



DOWNSIZING & MOVING TIPS

The How and Why

AskLandis is a full service, turn-key solution for folks who are downsizing from one size house to another. AskLandis offers a downsizing, de-cluttering service that uses a process of sorting items to sell, donate or dispose. In addition, this company implements storage and organizational systems for any room or space in a home including basements, garages and attics.

AskLandis was founded by Stephen Landis in January 2008. Stephen Landis saw a need for helping people and families "downsize" their spaces after his father's passing in 2007. Stephen helped his mom transform a home she designed and built with her husband while living in it for 30+ years, full of many years of his father's hobbies and interests. His passion for his interest in his three son's interests created almost mayhem in most spaces of the house, especially in the spacious basement. His oldest son taught him how to fly, while his middle son was a craftsman in the wood shop, and his youngest, an avid beekeeper and photographer. My father was busy building beehives with me and built a darkroom in the basement supporting my enthusiasm for photography. My middle brother learned how to build fine furniture which later blossomed into his own fine furniture building company in PA. His company is named John Landis Cabinet Works, which has been in business for decades!

In addition to our interests, my father was a self-taught musician and he too crafted the finest banjos in the wood shop, created miniature figurines, whittled with a sharp knife and the softest woods. He was a master of all in my eyes, and a very well-respected surgeon in a small town in VA. His other hobbies included tennis with his friends and family, horse back riding and drives through the mountains of VA with one of his best friends, "collecting" books, artifacts, fun things which in turn found themselves in the house.

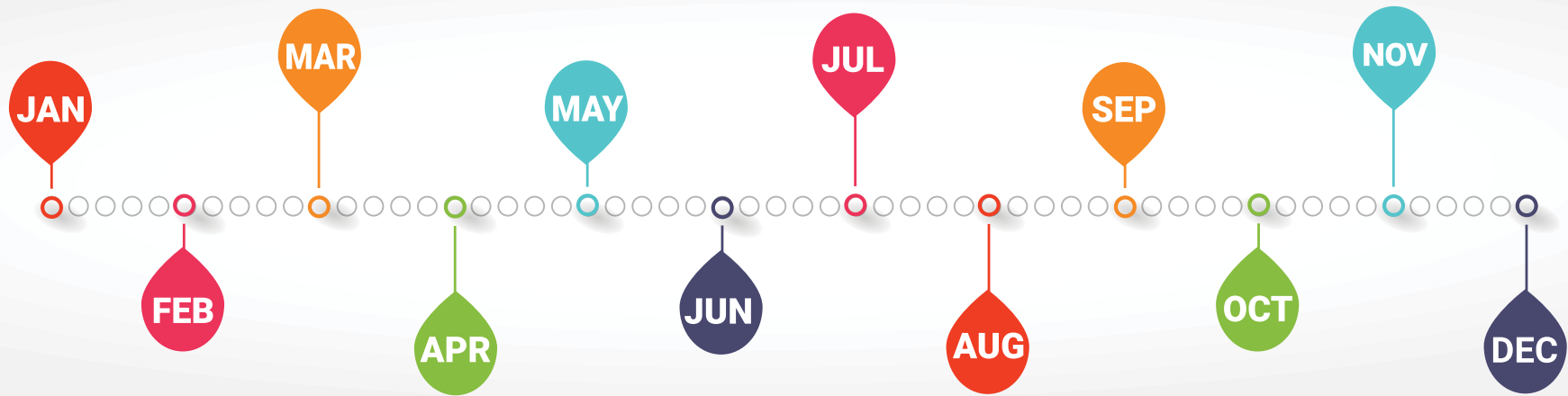
When he passed, my mom wanted to keep the memories of my father but live in a de-cluttered home, while my intention for her was to have the house in a "market ready" environment within days in the event she should be ready to sell her home.

AskLandis continued and continues to grow as a one stop shop for all our clients, offering the downsizing and de-cluttering portion. The things we sell, our clients get a commission in return. The items we donate, are itemized and our clients receive the list, tax write off and donation slip and we do our best to recycle as much as we can! We offer staging services and when your house sells, we'll even move you! We own a cleaning company to clean the house for the next owner. We have a network of contractors that we oversee for handyman services and repairs, window washing, power washing and carpet cleaning. AskLandis has you covered!

I've created this piece of literature as a reference for our clients or potential clients. The information contained in it is based on the many years of starting and running this business and helping thousands of very satisfied families, individuals and children overcome the obstacles of leaving a larger home for a smaller one. I discuss the topics in presentations that I do throughout the state. I hope you find it to be a great source of information to move forward.



Timeline of When To Start The Process.....



I'm often asked, "when should I start thinking about moving to a retirement community or smaller house"? There should be a conversation with your family members whether it be your spouse, significant other or your kids about when you are wanting to move. Some of our clients have planned upwards to five or more years of when they are going to downsize and move. Sometimes our clients make a decision when their spouse passes away; or there are times when living in a house can become overwhelming or expensive to maintain as we grow older. Regardless of the circumstance, you will know "your time" when to make the move.

Are you wanting to stay in the same area or move closer to your kids or grandchildren? Do you need to live close to your doctors and local hospital?

Ideally, the thought process with an ultimate end goal would be 3-6-12 months out. Begin thinking about your future space. You know you're going to have a bedroom and bathroom and possibly a second bedroom. Some use the second bedroom as a sitting area, office or a spare

bedroom. Most retirement communities offer a meal plan, but offer a kitchenette of full size kitchen in each unit. And then there should be a minimum of a living room.

