

Before you decide whether to keep, sell, or replace your sectional, answer one question first: **How wide are the apartment doorways?** I ask because a sofa can fit inside an elevator and still get stuck between the elevator and your front door. I keep a tape measure in my car, and after years of helping renters and relocating households around Houston, I've learned that "it will probably fit" is not a moving plan.

To know whether your sectional will make it into your apartment, measure the furniture, the elevator, and every part of the route in between. Then check whether the pieces can turn, tilt, or come apart safely. A few careful measurements can save you a failed delivery, a last-minute storage bill, or the unpleasant discovery that your new living room is occupied by a sectional that cannot get through the door.

Start by Measuring the Apartment and Entry Route

Do not start with the elevator. Start at the apartment and work backward to the building entrance. A sectional must pass through every opening and navigate every turn, so the tightest point on the route may be more important than the elevator's advertised capacity.

Measure the **clear opening** of each doorway: the usable space between the door frame, not the width of the door slab. If the door can be removed or held fully open, note that, but do not assume the hallway or frame has extra clearance. Also measure the height of openings and look for protruding handles, closers, trim, or other obstacles.

Check these route points before arranging delivery:

- The apartment's front door and any interior doorways the sectional must pass through
- Hallway width and ceiling height, especially at corners
- Turns between the lobby, elevator, and unit
- Lobby doors, security gates, and vestibules
- Any ramps, steps, or narrow landings along the route
- Elevator doors, cab interior, and any handrails or controls that reduce usable space

For a turn, measure the space around the corner—not just the hallway width. A long furniture section needs room to swing, and a hallway that looks wide enough straight on may not provide enough **turning clearance** at a tight corner. A quick sketch with measurements is more useful than a photo alone.

Measure the Sectional in Pieces

Sectionals vary widely. Some separate into manageable components; others have a one-piece corner unit or fixed frame that is much harder to maneuver. Find the manufacturer's model information if you can, and ask whether the legs, backs, arms, or connecting brackets are removable.

Measure each piece separately, including the largest and least flexible component. Record its:

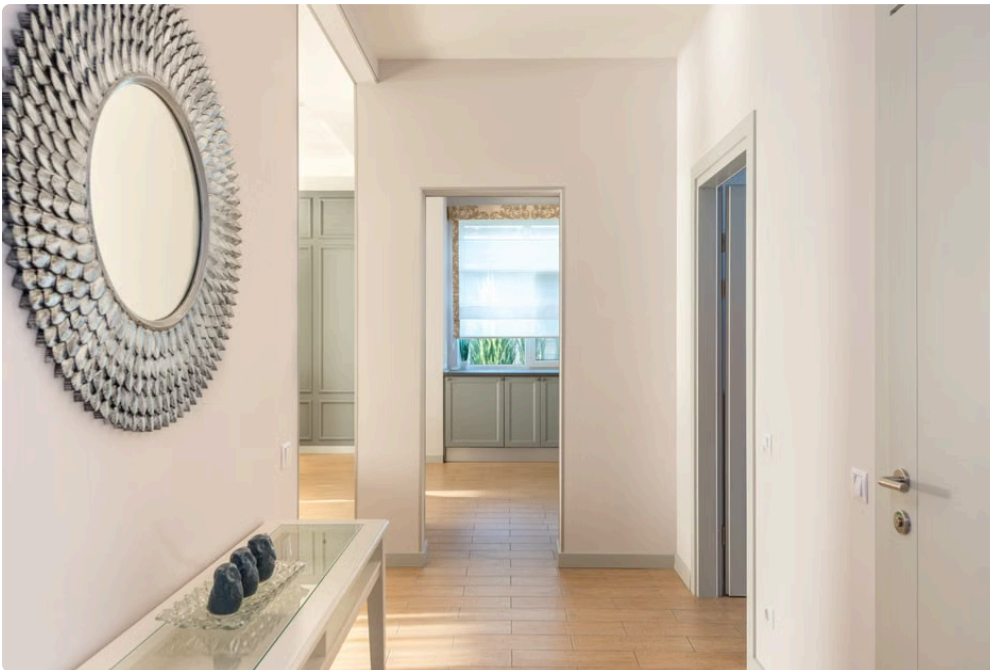
- **Width:** from one outer edge to the other
- **Depth:** from the front edge to the back
- **Height:** from the floor to the highest point
- **Diagonal dimensions:** useful for evaluating whether a piece can be tilted or angled through a doorway

Measure the actual object, not just the dimensions on a website. Cushions may compress, but a rigid frame will not. Measure with cushions removed if they are detachable, and note whether the frame has <https://www.rentdeals.com/blog/downsizing-to-a-smaller-apartment-what-to-do-with-your-furniture/> a recliner mechanism, a chaise, or an unusually deep back. If a sectional comes apart, label each section and check how it reconnects before moving day.

