



You Gotta Laugh

Funny PCS Stories We Had to Share

Because we know you've been there, too!



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If you've ever completed a military move, then you probably have your own "war story" of some...*unique* occurrence!

Miss a flight? Did the movers put someone else's belongings in your shipment? Did you accidentally pack your passports in a box and not your suitcase? Did your moving truck break down during a DITY?



**The truth of a
military move can
be stranger than
fiction!**

When faced with the stress of a PCS, sometimes you simply must laugh instead of cry! Some stories are truly stranger than fiction, and we hope you'll enjoy these funny PCS stories shared from some of the staff of MilitaryByOwner Advertising. It always helps to realize that maybe your experience wasn't so crazy, after all.

We hope you'll laugh along with us, and then connect with us on social media and tell us your own PCS war story!

PCS Stories

You just gotta laugh!



UNFORTUNATE PCS EVENTS



You miss your flight



You realize your passports are in one of the moving boxes



Your kids have the chicken pox for the 2500 mile cross country trip



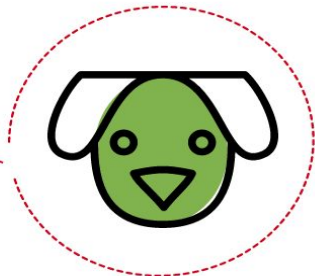
You're on a 14 hour flight and you forgot the baby's bottle



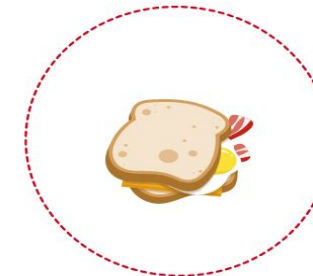
On delivery day, you realize it's someone else's stuff



The movers packed your favorite live plant



Turns out your dog gets carsick



On delivery day, you find a half-eaten sandwich in one of the boxes

The Movers Did What?!



Image via Nicolas Huk

We all know that sometimes Murphy's law reigns and military moves don't go as planned.

Movers can sometimes be less than gentle with our household goods.

Here are a few of our moving stories! Maybe you've also had an unexpected surprise like this:

On our last PCS move, our movers were so diligent that they packed a nearly empty carton of milk!

When I pulled it out of our dish pack on the other end, I started humming the song, "Things That Make You Go, Hmmm."

-Christy Shields

Kitschy Kitchen Woes



It's difficult to set a decorating style for your home when you're always on the move. But during one PCS, I was excited to deck out the kitchen in retro 1950s diner décor. The inspiration came from a Formica table with shiny chrome trim that I'd recently inherited from my grandparents.

Due to a mix-up with delivery timing, our goods were transferred into storage crates and delivered to us later. Our seasoned military friends cringed when we mentioned the word "storage," and we soon understood why.

When the delivery truck finally arrived, everything that had been packed with care was now crushed together into giant wooden crates.

Apparently, instead of taking five minutes to unscrew the legs, thus making the table flat to fit in a condensed space, the workers who'd placed our items into the storage crates simply tore the table legs apart from the unit. It must have been like breaking crab legs at Red Lobster. It was painfully obvious what had happened to my table, as one of the loose table legs had a triangle-sized piece of Formica hanging off the end of it. I wanted to cry, but my boiling anger prevented my tears!

-Mary Ann Eckberg

A Bed of...?

As newlyweds, my husband and I were caught up in the excitement of our first military move and didn't research what we should expect our moving crew to do to protect our goods.

As our moving van filled to the brim, the packing crew didn't plastic wrap or place our mattress in a box. It was simply the last thing shoved onto the truck before they drove away.

When the movers arrived at our destination, the first thing the crew did was lay our mattress on the front lawn. The neighbors had just watered the lawn, so not only was our mattress now a giant sponge, soaking up sprinkler water, but throughout



the course of the long day, it became a refuge for a variety of ants and chiggers.

When I came around the corner of the front yard and found where our mattress had been tossed, I startled a bird nesting in the tree overhead and it pooped down on to it. *Lovely.* Needless to say, our first purchase at our new assignment was a mattress!

