

Everything You Need to Know About Moving in Together After Dating Long-Distance

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Managing a long-distance relationship is tricky, but moving in together after living thousands of miles apart is often just as challenging.

"Moving in together is obviously a major step," says Josh Klapow (<https://www.joshklapow.com/>), clinical psychologist and host of *The Kurre and Klapow Show* (<http://www.kandkshow.com/>).

"Being long-distance prior to moving in together usually means you have had less chances to 'practice' what it is like to be under the same roof," he explains.

Fortunately, the one area long-distance couples do have plenty of practice in is communication. This skill, along with a willingness to compromise, can carry you and your partner through the inevitable stress of moving homes.

Ready to make the jump from long-distance to cohabitation? Here's what you need to know.

1. Talk About Your Expectations.

Have an open discussion about your expectations for sharing a home.

"The less time you have spent together under a single roof, the more honest communication is critical," says Klapow.

Start by talking about the space itself. What do you need in terms of storage space, organization, and decor? What's your idea of clean? Klapow recommends talking candidly about these types of topics, as well as your respective schedules, daily habits, and pet peeves.

And don't be afraid to dive into more challenging terrain.

"You need to have conversations not just about what you like," he says, "but what you need emotionally when it comes to your environment. Do you need fresh cut flowers? Do you need to have windows? Does a dark space bring your mood down? Does the need for order stress you out?"

Talking about what makes you feel happy, comfortable, or anxious in your space is a key step to setting up a happy home, Klapow explains.

2. Discuss Roommate Logistics

It may be tempting to take a wait-and-see approach to finances and household duties, but discussing these topics early will save you and your partner frustration after the move.

"Getting all this talked out well ahead of the actual move so you both are on the same page and know what to expect will give you both peace of mind," says Juli Oliver, NYC-based professional organizer and founder of **OrganizeNY** (<http://organizeny.com/>).

At minimum, it's important to discuss budgets, bills, groceries, pets, and how you'll divide chores and responsibilities.

3. Map Out Your Space

Depending on how far apart you and your partner live—and where you're moving together—it may be difficult to map out your home's layout before you arrive. Still, it's a good idea to have a basic idea of how your space will function, Oliver says.

Review the layout of your home and discuss the purpose and possibilities for each room. Do you need to create a work zone? Set-up your living room with extra seating because you love to entertain?

Planning out your space is smart way to figure out which pieces of furniture and art you want to bring with you.

Lior Rachmany, founder and CEO of **Dumbo Moving + Storage** (<https://dumbomoving.com/#1/>) in New York City, suggests taking videos of your new place, then snapping photos of the items you'd like to bring and keeping a note of the dimensions of each piece.

"This way you always have the information handy and you always know how much room you have to play with," he says.

4. Combine Your Stuff

Decide with your partner which items you'll need for your space, including furniture, art, decor, linens, kitchen appliances, and cleaning supplies.

Now figure out who is bringing what.

"Combine your favorite items, keep the best, purge the old or the least nice, and agree on what would make sense to purchase as new together," Oliver says.

If you can't agree on who should bring a particular piece, Rachmany suggests letting your new home decide.

"Consider the size of your new living room when deciding which couch to bring," he says. "Also consider the aesthetic of the new place and see which person's furniture and decorations match better."

And while it's smart to eliminate duplicates—after all, no one needs two mops—you don't have to get rid of all your doubles.

"The extra mugs or blankets may seem excessive," Rachmany says, "but it's important to keep some extra things that are unique to the both of you."

5. Pare Down Personal Belongings

Disagreements are inevitable (<https://www.sparefoot.com/self-storage/blog/21028-turf-wars-tutus-tuxedos-maintain-peace-share-closet-partner/>) when you move in with a partner, but if you want to reduce the risk of fighting over closet space every time you reach for a T-shirt, declutter ahead of time.

"Making space and accommodating the other person's needs and personal possessions is all about the sharing," says Oliver. And let's face it: sharing space is far less complicated when you have less stuff to deal with.

That's why it's crucial to be as realistic as possible when you debate which items to pack or leave behind. Only bring the things you love or use on a regular basis, and get rid of anything you'll no longer need in your new environment. Say you're moving to a small urban apartment, for example—time to ditch the beach cruiser bike. Or, if you're trading a cold climate for a warm one, consider leaving behind your pile of puffer vests.

6. Set Up Space For Alone Time

When you're moving in with your partner after living far apart, it's normal to feel overwhelmed by the amount of time you spend together.

"Personal space will make both your lives easier," says Oliver.

Designate a distinct area of the home you and your partner can retreat to for alone time.

7. Embrace The Transition Period

Don't feel obligated to settle in immediately.

"The move is not going to be an easy change and won't be something you get used to right away," Rachmany says.

Instead of rushing the decorating and organizing processes, give yourselves some time to relax and get to know your new space. After all, moving in with a significant other after building your relationship in two different places is a huge feat, and it's important to celebrate the milestone.

"Moving is a great excuse to open a bottle of champagne or wine," Rachmany says, "and it is a great way to turn up your take-out a few notches."

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