If you're moving into a 1-2 bedroom with a kitchen, plan for your bed, bedside table, a lamp, bureau, some hanging clothes. The bedrooms aren't as big as what you are used to. Take a small table that can seat 2-4 people and move a place setting for four people. You don't need the dozens of coffee mugs and wine glasses you have currently in your cabinets!

In the living room, a love seat or small couch, coffee table, a couple of end tables and a couple of lamps should be sufficient, along with a TV and small entertainment stand or table. The second bedroom which is typically optional, folks put a futon or pull-out couch for family or friends to stay, a small desk, computer and desk chair and filing cabinet.

As for the rest of what is in your house currently, what are you going to do with it.....?



The Ugly Truth

I do about a dozen presentations to retirement communities throughout Charlottesville talking about the downsizing process with the folks in attendance. When I cover the part about their “things” that they aren’t taking with them to their new space, I have to be the messenger of bad news. And here it is: ***YOUR KIDS DON’T WANT YOUR THINGS!***

This is a blanket statement I know, and yes, perhaps your kids want a couple of your things, but certainly not all of it for several reasons—taste, space in their homes, their spouse’s taste, or they just don’t want anything. Instead of taking this personally, ask your kids if there is anything that they’d like to have instead of assuming that they want things.

In addition, the other “things” in your house that you are going to do something with, don’t assume your neighbor, friend or the church wants it either. Chances are, they don’t.

Here is a list of items people assume someone wants:

- Pianos
- Plated silver
- China sets
- High end clothing
- Formal living and dining room furniture
- Antiques
- Hummel plates/figurines
- Pewter mugs/cups
- Beanie Babies
- Vintage/Antique baby items like high chairs and cribs
- Antique baby dolls
- Your children’s trophies (*they don’t even want them*)
- Your child’s baby shoes
- Fireplace tools



This is just a short list, but here are the reasons why people don't want these things. Pianos are big and bulky and traditionally were in formal living rooms. This generation doesn't play "old school" piano. If they did, they would buy an electric keyboard. Steinways and Baby Grand pianos still hold value.

Plated silver has no value except for decoration. Sterling silver does for the metal value melted down.

China sets are becoming a thing of the past. This generation doesn't have formal dinners like you, your parents or your grandparents did. This generation likes cheap cutlery, catered dinners or dining out or take out, given the convenience of local vendors.

New homes typically do not have formal dining and living rooms. Today's floor plan is typically open space; kitchen to family room.

Antique dolls, pewter, Hummels and "collector plates" is a generational collecting hobby. The current and future generations have no interest in these collections.

Typically homes are built with gas fireplaces so there is no need for and irons or fireplace fenders.

Again, keep in mind that this is very generational. Look at all the paper photographs your generation and all of them before you have. Today's generation, the photos taken are on social media platforms, forever stored on a cloud or a device.



On Your Mark, Get Set.....

Once you have de-cluttered your house and you're ready to put it on the market, you need to plan for a possible quick sale of your home, and also, how long does it take to get an apartment at a retirement community? Is it possible for you to rent back from the future purchaser of your home until you can move?

This is a great time to talk to a realtor. We recommend that you interview 2-3 and pick one who makes you feel comfortable to work with. Which ones sell real estate full time? What firms do they work for? Are they reputable? Are they willing to give you references? Definitely call the references provided and ask those folks what their realtor did well for them, and what they could have improved on. I feel the best realtor is one who communicates with our clients on a regular basis, especially when showing the house.

Once you have decided that you're going to sell your home, you need to "divorce" yourself from it. Take down family photos, anything religious, depersonalize your home and just show it as a "house". Take the advice from your realtor on how to stage it and although it may seem odd to you the way it is staged, it's because you've lived in your house the same way for multiple years. Realtors like to show houses to look big and spacious, roomy and bright! Not cluttered and crowded.

Also at this time, it is important to start looking for a mover. Often-times our clients ask if they should pack themselves to save money. In the long run, it doesn't save you money. If you pack yourself and something breaks in transit, it isn't covered by the mover's insurance. Possibly by your homeowner's insurance but unlikely. As you would with a realtor, interview your possible mover and also get references of theirs. Don't go with the cheapest mover, there's a reason they're cheap. Make sure they carry the proper insurance as well and ask for the documentation.

The Wrap Up

Once you have downsized and de-cluttered, staged your house to sell, sold it and have now moved, you should have your home at the least broom swept for the next owner. In addition, here is a good "check list" for your time moving forward.



Moving Checklist

- Forward Mail. Go to usps.com or ask your carrier for a change of address card
- Utilities. Transfer or disconnect utilities: electricity, water, gas, propane, cable, telephone.
- Newspapers, Magazines, Favorite Catalogs. Remember: USPS will only forward First Class mail.
- Bank & Retirement accounts, Credit & Gas Cards. Contact your bank(s) and credit cards to update billing & zip codes changes.
- Insurance. Contact your agent to work out change of address details, especially if you are moving out of state.
- DMV. If moving out of state, when you arrive at your new destination you will need to arrange returning license plates when you get your new plates & registration. Take proper identification and proof of address for new driver's license.
- Register to Vote. If you are changing counties or states you will need to change your voter registration.
- Religious Institution. Be sure to update your church, synagogue, or mosque of your move and new address.
- Doctors, Dentists, Attorney. Transferring legal and medical records as well as images and x-rays is much easier in the digital age.



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Downsizing and Home Services