- Mary Ann Eckberg

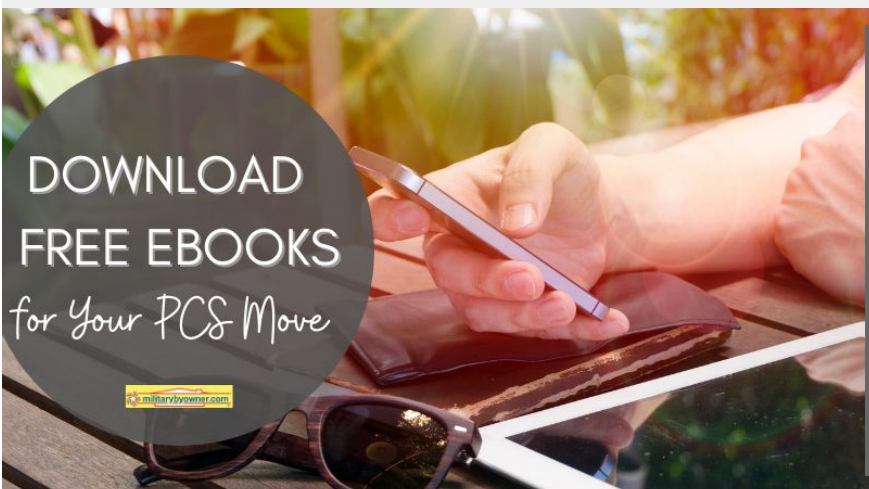


You Packed What...Where?!

Some strange things happened during our pack outs over the years, which we didn't find until we unpacked boxes at the *other* end. In order of weirdness:

- 1) **Unpacking a box that had been in storage for 6 months**, at which point it was quite aromatic, and finding an open bottle of Tabasco sauce at the bottom, along with a half eaten sandwich which had seen better days. No one in our family eats Tabasco...
- 2) **A Snickers bar** with one bite out of it. (Oh, what a waste!!)
- 3) **As the movers unloaded our giant bookshelf we used to store board games**, tiny game pieces began falling out of the bottom of it. The movers on the packing end had simply wrapped the entire shelf in brown paper, before sticking it on a ship about to cross the Pacific!
- 4) **I cried when I saw that the movers had chunked my husband's 35- and 50-lb. weight sets in the bottom of our antique German china cabinet.** Yes, there was damage. My husband was TDY, and the poor movers on the receiving end felt so bad for me that one patted my shoulder awkwardly as I cried (they'd had nothing to do with it!).

-Jen McDonald



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Moving with Kids (and Pets!)

If you're a military family with kids, you know that a cross-country or across the world PCS move can quickly turn into a comedy of errors.

At some point, you learn that it's best to keep your sense of humor about it all!

And, in the words of Christy Shields, you may also come to learn:

Driving cross country, days on end, I can say without a doubt that my kids know every iteration of the "Diarrhea Song."

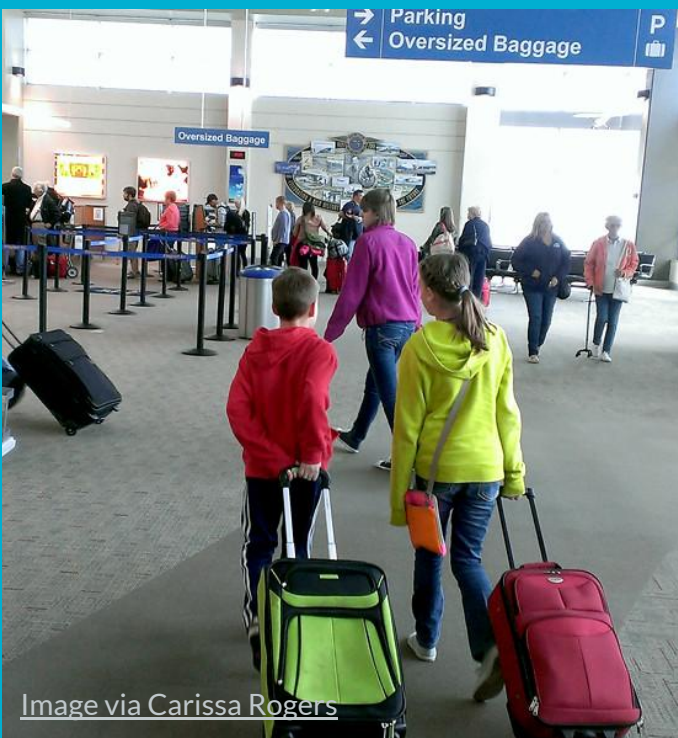


Image via Carissa Rogers

Have Injuries, Will Travel!

