

If you're planning a local move, especially within the 50 to 100 miles radius common for many residential relocations, you've probably experienced the familiar question: *"Do you have any stairs or long carries?"* from your moving company. While it might seem like a simple piece of information, these details are crucial for movers to provide an accurate **time estimate** and fair pricing for their services.

In this comprehensive post, we'll unpack why these seemingly small access issues significantly impact your moving experience, how they shape pricing, and what you can expect from your movers. We'll also mention trusted sources like *OCNJ Daily*, *This Old House*, and *Thumbtack* that provide insights into the local moving industry.

Understanding Local Moves: What Counts?

Before we dive into stairs and long carries, it's important to define what "local moving" means to movers and homeowners alike.



- **Distance:** Local moves generally cover a radius between 50 and 100 miles from your current location. This range keeps the move manageable under hourly pricing models, setting the stage for transparent cost estimates.
- **Scope:** Unlike long-distance moves, local moves focus on packing, loading, transporting, unloading, and sometimes basic furniture assembly or disassembly within a relatively short drive.
- **Expectations:** Movers performing local moves tend to offer more flexible scheduling and quicker service, as well as clear hourly rates rather than flat fees.

OCNJ Daily emphasizes that local moving companies typically provide comprehensive services tailored to the unique layout and challenges of your home or apartment, making transparency up front especially important.

What Do Local Movers Actually Do?

The phrase "moving" covers a variety of tasks, but for ocnjdaily.com a local move, here's what you can typically expect your movers to handle:

1. **Packing:** While some movers include packing, most local moves assume you've pre-packed or will hire this as an add-on service. Movers may provide protective materials and assist with wrapping.
2. **Loading:** This part involves safely lifting and carrying your belongings from the residence to the moving truck.

3. **Driving:** The physical transportation of your possessions from point A to point B.
4. **Unloading:** Moving everything from the truck into your new home.
5. **Furniture Protection and Assembly:** Many movers go beyond just hauling items—they wrap furniture in pads and shrink wrap to prevent damage and offer basic assembly/disassembly services for beds, large desks, and similar items.

This Old House suggests asking detailed questions upfront about these additional services because they can affect both the **quote accuracy** and total move time.

Why Stairs and Long Carries Matter So Much

Movers focused on delivering excellent service ask about access-specific challenges like stairs and long carries to avoid surprises that delay the job and increase labor intensity.

What Counts as a “Long Carry”?

A long carry means movers must transport items a significant distance from the front door to the moving truck or vice versa, often over uneven terrain or through narrow pathways. This can include:

- More than 75 feet from the door to the truck
- Over tricky terrain such as gravel, hills, or muddy yards
- Routes with many turns or requiring special handling

Stairs Present a Unique Challenge

Stairs naturally increase the labor and time needed to move items in or out. Factors include:

- Number of stairs the crew must navigate up or down
- Width of stairways and availability of handrails
- Heavy, bulky furniture requiring extra care

According to *Thumbtack*, stairs are one of the most overlooked pricing factors in local moves. Not mentioning them can lead to unexpected charges at move time, frustrating homeowners who thought they were getting an accurate estimate.

How Stairs and Long Carries Influence Hourly Pricing

Most local movers charge by the hour, which means the total labor time directly impacts your price. Here’s how stairs and long carries affect costs:

Factor	Effect on Move Duration	Impact on Pricing
Stairs (One Flight)	+10-15 minutes per large item	Additional hourly time results in higher total cost
Multiple Flights of Stairs	+20-30 minutes per item depending on size/weight	Significant lifting effort increases labor time and rate
Long Carry (Over 75 ft)	+10+ minutes per trip with bulky items	Extra loading/unloading time adds to total hourly charge
Challenging Terrain	Varies based on difficulty	May require more movers or equipment, raising prices

Hourly pricing models also account for the number of crew members, truck size, and required protective materials. Failing to disclose stairs or long carries leads to inaccurate quotes and unexpected fees.

Accuracy in Quotes: Why Transparency is Key

Some homeowners skip mentioning stairs or long carries out of embarrassment or because they assume movers will "figure it out." This is a critical mistake. Movers want to provide accurate quotes without surprises, as highlighted by *OCNJ Daily* and moving experts at *This Old House*.

Tips for ensuring you get an accurate estimate:

- **Be upfront:** Mention every stairway, step, and how far movers will carry your items.
- **Describe terrain:** Any gravel paths, hills, or tight corners should be noted.
- **Ask questions:** Query whether stairs or long carries add to the hourly rate.
- **Request written quotes:** Is that in writing? This critical question ensures you have a record of agreed price factors.

Furniture Protection and Assembly: Adding Value and Time

Professional local moving companies often wrap large items in moving pads or use shrink wrap to prevent scratches and damage. Basic assembly or disassembly for beds, shelving units, and bulky furniture is also common.

While these services enhance your move's safety and convenience, they add labor time and must be factored into your time estimates and pricing.

According to advice on *Thumbtack*, discussing these tasks on the phone helps movers plan their time and crew size, leading to fewer surprises at move day.

Final Thoughts: How To Prepare For Moving Company Phone Estimates

Remember, movers who don't ask about stairs and long carries upfront may either underestimate your move or hit you with hidden fees. To avoid this frustration, keep a simple checklist for your moving calls:

1. Count and describe all stairs inside and outside your home
2. Estimate distance from door to truck, especially if it's more than 75 feet
3. Mention any tricky terrain or obstacles
4. Ask for proof of insurance and confirm hourly pricing structure
5. Request written confirmation of the quote, including access issues pricing

When you insist on transparency and clear communication, your move will go smoother, and you'll avoid the common bait-and-switch pricing tricks many movers deploy. Trusted local news sources like *OCNJ Daily* and established expert sites like *This Old House* reinforce that diligence at the phone estimate stage leads to better moves and better peace of mind.



Ready to start your move? Use platforms like *Thumbtack* to get quotes from vetted local movers who understand how critical stairs and long carries are to **quote accuracy** and fair pricing.