniture. Store large pieces of furniture vertically to save space.
- Chairs can be stacked seat to seat to save space. Cover chair legs with protective wrapping for extra protection. We also sell chair covers, which are good for long term storage.
- Spray your wood furniture with a good quality furniture spray before storing it in the facility to give it some added protection.
- All furniture entered to store should be clean and free from stains or moisture to prevent the risk of spreading mould and mildew among your goods.

#### **AVOID PLASTIC WRAP ON FURNITURE**

**It might seem logical to wrap your furniture in plastic to keep moisture away, but it can have the opposite effect.**

**Plastic can trap moisture underneath it and against your furniture, especially on leather furniture. This can increase the chances of developing mould.**

**Plastic also doesn't let your furniture breathe, especially on fabric-upholstered pieces such as sofas and chairs.**

**Blankets or other fabric can keep your furniture protected from dust and bugs while still letting it breathe.**



### ***Storing electrical goods and unusual items***

- Electrical equipment such as TVs, stereos and computers should be packed in their original boxes wherever possible. If this isn't possible, pack them into boxes that are about the right size, making sure that you pack gaps.
- If you are storing items such as lawn mowers and cars that have fuel tanks, drain the tanks before you put them in storage. Fuel is one of the few things that you cannot store in a self storage facility.
- Wipe down metal objects and tools with a little oil before storing to avoid rust.
- You can tie tools and long-handled items in bundles. Don't store a brush resting on the bristles.
- Don't store vacuum cleaners with the bag in – throw it away before you store them in the facility.
- Treat leather items with a leather conditioner before you store them.