The night before our family of 6 was due to board a flight to Guam from Florida, our oldest son threw his whole body into catching a Frisbee at the park (*because you have to give it your all, you know*) and fractured his hand. I dare say he was actually a little proud of this fingertip to elbow cast!



Several years later, his brother tried to beat him by spraining his ankle before we moved to Germany. By then 6'3", it was a very painful and unwieldy move for a teenager navigating the terminal and airplane on crutches! - Jen McDonald

Prepare for Your PCS Move

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Quick & Easy Steps to Prepare for Your PCS Move



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You Do What You Have to Do

With four kids, our moves in the U.S. have included my husband and me each driving a vehicle, usually also towing a trailer. On one move with two squirmy toddlers, I passed a giant bag of Skittles to them in the back seat as I navigated toll roads and traffic through somewhere in middle America. One blessed hour of silence later, we rolled into the rest stop and my husband was surprised to greet two rainbow-colored but happy little ones. Sometimes a big bag of candy is the ticket! - *Jen McDonald*

Not Juice in This Cup

While PCSing across country with three little boys and a dog, my husband and I each drove a vehicle. Those were long hard days. We still have fond memories of finally getting the kids to sleep and then slinking into the hotel bathroom where one of us would sit on the toilet seat, the other on the bathtub edge, and toast with a glass of cheap wine. I don't think I've tasted such sweet wine since...

- *Christy Shields*



Image [Lars Plougmann](#)

Nothing to See Back Here

During our move to North Dakota from Guam (a 20-hour flight by the time it was all said and done with layovers), our third child became airsick.

That leg of the trip found us on a small regional flight with a group of soldiers about to deploy. They'd been joking and rowdy until they heard the unmistakable sounds of a small child losing her cookies. But what put it over the top was the sympathy puking from her younger sister preceded by shrieking, "Ohhhhhh gross!!
I'm-gonna-be-sick-I'm-gonna-be-sick!!"

I've never seen a group of people get so dead silent so quickly. As we landed and they quickly rose to exit the by then foul-smelling plane, one nice young soldier turned to me and said sympathetically, "I'm so sorry, ma'am." *Me too, young man, me too.* -Jen McDonald



A Pox Be on You

Traveling from Fort Bragg, NC to Fort Irwin, CA—a quick 2,500-mile jaunt—my husband and I did a partial DITY move. We had our van with a topper, and a UHaul truck towing a boat.

We were traveling with our huge Rottweiler and three kids, ages 1, 3, and 5, who all happened to have

a raging case of chickenpox (the kids, not the dog). Their faces were so misshapen that we couldn't take them into any eating establishments. I remember standing in a parking lot in Texas somewhere – hot as hades, dog panting, the whole family licking drippy, sticky, ice cream cones....there was a moment of silence, and then my husband and I began laughing hysterically, unable to stop, because, I mean, *what else can you do?*

During one move, I ended up taking a long cross-country flight with two bottle-drinking little ones. Barely making it to the airport on time, my sister dropped me and all my baby accoutrements at the airport curbside. On her way home, she happened to glance to the side and her stomach dropped as she noticed my cool little travel pack loaded with 6 baby bottles...

- Christy Shields

Just One of the Kids



PCSing in the days before there were as many pet-friendly hotels as there are now had its challenges. My husband and I were caught sneaking our massive Rottweiler into our hotel room when we thought nobody was looking.

As hotel management was lecturing us, our big Rottie stepped up to the man, sat on his foot, then leaned against him, pressing his head up for a pet. Management told us to sleep well, *he hadn't seen a thing*.

-Christy Shields



A Change of Plans



If you haven't learned this lesson yet, the military will soon teach you the fine art of waiting...or at least flexing with a last-minute change of plans!

You probably have your own version of the following.

About six weeks before our scheduled PCS to Okinawa and four months into our dog's quarantine period, and about one week before we had intended to put our car on the Pacific-bound ship, my husband received an email.

Apparently, the multitude of shots we had all received (including the dog) and the job resignation letter I had submitted were unnecessary. A 'must fill' position came available about 30 miles away from the assignment he was currently in. Bummer!

-Karina Gafford

We've Changed Our Mind(s)



During one of my husband's long deployments, I prepared for another overseas move, shipped our vehicles, and dealt with the mountain of paperwork where I was living in Germany with our four kids.

After several days of packing out, I exhaustedly stood in the doorway, watching the last moving truck trundle down the street. I kid you not, the phone rang at that exact moment and on the other end was my husband...telling me that our orders had completely changed and he was being assigned to a different base.