Do not treat the diagonal measurement as a magic workaround. A piece may be narrow enough to tilt through a door but still fail to turn in a hallway or elevator. The path has to work in three dimensions: width, height, depth, and the space needed to rotate the piece.

Get the Elevator's Usable Dimensions

Ask building management for the elevator's interior measurements and door opening. Request the dimensions in writing if possible, and confirm whether they are for the passenger elevator or a designated service elevator. A building's listed elevator capacity is usually a weight limit, not a promise that a sectional will physically fit.



Measure or confirm:

- **Elevator door opening:** clear width and height when the doors are open
- **Cab interior:** width, depth, and height
- **Door operation:** whether the door can be held open and for how long
- **Interior obstructions:** handrails, panels, mirrors, or protective pads that reduce usable room
- **Move rules:** reservation requirements, time windows, deposits, and padding requirements

Ask whether the cab has a recessed area or a particular orientation that changes how furniture can be placed. If you visit the building, take your own measurements with permission. A tape measure gives you better information than a diagram that may not show handrails or recent renovations.

Use a Simple Fit Check

Compare each sectional piece against the narrowest doorway and the elevator opening, then think through the turn and the cab placement. The table below is a screening tool, not a substitute for a full route check.

Check What to compare What it tells you Door opening Piece dimensions in a possible carrying orientation versus clear door width and height Whether it may pass straight through or require careful angling Elevator entrance Piece dimensions versus clear elevator-door width and height Whether the piece can enter the cab without forcing or scraping Cab interior Piece dimensions and diagonal versus cab width, depth, and height Whether it can fit inside and be positioned safely Turns Piece length and depth versus hallway width and corner space Whether there is enough turning clearance along the route Building rules Move schedule, elevator reservation, and protection requirements Whether the move can happen under the building's policies

If the dimensions are close, do not assume the movers can "make it work." A few inches matter, and upholstery can be damaged when a piece is forced against a frame or squeezed through a tight opening. Share your measurements and photos with the moving company before booking. Ask whether they can assess the route or recommend a furniture-handling specialist.

Make a Plan for the Whole Route

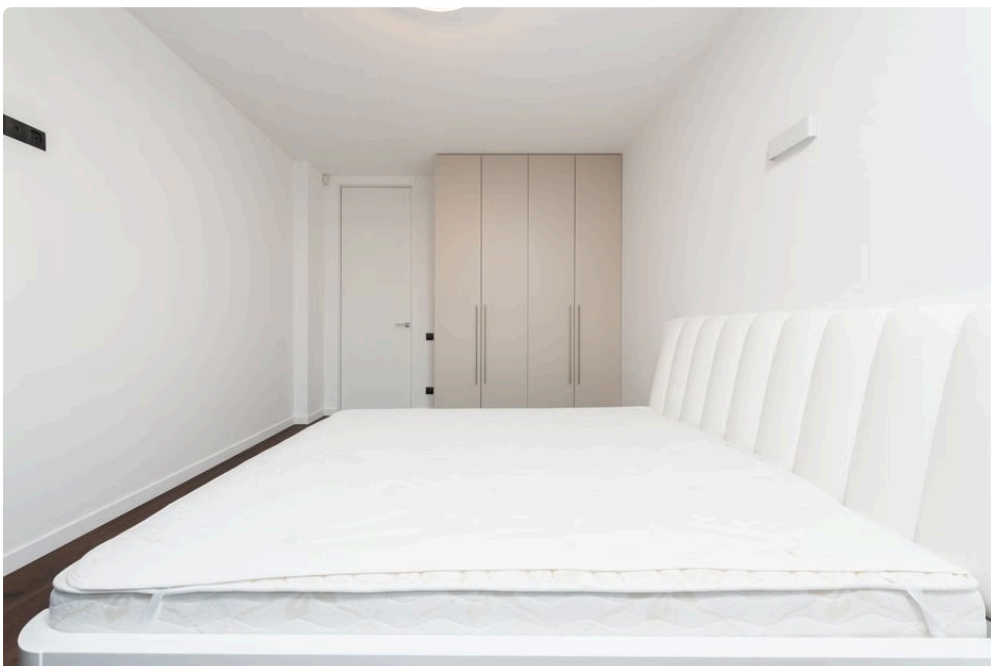
Think of the move as a series of checkpoints: truck to building entrance, lobby to elevator, elevator to apartment door, and apartment door to the final room. The sectional must pass all of them. A successful elevator fit does not help if the unit's entry hallway has a sharp turn or the sofa cannot get around a kitchen island.

