



THE ULTIMATE

Downsizing guide

FOR SANFERNANDO VALLEY
HOMEOWNERS

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In Los Angeles, space is the ultimate luxury — the magic of downsizing is that it lets you spend less on square footage and more on the life you actually want to live."

SCOTT HIMELSTEIN GROUP

Downsizing in the Valley can be both Empowering and Emotional

Whether you're leaving a big Porter Ranch or Northridge house for a low-maintenance condo, cashing out equity to move closer to family, or simply ready to trade square footage for freedom, this guide is built for the realities of downsizing in the San Fernando Valley — from Prop 19 tax rules to earthquake-ready floor plans.

From planning and decluttering to settling into your new neighborhood, here's how to make your transition smooth, intentional, and rewarding



HOW WE HELP YOU DOWNSIZE

You Don't Have to Lift a Finger

Downsizing means dealing with decades of stuff, repairs, and logistics. Our team handles it all — from the first box to the final haul-away — so you can focus on your next chapter.

FREE MOVING BOXES

Just starting to pack? We'll drop off free moving boxes and packing supplies to get you started — no cost, no catch.

HAUL-AWAY & JUNK REMOVAL

Furniture, old appliances, decades of clutter — our crews clear it out so you're not stuck renting a dumpster or making dump runs.

REPAIRS, HANDLED FOR YOU

Roof, plumbing, electrical, flooring, painting, termite work — we manage every bid and every contractor so nothing falls on your plate.

STAGING & DECLUTTERING HELP

Our team helps arrange, declutter, and stage what's left behind so your home shows beautifully and sells faster.

Introducing Concierge Plus™

Our Concierge Plus program covers the cost of repairs and upgrades — with zero out-of-pocket expense until closing. Sell faster, for more, without fronting a single dollar.

Scan to learn more →



1 CLARIFY YOUR NEEDS AND GOALS

Before you list your L.A. home, take time to reflect on your motivations and future lifestyle.

IDENTIFY YOUR WHY

Reduce upkeep, unlock equity in today's market, or move closer to family in another part of the city or state? Clear goals guide smarter decisions.

RIGHT-SIZE YOUR SPACE

Consider what you truly need. Is a guest room a must, or can a home office alcove pull double duty in a smaller unit?

UNDERSTAND PROP 19

California's Prop 19 lets homeowners 55+ transfer their current property tax base to a new home anywhere in the state, up to three times — a major reason many L.A. owners downsize now instead of staying put.

PLAN FOR PRIVACY

Smaller homes and closer-together lots mean tighter quarters. If you're sharing space with a partner or family member, make sure the layout provides enough separation.



LOCAL TIP

Talk to your accountant or a CA-licensed advisor about your Prop 19 base-year-value transfer before you sell — timing and paperwork deadlines matter.



2 DECLUTTER WITH INTENTIONS

Letting go of belongings is tough — but liberating, especially before a move within the city.

START EARLY

Begin months in advance. Tackle one room or item category at a time — L.A. traffic and busy schedules make procrastinating costly.

APPLY THE 80/20 RULE

Most people use just 20% of what they own regularly. Ask yourself what you truly use and love.

SORT THOUGHTFULLY

Use keep, donate, sell, and toss piles. Be honest — will it fit and serve you in the new home?

DIGITIZE KEPSAKES

Scan photos and documents to save space and preserve memories, especially anything irreplaceable in case of wildfire or earthquake.



LOCAL TIP

Try the "90/90 Rule": if you haven't used it in the past 90 days and won't in the next 90, let it go.

3 MEASURE AND PLAN AHEAD

Avoid surprises on moving day by mapping out what will — and won't — fit.

GET ACCURATE DIMENSIONS

Obtain your new home's floor plan and measure your furniture before moving day, especially for older L.A. bungalows with narrow doorways and hallways

TEST FURNITURE FIT

Large furniture often doesn't scale well in smaller condos or ADUs. Don't move items that won't work.

ACCOUNT FOR STORAGE

Smaller homes mean fewer closets, less garage space, and sometimes no driveway. Consider storage furniture, built-ins, or an off-site unit.

USE DIGITAL TOOLS

Try layout apps to visualize furniture placement in advance, and confirm elevator or stair access if you're moving into a mid-rise building.



LOCAL TIP

Take photos of your current rooms and compare them to your new home's layout to help envision what works before the truck arrives.

4 **SELL, DONATE, OR GIFT MINDFULLY**

Reduce what you own and give your items a new life elsewhere in the community.

SELL WHAT YOU CAN

Use platforms like Facebook Marketplace, eBay, or L.A.-area consignment shops for valuable furniture and decor.