For a split second, I envisioned myself running after the truck and waving them down. Not that it would have helped, but it seemed reasonable for a moment! I couldn't believe I would need to redo all the paperwork, reroute the vehicle, and figure out who to notify. The whole scenario ended up with me at the transportation management office, Power of Attorney and other paperwork in hand. A little overwhelmed, I desperately (and kindly, I hope!) asked for help. I did bring a plate of cookies along...

And it all worked out. The military takes care of its own! -Jen McDonald



[Image Guy Killroy](#)

Where Are You?

It was a Tuesday at 10 a.m., and I was enjoying a quiet cup of coffee at home when the phone rang.

"Are you sitting down?" my husband asked from the other end of the line.

"Yes..." I replied hesitantly.

"We have orders to Florida..." He, too, sounded hesitant.

"Great!"

"I need to report there in 10 days."

"What?!?!?!?"

(cont.)

Apparently someone had forgotten to notify him! He found out he needed to report in when the person he was replacing called, wondering why he hadn't checked in with him yet.

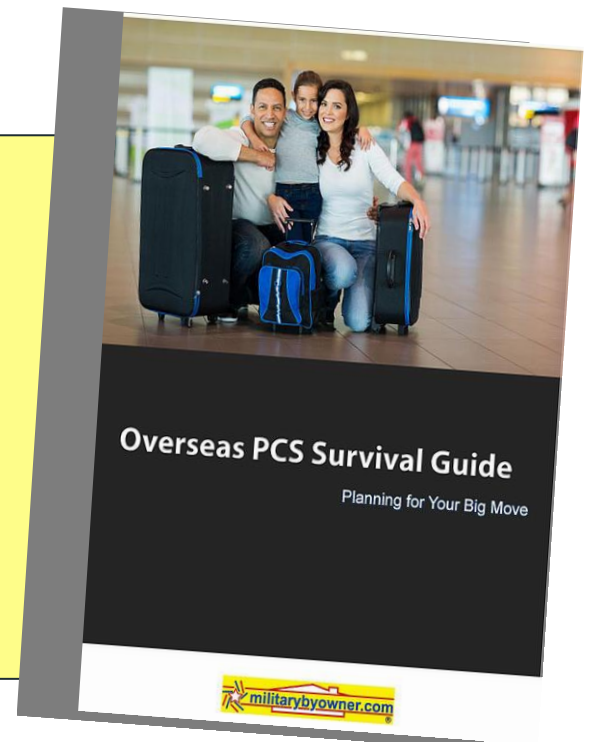
This insanely short turnaround PCS move could have ended so much worse, but we put a process in place and somehow listed our home, found a property manager, found tenants, held a garage sale, packed up, and made it Florida just in time.

We checked into a hotel room and I proceeded to sleep for the next two days!

