

Is It Better to Pack Room-by-Room or by Category When Moving?



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What Is Room-by-Room Packing?

Room-by-room packing means focusing on one space at a time — for example, finishing everything in the kitchen before moving on to the bedroom.

? Pros:

- Keeps similar items together
- Easy to label boxes by room
- Simplifies unpacking in your new home
- Works well when using [professional movers](#)

? Cons:

- Can be overwhelming in cluttered rooms
- Leads to mixed item types in boxes (e.g. cookbooks with utensils)

What Is Category-Based Packing?

Packing by category involves collecting all items of the same type — such as books, clothing, electronics — from across your entire home and packing them together, regardless of the room they were in.

? Pros:

- Helps with decluttering and finding duplicates
- Great for minimalist or KonMari-style packing
- Makes organising your new space easier

? Cons:

- Slower and requires more planning
- Boxes are harder to allocate to specific rooms when unpacking

Which Packing Method Is Right for You?

Ask yourself the following:

- **Are you hiring movers or doing it yourself?** - Room-by-room is easier for movers to follow.
- **How much time do you have?** - Room-by-room is faster. Category-based is better if you're not in a rush.
- **Are you decluttering?** - Category packing helps eliminate duplicates and reduce items.

- **Do you want quick unpacking?** - Room-by-room helps you settle in faster.

Our Expert Advice: Combine Both Methods

At London Man Van, we suggest a hybrid strategy — combining both methods depending on the item type and your priorities.

Area	Pack Style	Why
Kitchen	Room-by-Room	Fragile and bulky — keep together
Books	By Category	Easier to sort and reduce clutter
Clothing	By Category	Good for seasonal sorting/storage
Bathroom	Room-by-Room	Essentials kept together

This strategy makes packing more manageable and unpacking more intuitive.

Pro Packing Tips from London Man Van

- ? **Label clearly:** Include both the room and content type (e.g. “Living Room - Fragile Glassware”)
- ? **Use proper materials:** Use bubble wrap, packing paper, and strong tape for fragile or sharp items
- ? **Prepare a “first-night” essentials box:** Toiletries, meds, chargers, towels, bedding
- ? **Use [wardrobe boxes](#):** For quick and wrinkle-free clothing transport
- ? **Start early:** Begin with non-essentials 2-3 weeks in advance

? Need help? Explore our [professional packing and unpacking services](#).

FAQs About Packing for a Move

What does packing room-by-room mean?

It means packing everything from one room before moving to the next. It’s an organised, location-based strategy that helps during both packing and unpacking.

What does packing by category involve?

It involves gathering similar items (like all clothes or books) from every room and packing them together. It’s great for decluttering and organising by type.

Which packing method is more efficient for moving?

Room-by-room is generally faster and better suited for professional movers. Category-based is ideal if you want to organise and minimise what you pack.

Is packing by room better for unpacking?

Yes. When boxes are clearly marked by room, it's easier for movers to place them in the correct space — making unpacking smoother and faster.

Does [packing by category](#) save space in boxes?

Often, yes. Grouping similar-shaped or sized items allows tighter, more efficient packing — especially for books, clothes, or files.

What's best for a last-minute move — room or category?

Room-by-room. It's faster and easier to tackle one space at a time, especially when time is limited.

Should I combine room-by-room and category packing?

Absolutely. Combining both allows better organisation — pack daily-use items by room and personal collections (like clothes or books) by category.

What do professional movers recommend?

Movers prefer [room-by-room packing](#) for efficiency and clear labelling. However, mixing both methods offers the best of both worlds.

How should I label boxes when using each method?

Use permanent markers. Label boxes with the room name, main contents, and add "FRAGILE" where needed. Colour-coded stickers can also help.

What's the best packing method for large homes or families?

A combined method works best. Assign packing zones or categories to each family member to stay organised and efficient.

Final Thoughts

There's no one-size-fits-all solution — but understanding the strengths of both packing methods helps you create a strategy tailored to your move. Whether you prioritise speed, decluttering, or unpacking ease, the key is planning ahead, labelling well, and getting help if needed.

? Ready to move without the packing stress?

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