

Your Complete Guide to Moving in Old Town, Chicago

Welcome to Old Town

Old Town stands as one of Chicago's most historically rich and culturally vibrant neighborhoods. Nestled on the North Side, this area charms residents with its distinctive Victorian architecture, tree-lined streets, and an unbeatable mix of entertainment and dining options. Home to the legendary Second City comedy club—where comedy greats like Tina Fey and Steve Carell got their start—Old Town pulses with creative energy while maintaining the intimate feel of a well-established community. The neighborhood's preserved buildings and cobblestone streets tell stories of Chicago's past, while modern cafes, boutiques, and upscale restaurants keep it firmly rooted in the present.

What truly sets Old Town apart is its ability to balance historic charm with urban convenience. Unlike newer Chicago neighborhoods, Old Town has maintained its architectural character through careful preservation efforts, creating a unique streetscape that feels more like a European quarter than a typical city neighborhood. The area attracts a diverse mix of young professionals, families, and long-time residents who appreciate both the cultural amenities at their doorstep and the quick access to downtown. Whether you're drawn to the arts scene, the dining options, or simply the neighborhood's distinctive character, Old Town offers a living experience that's hard to replicate elsewhere in Chicago.

Planning Your Move

Timing your move to Old Town can significantly impact both availability and costs. Late fall through early spring typically offers the best availability for moving services, with more flexible scheduling options and competitive rates. Summer months from May through September represent peak moving season, when demand surges and availability becomes limited. If you're planning a summer move, booking 3-4 weeks in advance is essential to secure your preferred date. For those with flexibility, scheduling during the off-peak months often results in a smoother, more cost-effective moving experience. Experienced [Old Town movers handle these logistics daily and can help you navigate the scheduling challenges that come with this popular neighborhood.](#)

The logistics of moving in Old Town require careful planning due to the area's historic nature and urban density. Most residential streets require temporary moving truck parking permits, which must be requested at least 10 business days in advance through the City of Chicago 311 system. Zone 1 parking enforcement is notably active here, making proper permits non-negotiable for avoiding fines and delays on moving day. The neighborhood's mix of narrow streets, vintage walk-ups, and buildings with unique layouts means your moving crew needs to be familiar with Old Town's specific challenges. Factor in extra time for coordinating building access, especially in larger vintage buildings where elevator scheduling and hallway protection

requirements are common.

Living Here

Daily life in Old Town combines the convenience of urban living with the warmth of a neighborhood community. The Brown and Purple Lines provide excellent transit connections throughout Chicago, making commutes downtown remarkably easy—most Loop destinations are reachable within 20 minutes. While the average rent of \$2,100 reflects the neighborhood's desirability, residents gain access to some of Chicago's best dining, from casual bistros to upscale restaurants along Wells Street. The Midwest Old Settlers and Old Town Triangle areas host community events throughout the year, including the famous Old Town Art Fair each June. Weekly needs are easily met with nearby grocery stores, pharmacies, and the practical amenities that make day-to-day life convenient.

The neighborhood's housing stock reflects over a century of Chicago architecture. You'll find charming walk-up apartments in vintage three-flats, Victorian-era buildings with original details, and newer construction that blends with the historic character. Many buildings feature the classic Chicago layout with long hallways, high ceilings, and substantial woodwork—beautiful features that require experienced movers to navigate properly. Parking in Old Town operates under Zone 1 residential permit parking, so new residents should apply for permits promptly after moving. Street parking can be competitive, particularly near the entertainment district, though many buildings offer dedicated parking options. The neighborhood's walkability means many residents rely less on cars, using the excellent transit access and bike-friendly streets for daily transportation.

Moving Tips for Old Town

1. ****Secure permits early****: Submit your temporary parking permit request through Chicago 311 at least 10 business days before your move date. Keep confirmation numbers and permit documents easily accessible on moving day.
1. ****Confirm building requirements****: Contact your building management or landlord to understand specific move-in procedures, including elevator reservations, required insurance certificates, and any required deposits or move-in fees.
1. ****Measure doorways and stairwells****: Many Old Town buildings feature narrow staircases and doorways typical of Victorian-era construction. Measure large furniture pieces and compare them to building dimensions before moving day.
1. ****Plan for Zone 1 parking****: Moving trucks will need proper permits for street parking, as Zone 1 enforcement is active throughout the day. Coordinate with your moving company about permit requirements and display procedures.

1. ****Schedule around neighborhood events****: Old Town hosts numerous festivals and events, particularly in summer months. Check community calendars to avoid moving during major events when street closures and congestion are likely.
1. ****Protect vintage building features****: Many Old Town buildings feature original hardwood floors, ornate woodwork, and historic details. Discuss floor protection and hallway padding with your movers to protect both your belongings and the building's character.

Getting Settled in Your New Neighborhood

Once you've unpacked, take time to explore what makes Old Town special. Register for Zone 1 residential parking permits through the City Clerk's office if you have a vehicle—you'll need proof of residency and vehicle registration. Stop by Second City for a show, browse the independent shops along Wells Street, and introduce yourself to neighbors at one of the local coffee shops. Join the Old Town Neighbors Facebook group or attend Old Town Triangle Association meetings to connect with the community and stay informed about neighborhood news. The 18th Police District station is located nearby for any registration needs, and the Lincoln Park Library branch serves Old Town residents. Taking these first steps helps you quickly transition from new resident to established community member.

FAQs About Moving to Old Town

Q: How much do movers cost in Old Town Chicago?

A: Moving costs in Old Town typically range from \$400-\$800 for local moves, depending on apartment size and building accessibility. Vintage walk-ups without elevators may cost more due to stair carries. The neighborhood's Zone 1 parking requirements don't add permit costs, but proper advance planning prevents delays that could extend hourly moving charges.

Q: Do I need a parking permit to move in Old Town?

A: Yes, you need a temporary moving truck parking permit for most Old Town streets under Zone 1 regulations. Apply through Chicago 311 at least 10 business days before your move. Without proper permits, parking enforcement actively tickets and may tow vehicles, causing significant delays and added expenses on moving day.

Q: What's the best time of year to move to Old Town?

A: Late fall through early spring offers the best moving conditions in Old Town, with better availability and often lower rates. Summer months (May-September) are peak season, requiring 3-4 weeks advance booking. Avoid moving during the Old Town Art Fair in June and other major neighborhood events when street access becomes limited.

Q: What makes moving in Old Town challenging?

A: Old Town's Victorian-era buildings often feature narrow staircases, tight hallways, and walk-up configurations without elevators. Street parking is limited under Zone 1 regulations, making permits essential. The neighborhood's popularity means higher demand during peak season. Experienced movers familiar with historic building layouts navigate these challenges efficiently while protecting original architectural features.

Q: Why do people choose to live in Old Town?

A: Old Town attracts residents seeking historic charm combined with urban convenience. The preserved Victorian architecture creates unique character, while Second City, excellent restaurants, and cultural venues provide entertainment at your doorstep. Brown and Purple Line access makes downtown commutes easy. The strong community feel, walkable streets, and architectural beauty offer a distinctive Chicago living experience unavailable in newer neighborhoods.

Q: Are Old Town apartments difficult to move into?

A: Many Old Town buildings require coordination for move-ins, including elevator reservations in larger buildings and careful navigation of historic walk-ups. Building management often requires advance notice, insurance certificates, and move-in deposits. The narrow doorways and staircases typical of Victorian construction demand experienced movers, but proper planning and professional handling make the process manageable and protect both your belongings and building features.

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