

# Your Complete Guide to Moving to Des Plaines, Illinois

## Welcome to Des Plaines

Des Plaines offers the ideal balance for those seeking suburban comfort without sacrificing urban accessibility. Located in the North Suburbs of Chicago, this diverse community of approximately 60,000 residents sits just minutes from O'Hare International Airport and provides direct access to downtown Chicago via multiple transportation options. The city's tree-lined streets feature a mix of well-established neighborhoods alongside newer developments, creating a welcoming environment for families, young professionals, and retirees alike. With its robust parks system, thriving downtown district, and strong sense of community, Des Plaines has become increasingly popular among those relocating from Chicago's busier neighborhoods as well as newcomers to the Chicagoland area.

What truly sets Des Plaines apart is its multicultural character and practical advantages. The city boasts excellent dining options reflecting its diverse population, from authentic Asian markets and restaurants to classic American eateries. Residents enjoy immediate access to major highways including I-90, I-294, and Route 12/45, making commutes manageable in multiple directions. The Metra North Central Service and UP-Northwest lines provide train alternatives for downtown commuters. Unlike some suburbs that feel isolated, Des Plaines maintains that connected feeling—you're close to everything from shopping at nearby Woodfield Mall to entertainment options in Rosemont, yet you come home to quieter streets and more space than city living typically allows.

## Planning Your Move

Timing your move to Des Plaines strategically can save you both money and stress. June through August represents peak moving season here, as families with school-age children coordinate relocations to align with summer break. If you're planning a summer move, book your moving date 3-4 weeks in advance to secure your preferred timing, as experienced [Des Plaines movers often fill their schedules quickly during these months. The increased demand during summer can also mean slightly higher rates and less flexibility with last-minute changes. For more availability and potentially better pricing, consider scheduling your move during the shoulder seasons of spring \(April-May\) or fall \(September-October\), when the weather remains cooperative but competition for moving dates decreases significantly.](#)

The logistics of moving in Des Plaines differ considerably from Chicago proper, and understanding these nuances helps ensure a smooth moving day. Most residential properties here feature driveways and garage access, which simplifies the loading and unloading process compared to city apartments with tight parking situations. However, many Des Plaines homes include basements and multiple levels, requiring careful planning for furniture navigation through stairways and doorways. Traffic patterns matter too—I-90 and I-294 experience heavy

congestion during rush hours (7-9 AM and 4-6 PM), so professional movers familiar with the area typically schedule moves to avoid these windows. The suburban street layout means larger moving trucks can generally access properties more easily than in urban settings, though some older neighborhoods have mature trees that create overhead clearance considerations.

## Living Here

Daily life in Des Plaines combines suburban conveniences with surprising urban amenities. The city's school districts serve families across various neighborhoods, with many parents specifically timing their moves around the academic calendar to ease transitions for children. Whether you're enrolled in Community Consolidated School District 62 or Maine Township High School District 207, mid-year moves are common enough that schools have established procedures to welcome new students. For commuters, Des Plaines offers genuine flexibility—you can drive to downtown Chicago in 30-45 minutes outside rush hour via I-90, or take the Metra for a stress-free commute while avoiding parking costs. The two Metra lines serving Des Plaines provide options depending on your destination, with the UP-Northwest line being particularly popular for Loop commuters.

The housing stock in Des Plaines reflects its development over several decades, offering options for various budgets and preferences. You'll find classic brick bungalows and ranch-style homes from the 1950s-70s in established neighborhoods, alongside newer townhome developments and condominium communities. Single-family homes dominate the landscape, with many featuring finished basements that provide valuable extra living space—though these basements add complexity to moves requiring stairs and tight corners. The downtown area has seen revitalization in recent years, bringing new restaurants, coffee shops, and the Des Plaines Theatre performing arts center. Residents appreciate the proximity to practical amenities: multiple grocery stores including Jewel, Mariano's, and international markets; the Des Plaines Public Library; and the extensive park district offering year-round recreation programs. The nearby Rivers Casino in Des Plaines provides entertainment, while Oakton Community College serves those pursuing education opportunities.

