

The *Move-Day* Checklist.

What gets photographed, condition-reported, packed how, by whom. The working pre-move, pre-storage, and pre-ship inventory every collector should have before anyone touches the collection.

A WORKSHEET BY MORIAH ALISE · DEAR GLORY · MAY 2026 · [READ THE ARTICLE →](#)

Most damage happens *between* places.

Not on the wall. Not in storage. In the move. The handoff is where insurance gets ambiguous, condition reports stop existing, and the people who actually touch your work have the least documentation. The checklist below is the difference between a clean move and a quiet disaster you find out about in three years.

How to use this. Run this once per move — whether you're relocating, putting work in storage, sending to a fair, lending to an institution, or shipping a single piece across town. If you have a large collection, work piece-by-piece on the most valuable five before the truck arrives.

SECTION I · THE AUDIT

Six areas. *Pre-, during-, and post-move.*

The first three areas happen before the truck arrives. The middle two happen during. The last one happens within 48 hours of arrival.

01 PRE-MOVE · INVENTORY

The complete list of every work in motion, with current and intended location. Most collectors discover their inventory is wrong on move day.

- I have a complete inventory list of every work being moved
- Each work has a unique ID and a current physical location noted
- Each work has an intended destination noted
- Items not moving (staying behind) are clearly marked
- The inventory is shared with the mover, the receiving location, and the insurer in advance

→ What is missing or uncertain here — and what's the first move to fix it?

02 PRE-MOVE · DOCUMENTATION

Photos, condition reports, and existing paperwork for every piece. This is your only record if something goes wrong.

- Every work has been *recently photographed* (front, back, sides, signature, any damage)
- Every work has a current condition report, signed and dated
- Provenance, COA, and invoice files for every piece are accessible (digital + backup)
- Frames, mounts, and original packaging are documented separately
- Any artist installation instructions or care notes are attached to the file

→ What is missing or uncertain here — and what's the first move to fix it?

03 PRE-MOVE · INSURANCE

The financial layer that travels with the work. Most homeowner's policies do not cover art in transit. Verify.

- Active fine-art coverage includes transit, not just on-premises
- Coverage values reflect *current* market, not original purchase price
- The insurer has been notified of the move dates and route
- I know my deductible and what triggers a claim
- The moving company carries their own liability that I've verified

→ What is missing or uncertain here — and what's the first move to fix it?

04 MOVE-DAY · CREW

Who's doing the packing. Who's signing the chain of custody. The chain only matters if it's named, signed, and witnessed.

- The crew is a *fine-art mover*, not a general residential mover
- The lead is named on the paperwork and present on site
- I (or my designee) am present for the start and end of the move
- A condition report is signed at pickup and again at delivery
- Any deviation from the inventory or the plan is documented in writing on the day

→ What is missing or uncertain here — and what's the first move to fix it?

05 MOVE-DAY · PACKAGING

What materials touch the work, what method per piece. Bubble wrap touching a paint surface is the most common preventable damage in art.

- Materials are *archival* and non-acidic where they contact the work
- Bubble wrap, plastic, and tape never touch the work surface directly
- Crating is used for fragile, large-scale, or high-value works
- Each piece's packaging is appropriate to its medium (oil, paper, sculpture, photo)
- Climate during transit is controlled where the work requires it

→ What is missing or uncertain here — and what's the first move to fix it?

06 POST-MOVE · RECONCILIATION

Within 48 hours of arrival. The step almost nobody does. The step that turns a clean move into a verified one.

- Every work has been counted against the inventory on arrival
- Every work has a fresh condition report compared against the pre-move one
- Any damage, however small, has been photographed and reported in writing
- The moving company has been given a written sign-off (or a written claim)
- Final placements are documented — where each piece now lives, on the wall or in storage

→ What is missing or uncertain here — and what's the first move to fix it?

Where is the *chain breaking*?

Look across the six areas. Find the link where the chain of custody is weakest right now — the gap that, if you fixed it before the next move, would save you the most.

What a *clean* chain looks like.

Documented at every handoff. Signed by every person who touched the work. **Verified at every endpoint.** Counts match, condition matches, paperwork matches. **Reported in writing, not verbally.** If it isn't on paper, it didn't happen. Identify the link in your chain that breaks this rule.

YOUR WEAKEST CUSTODY LINK

The *one link* you're tightening before the next move —

Three *pre-move actions*. This week.

The three things you'd do this week if a move was happening in 30 days. Three concrete actions, with a name attached — who's doing them and by when.

A pre-move action is something you can complete this week, by yourself or with one phone call. Updating insurance values. Hiring a registrar. Photographing the five most valuable pieces. Three.

1	PRE-MOVE ACTION ONE	BY WHEN
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2	PRE-MOVE ACTION TWO	BY WHEN
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3	PRE-MOVE ACTION THREE	BY WHEN
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CLOSE

A move is a *chain*. Audit every link.

Your collection survives on the strength of its weakest link. The good news is that links are simple to strengthen if you name them out loud. Print this. Use it on the next move. Use it before the next move you're not yet planning.

Moriah Alise

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