Using your Zebrabox storage unit:
store everything right with these top tips

Your long-awaited trip around the world, your opportunity to study a language abroad, your big home renovations, or simply too much stuff in your house – there are many reasons for renting a storage unit – and one solution. Self-storage. When using self-storage, it is important to store items correctly and strategically. Let us explain.

Things to remember when using a self-storage unit:

Dimensions

Sometimes items are just simply too big to fit – even with self-storage. So, think about how much _self-storage space_ ⊖ you need well in advance!

Important: If using a self-storage unit, think in advance about which items you will want to access often and which will rarely be touched. Why? Because, if you don't need to access your items frequently, then you can pack them in as tightly and as high as possible and use every last inch of space. However, if you want to access your items frequently, then you'll need to leave yourself space to walk through and perhaps plan on renting more square metres. That will help you see where things are!

Useful tips: Frequently used items, such as summer or winter clothing, should be stored at the front of your storage unit so that you can get them out again easily later on. Rule of thumb: the smallest _Zebrabox XXXS_ ⊖ is 1x1x1 metre. That will comfortably fit about 6 boxes or 5 boxes and a suitcase. If you need more space, because you're subletting your apartment or the renovations are taking longer than expected, then _bigger storage units_ ⊖ are available. Our storage unit dimensions range from a one cubic metre storage cabinet to storage units of over 50 square metres.

Zebrabox tip: Worried you won't have enough space?! Most self-storage users are first-time users and overestimate the volume they need and actually require a lot less space than they originally thought. So, it's always best to ask if you are unsure and get advice on site to avoid being left with too much empty space!

Security

Even expensive items are safe in self-storage, if you've got valid insurance and the unit is under constant surveillance. Security is one of the most important factors when deciding where to store your belongings.

Important: Check that the storage unit is individually alarmed and that the buildings are under 24-hour video surveillance.

Useful tips: The storage unit should be opaque. So that no one can see what you have stored in there!

Zebrabox tip: In addition to security and a 24-hour service, cleanliness and dryness are imperative when it comes to selecting your storage unit. The storage unit should be kept at the right temperature and ventilated all year round. The temperature should never drop below 10 degrees and humidity should be between 40 and 60 percent so that items made from wood, paper, cardboard or fabric don't start to go mouldy or rip due to dry (cold) air.

Times

Being open 365 days a year is very important when it comes to self-storage. You're bound to need something at the most inconvenient time: that old photo album on Christmas eve or the coffee set your grandma bought you when she suddenly decides to drop in for a visit. It should be possible to have unrestricted, simple and free access to your items at any time.

Important: You should be able to access your storage unit whenever you like, 365 days a year, without any fees or having to let anyone know in advance.

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Useful tips: You can even rent a self-storage unit for just a short period. Some have minimum rental periods of seven days or less, others start from four weeks. But it's not always set in stone. It's always best to just ask. It should be possible to cancel your contract at any time.

Zebrabox tip: An identification badge is usually available to allow you constant access to your personal things that are *temporarily in self-storage* ⊕ .

Storing furniture and large items

That trendy but cumbersome chest of drawers from the flea market, your mountain bike, summer or winter tyres, garden furniture, a fridge – there are a few tricks to making sure that everything fits in your storage unit.

Important: Before storing your washing machine, fridge or freezer, make sure that you switch them off, take everything out (double check!), give them a thorough clean and let them dry out. Very important: when storing a fridge, leave the door open otherwise it will get mouldy or start to smell! To save space, stand bed frames, garden benches, tables etc. up on their end. Collapse fold-up furniture and stack boxes. Dismantle wardrobes, beds and other large furniture, put the screws and hinges in a resealable zip-lock bag and attach the bag to the inner surface or inside a drawer with masking tape. Don't put masking tape directly onto furniture otherwise you'll be left with brown bits of masking tape stuck to your furniture and it can damage the surfaces!

Useful tips: Dismantle wardrobes, beds and other large furniture. Protect upholstered furniture and mattresses from dust by covering or wrapping them. If you are going to stack boxes or items on top of them, put a piece of wood underneath to prevent indentation marks.

Zebrabox tip: Moving stuff into and out of storage is easier if the storage unit is located at ground level, or if a goods lift or loading ramp is available. Also check the ceiling heights and door widths to make sure that all of your items can be stored easily and not become damaged.

Odds and ends

From the Barbie collection that brings back your childhood memories to your ski equipment – you can put pretty much anything you want in your storage unit. However, there are some important exceptions.

Important: Anything living or that smells worse than an unwashed sock cannot be put in storage. Drugs, weapons as well as flammable and combustible objects are also prohibited. Rule of thumb: any items that could be dangerous are not allowed. That includes explosive substances as well as easily flammable materials. The devil is often in the detail. If you want to store your lawn mower, you must remove the fuel first and ensure that the tank is thoroughly dry. That helps to ensure safety and prevent any bad odours.

Useful tips: Mirrors, picture frames, standing lamps and other delicate items should be wrapped in bubble wrap to protect them from possible damage. *Packaging material* ⊕ and protective covers are generally available to buy on site! Pad out boxes of small things, such as cutlery and glasses, with filling material. Don't make the boxes too heavy! Tyres and carpets must be wrapped in plastic!

Zebrabox tip: Put heavy boxes, chests, sideboards and other small furniture at the bottom. Don't leave empty gaps in your storage unit and DON'T store unwieldy, heavy objects at the front, otherwise you'll have problems later on when you want to access something stored at the back.

Clothes and other organic items such as books

A storage unit is ideal for temporarily storing seasonal items: summer or winter clothes, ski equipment, cushions and covers for the balcony as well as baby things. There are also a few things to consider when storing textiles.

Important: It is best to store suits in special clothes storage boxes with a hanging rail. Hard-wearing textiles should be stored in vacuum bags to save space. Fold towels, bed linen and curtains and store them in drawers or suitcases. Wash textiles before putting them into a storage unit. They must always be clean and dry.

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Useful tips: It's hard to part with books – storage is a good alternative. Another tip: to protect the spines of the books always store them lying flat! Don't cram too many books, photo albums or folders into boxes and make sure that they go at the bottom.

Zebrabox tip: Which box are the photo albums in and where are the sleeping bags? The more boxes you have, the quicker it can all become a bit chaotic. Number each box (use a marker pen!) and write a self-storage list of what is in each numbered box. This will give you a good overview and reduce the stress.

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