## Moving Tips for Des Plaines

1. **\*\*Reserve your moving date early during summer months\*\*** – With many families moving before the school year starts, June-August dates fill quickly. Spring and fall offer better availability and sometimes lower rates.
1. **\*\*Measure doorways and stairwells in advance\*\*** – Many Des Plaines homes feature finished basements accessed by standard-width stairs. Measure your largest furniture pieces and compare them to doorway and stairway dimensions to avoid moving-day surprises.
1. **\*\*Plan for driveway and garage access\*\*** – Communicate clearly with your movers about your property's layout. While most homes have adequate driveway space, some older neighborhoods have single-car driveways that may require street parking for the moving

truck.

1. **\*\*Consider the Metra schedule for move timing\*\*** – If you're near the Metra lines, trains run frequently during rush hours. Plan your move during mid-day windows to avoid street congestion from commuters parking at nearby stations.
1. **\*\*Check HOA or condo association requirements\*\*** – If moving into a townhome or condominium community, verify whether you need to reserve elevators, obtain move-in permits, or follow specific moving hours. Some associations require certificates of insurance from moving companies.
1. **\*\*Notify O'Hare-area hotels if hosting helpers\*\*** – If you have family or friends coming to help with your move, Des Plaines offers numerous hotels near O'Hare. Book accommodations early, as airport hotels fill quickly, especially during peak travel seasons.

## Getting Settled in Des Plaines

Once you've completed your move, start by updating your vehicle registration and driver's license at the Des Plaines DMV facility on Pearson Street—Illinois requires these updates within 90 days of establishing residency. Register for water and sewer service through the City of Des Plaines, and set up ComEd for electricity and Nicor Gas for heating. Waste Management handles garbage and recycling collection, which runs on specific schedules depending on your neighborhood. Connect with your local alderman's office to understand neighborhood-specific resources and upcoming community events. The Des Plaines Park District offers an excellent way to meet neighbors through recreation programs, fitness classes, and seasonal activities. Download the Metra app if you'll be commuting downtown, and familiarize yourself with the major shopping areas along Elmhurst Road, Milwaukee Avenue, and Oakton Street. Joining local Facebook groups like "Des Plaines Community" helps you tap into neighborhood recommendations and stay informed about local happenings.

## FAQs About Moving to Des Plaines

**Q: How much does it cost to hire movers in Des Plaines?**

**A: Local moves within Des Plaines or to nearby suburbs typically range from \$400-\$1,200 depending on home size and distance. A two-bedroom apartment move averages \$500-\$700, while a three-bedroom house costs \$800-\$1,200. Peak summer months (June-August) may see slightly higher rates due to demand. Moves involving basements or multiple levels may require additional time and labor.**

**Q: Do I need a parking permit for moving trucks in Des Plaines?**

**A: Most Des Plaines residential streets don't require special permits for moving trucks, as homes typically have driveway access. However, if you're moving into a downtown condominium or need to temporarily block a street, contact Des Plaines City Hall at least 48 hours in advance. Condo associations may have their own requirements, so verify with your building management beforehand.**

**Q: What's the best time of year to move to Des Plaines?**

**A: Late spring (May) and early fall (September-October) offer the best combination of good weather and availability. Summer months are most popular for families coordinating with school schedules, but you'll need to book 3-4 weeks ahead. Avoid winter moves (December-February) when snow and ice can complicate loading and unloading, though rates may be lower.**

**Q: What moving challenges are specific to Des Plaines homes?**

**A: The primary challenge is navigating finished basements with furniture, as many Des Plaines homes feature below-grade living spaces accessed by standard residential stairs. Older neighborhoods have mature trees creating overhead clearance issues for large trucks. Some properties have narrow driveways designed for smaller vehicles. Professional movers experienced with suburban layouts handle these situations routinely.**

**Q: Why are families choosing to move to Des Plaines?**

**A: Des Plaines attracts families seeking quality schools, safe neighborhoods, and reasonable home prices compared to nearby suburbs like Park Ridge or Arlington Heights. The Metra access allows one spouse to commute downtown while the other works near O'Hare or in the northwest suburbs. The diverse community, improved downtown area, and excellent park system provide family-friendly amenities without the higher taxes of some neighboring communities.**

**Q: How long does the commute take from Des Plaines to downtown Chicago?**

**A: Via Metra's UP-Northwest line, expect 30-40 minutes to Ogilvie Transportation Center during rush hour, with trains running frequently in the morning and evening. Driving via I-90 takes 30-45 minutes in light traffic but can extend to 60-90 minutes during peak hours. Many residents prefer the Metra to avoid parking costs (\$20-30 daily downtown) and traffic stress.**

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