DONATE WITH PURPOSE

Local nonprofits such as Habitat for Humanity ReStore, Goodwill Southern California, and Salvation Army often offer pickup service for furniture.

GIFT MEANINGFULLY

Offer heirlooms or special items to family and friends who will appreciate them.

EVALUATE STORAGE TRADE-OFFS

If your new home has limited storage, be selective about what you keep.



LOCAL TIP

Host a "Downsizing Party" or post in a neighborhood Buy Nothing group — turn decluttering into a community celebration.

5 ORGANIZE YOUR IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Make sure you know where everything important is — without the clutter.

CONSOLIDATE KEY DOCUMENTS

Passports, medical records, insurance, deeds, and your Prop 19 tax-base paperwork — store it all in one secure place.

DIGITIZE THE REST

Use secure cloud storage for files you don't need in physical form.

SHRED WHAT'S OUTDATED

Safely dispose of old paperwork to protect your privacy.



LOCAL TIP

Create a "Life Binder" with critical documents and instructions to help loved ones in an emergency — and keep a fire-ready go-bag copy for wildfire season.

6 STRATEGIZE YOUR MOVE

A smooth transition starts with thoughtful planning around L.A.'s unique logistics.

HIRE EXPERIENCED MOVERS

Especially helpful for long-distance or cross-town moves — some movers specialize in downsizing and navigating hillside or high-rise access.

RESERVE PARKING PERMITS

Many L.A. neighborhoods require temporary no-parking permits for moving trucks. Apply with the city at least a few days ahead.

LABEL EVERYTHING

Mark boxes clearly by room and priority to make unpacking easier.

MOVE IN PHASES

If possible, store non-essentials first, avoid peak traffic windows, and test living with less.



LOCAL TIP

Pack a "First-Day Box" with toiletries, bedding, coffee supplies, and phone chargers — you'll thank yourself later.

7 EMBRACE THE EMOTIONAL JOURNEY

Letting go of a longtime L.A. home is emotional. Give yourself grace.

HONOR YOUR FEELINGS

Nostalgia is normal. Acknowledge the memories and milestones made in your home and neighborhood.

FOCUS ON THE GAINS

Less upkeep, more time, and freedom to explore a new lifestyle — and often a lower cost of living.

CHECK THE HOME'S QUALITY

Soundproofing, insulation, and seismic retrofitting can differ significantly between older and newer L.A. buildings.

SEEK SUPPORT

Talk to loved ones or a counselor if the emotions become heavy.



LOCAL TIP

Write a letter to your old home — reflect on your time there and thank it for the chapter it held

8

MAXIMIZE AND PERSONALIZE YOUR NEW SPACE

Make your smaller L.A. home functional, comfortable, and uniquely yours.

USE EVERY INCH

Think vertically — add shelving, under-bed storage, or wall-mounted solutions in tighter square footage.

STICK TO YOUR PLAN

Avoid the temptation to refill every nook. Less can truly be more.

PERSONALIZE WITH PURPOSE

Choose meaningful decor that brings joy without adding clutter.



LOCAL TIP

Invest in custom storage solutions — they go a long way in maximizing condos, bungalows, and ADUs across the city.

9

ADJUST AND THRIVE IN YOUR NEW LIFESTYLE

Settling in is just the beginning of your new L.A. chapter.

RESEARCH THE AREA

Ensure access to community events, healthcare, walkable errands, and public transit or Metro lines that fit your routine.

BUILD NEW HABITS

Regularly declutter, buy mindfully, and stay organized in your new, smaller footprint.

AVOID LONELINESS

If you're leaving a close-knit neighborhood, join local meetups, clubs, or classes to rebuild connection.

MIND THE OUTDOORS

If having a yard, patio, or garden matters to you, confirm the new home supports that desire — even a shared courtyard can help.



LOCAL TIP

Schedule a "3-Month Check-in" to reflect on what's working in your new neighborhood and what needs adjusting.



10 STAY MINDFUL MOVING FORWARD

Downsizing is a mindset — keep it alive.

ADOPT THE ONE-IN, ONE-OUT RULE

For every new item, something else goes.

REASSESS ANNUALLY

Set a reminder to review your belongings and eliminate what's no longer serving you.

CELEBRATE THE SIMPLICITY

Less stuff means more freedom, more peace, and more room for what truly matters — and more to enjoy in a city full of things to do.



LOCAL TIP

Keep a journal to document how downsizing has enhanced your life. It's a great motivator and memory keeper.

Final Thought

Downsizing isn't just about moving to a smaller home in a bigger city.

IT'S ABOUT MOVING TOWARD A BIGGER LIFE.

With intention, preparation, and a little L.A.-savvy planning, you can create a space and lifestyle that brings more ease, connection, and joy — wherever in the city you land next.





Let's work together



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