-Karina Gafford

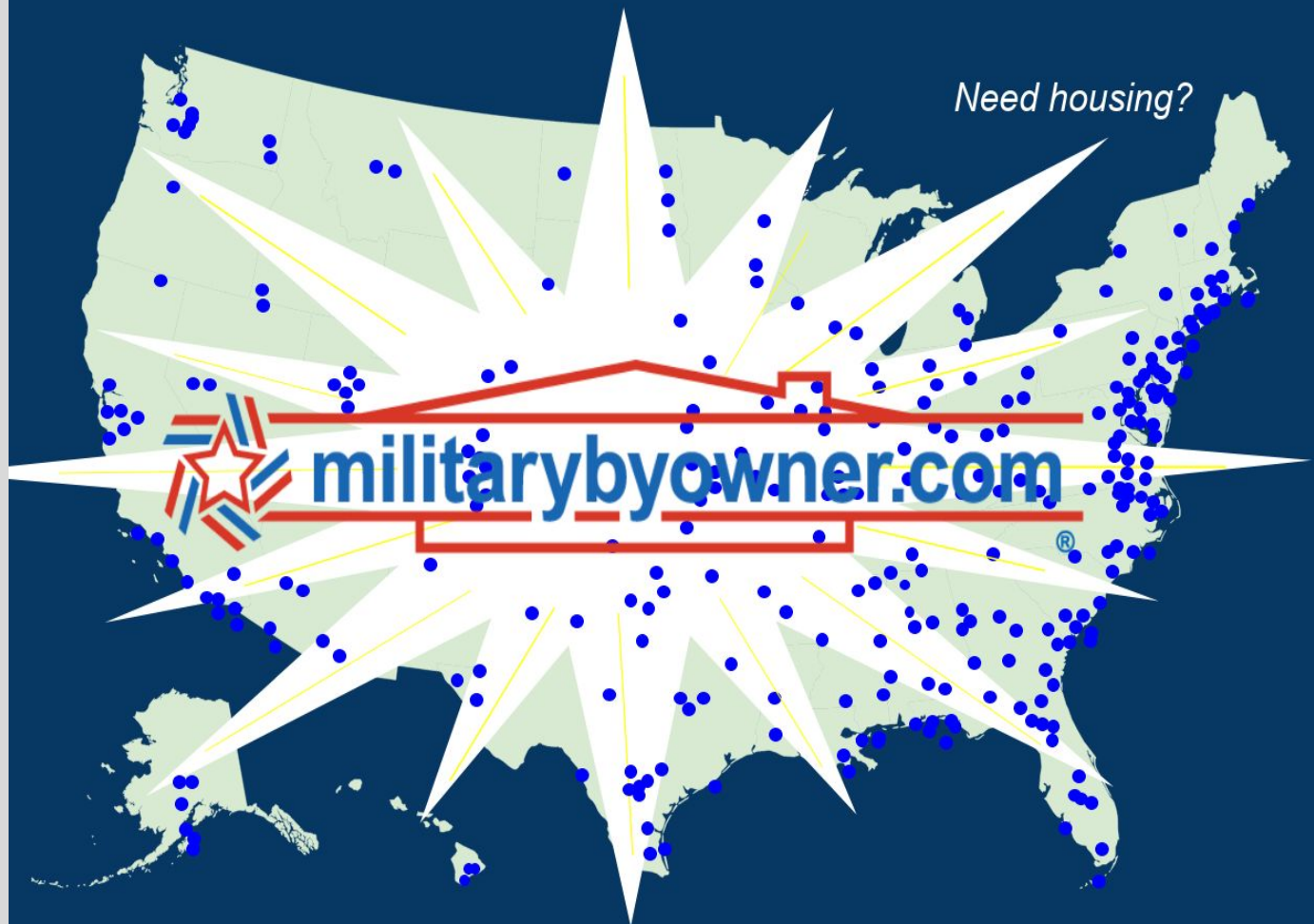
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Avoid PCS Move Wipeout!



TIPS FOR THE D
LEADING UP T

Bloom Where PCS Plants You



Checklists for the week of your move, moving day, and the early days of settling into your new home.

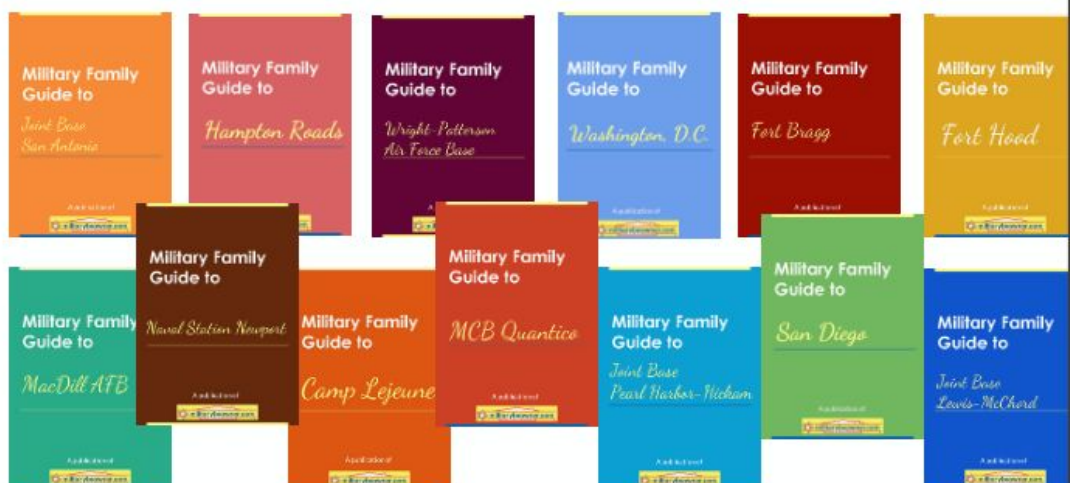
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