You ever wonder why for each turn, mark where the furniture can pivot and whether there is space to tilt it. Consider the ceiling height, door swing, and nearby walls. If you can, make a simple floor plan and trace the route with the dimensions of the largest piece. This is especially helpful when the elevator opens directly into a small vestibule or when a long corridor ends at a tight corner.

Also check whether the elevator is large enough for the movers and the sectional at the same time. They may need to position the piece at an angle, and people still need room to control it. A workable plan should not depend on pinning someone against the cab wall or holding elevator doors beyond the building's rules.

Have a Stair Backup Plan—But Verify It

A stair backup plan sounds reassuring until you check the stairwell. Measure its clear width, ceiling height, landings, and turns.



A sectional that cannot rotate in the elevator may be even harder to maneuver around a stair landing. Confirm whether the building permits furniture moves on the stairs and whether there are restrictions on access, hours, or protection.

Ask the building manager and movers what the actual alternatives are if the sectional does not fit in the elevator. Possible options may include using a service elevator, removing detachable parts, scheduling a different move window, or arranging a professional lift where permitted. Do not assume a balcony lift or window removal is allowed—or safe—without approval and qualified professionals.

If there is no realistic backup, treat that as important information before moving day. The cost and hassle of finding out at the curb can be much higher than arranging a measurement visit in advance.

Decide Whether to Keep, Store, Sell, Donate, or Replace

Once you know the route, choose what makes sense for the sectional and your new home. Ownership alone is not a good reason to move a bulky item. I have seen downsizing moves go sideways because people paid to move furniture that did not fit the building, did not suit the room, or was not worth the storage cost.

Option Consider it when... Watch for... Keep and move Measurements work, the sectional suits the floor plan, and it is in good condition Move fees, disassembly, building rules, and protecting the upholstery Store You have a clear short-term reason to keep it and a realistic retrieval plan Monthly costs, transport twice, and whether it will fit the next home Sell It is in good condition and the move or storage cost outweighs its value to you Allowing time for pickup and being transparent about dimensions Donate It is usable and an organization can accept it Donation rules, condition standards, and pickup availability Replace The sectional is too large, the route does not work, or it overwhelms the room Measure the new home first; avoid ordering before access is confirmed

Storage is not automatically the safest choice. Add up the monthly fee, delivery to storage, eventual retrieval, and the chance that the sectional will fit your next place. If the total is higher than the value you place on keeping it, selling or donating may be the cleaner decision.

Consider Scale and Visual Weight in a Small Room

Even if the sectional fits through the elevator, it may not fit the room comfortably. Measure the living room's width and length, then mark doors, windows, radiators, outlets, and walking paths. Include the sectional's full footprint, including a chaise that sticks out into a walkway.

In a small apartment, a deep or high-backed sectional can make the room feel crowded even when it technically fits. Visual weight matters: dark upholstery, bulky arms, a tall back, and a solid skirt can make a piece feel larger. A lower-profile sofa, slimmer arms, or a separate chair may leave more open floor and make the room feel easier to use.

Before buying replacement furniture, move in and live with the empty room if your timeline allows. Use painter's tape or cardboard to outline the proposed footprint. Check whether you can walk around it, open doors, reach windows, and use the room without squeezing past furniture. Buying before you know the room and access measurements is an easy way to trade one oversized problem for another.

A Practical Checklist Before Moving Day

1. Measure each sectional component, including its height, width, depth, and diagonal.
2. Measure every doorway, hallway, turn, lobby entrance, and elevator opening on the route.

3. Get the elevator cab's usable dimensions and confirm the building's move procedures.
4. Check whether the sectional can be safely disassembled and identify any fixed, bulky pieces.
5. Send measurements and photos to the moving company; ask for a route-specific assessment if the fit is close.
6. Verify a stair backup plan instead of assuming the stairs will solve the problem.
7. Decide whether to keep, store, sell, donate, or replace the sectional based on fit, cost, and room scale.
8. Do not order replacement furniture until you have measured the apartment and confirmed the delivery route.

The Bottom Line

You know whether your sectional will fit in the elevator only after you compare its actual dimensions with the elevator's door and interior—and check the entire route to the apartment. Pay special attention to doorway width, turning clearance, and the fixed pieces that cannot be taken apart. Confirm building rules, make a stair backup plan, and think about whether the sectional will suit the room once it arrives.

Measure first, decide second, and move or buy furniture only when the route is clear. That approach is less exciting than hoping for the best, but it is far less expensive than discovering your sectional has reached the building and cannot go any farther.