

Mover's Material & Volume Estimator

Cheat-Sheet · by Cristian Stefanescu · 15+ years in international moving

Use these rules of thumb to estimate your move volume in cubic metres (CBM / m³), the packing materials you need and the right vehicle or container. Always confirm with a video or on-site survey.

1. Volume by home size

Home size	Typical CBM	Transport	Std boxes	Book boxes	Wardrobe
Studio / 1 room	8-12	Van 3.5t	30	10	2
1-bedroom	12-18	Van 3.5t / 20ft	45	15	2
2-bedroom	20-30	Truck 7.5t / 20ft	75	25	4
3-bedroom	32-45	40ft container	115	38	5
4-bedroom house	50-65	40ft HC	165	55	7

2. Volume per item (CBM)

Item	CBM	Item	CBM
3-seat sofa	2.0	Double bed + mattress	2.0
2-seat sofa	1.4	Single bed + mattress	1.2
Armchair	0.8	Wardrobe 2-door	1.8
Coffee table	0.4	Wardrobe 3-door	2.5
TV + unit	0.6	Chest of drawers	0.7
Bookcase	1.0	Desk + chair	0.8
Dining table	1.0	Fridge-freezer	1.0
Dining chair	0.25	Washing machine	0.6
Bicycle	0.5	Packed box (60×40×40)	0.1

Tip: loose belongings without furniture usually add 25-35% of the furniture volume. Add a 10% safety margin before booking a vehicle.

3. Packing material formulas

Material	Rule	Example 25 CBM
Standard boxes 60×40×40	3 per CBM	75
Book / small boxes 40×30×30	1 per CBM	25
Wardrobe boxes	1 per 8 CBM	4
Bubble wrap rolls	1 per 10 CBM + 1 per 3 fragile items	3+
Stretch film rolls	1 per 12 CBM	3
Tape rolls	1 per 4 CBM (min 2)	7
Moving blankets	1 per 2 CBM (min 4)	13

4. Vehicles & containers

Option	Usable CBM	Best for
Van 3.5t	up to ~15	Studio / 1-bedroom, local moves
Truck 7.5t	up to ~30	2-bedroom, road moves in Europe
20ft container	~25-28	1-2 bedroom overseas
40ft container	~55-58	3-bedroom overseas
40ft High Cube	~65-68	Large houses, bulky furniture

5. Crew productivity (planning)

Task	Output per crew member / day
Packing	~5 CBM
Loading / delivery	~10 CBM

6. Pro checklist

☐ Measure doors, lifts and stairs for large items ☐ Dismantle beds, wardrobes, tables before loading ☐ Mark fragile boxes on 2 sides ☐ Number every box and keep an inventory list ☐ Heavy items in small boxes, light items in large boxes ☐ Check parking / shuttle access at both addresses

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