

## Quick Quiz

In the event of a total loss what document can best help replace your belongings?

- A. Your résumé
- B. The Declaration of Independence
- C. A complete home inventory

**Answer: C. A complete home inventory**

If all of your belongings are lost, a detailed home inventory can help ensure their replacement, verify losses for the police and an insurance adjuster, substantiate a tax credit, and help you get your life back to normal as quickly as possible.

Don't think your belongings are worth enough to insure? Even the tiniest studio apartment can hold thousands of dollars worth of personal property. Completing a home inventory can help you determine the overall value of your belongings and assist you in assessing their insurable value.

## Investing Time In Your Assets

Taking the time now to document your belongings can save you time and worry later, and ensure proper reimbursement for all your losses. The more area you occupy and personal property you have, the longer it will take to complete an inventory. The most effective inventory combines a detailed written list with one of the following:

1. Videotape with audio narration
2. Photographs of valuable or unique items
3. Audiotape with photographs of valuable or unique items

There are also good inventory software packages available to help you organize, store and keep your list updated.

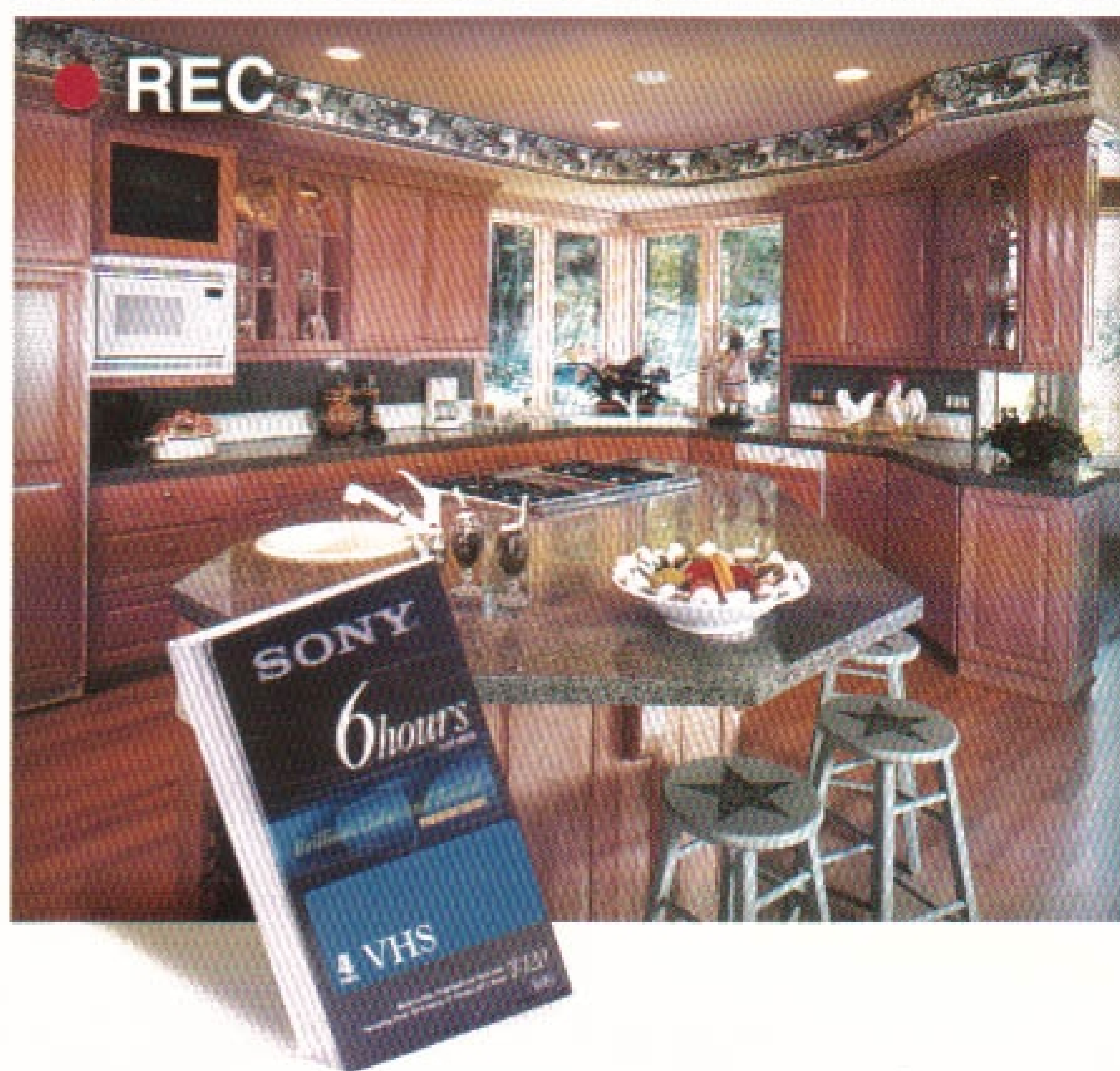
## Start Here

The inventory list that follows is a good starting point and includes many of the common items most people have in their homes. Use this list as a starting point for your personal inventory. Don't be surprised if you need to attach an additional sheet marked "other" for each room you inventory. A lifetime of collecting belongings, even if you've just rented your first apartment, can yield a wealth of unique items that express who you are.

**Your inventory should include the following information:**

- Number of items
- Description of items
- Year purchased
- Cost new
- Estimated current value

**Play it safe. Include a video with your list.**



For an electronic version of this list, please visit [www.TrustedChoice.com](http://www.TrustedChoice.com)

## Living Room

- Bookcases
- Books
- Carpets/rugs
- CDs, DVDs, records, tapes
- Chairs
- Coffee tables
- Collectibles/Knick-knacks
- End/Side tables
- Entertainment unit
- Game units
- Games
- Lamps/Fans/Fixtures
- Musical instruments
- Ottoman
- Planters/Plants
- Sofas
- Sound system
- Television/VCR
- Videotapes
- Wall artwork/Mirrors
- Window treatments
- Other

## Dining Room

- Arm Chairs
- Buffet
- Carpets/rugs
- China
- China cabinet
- Clocks
- Collectibles/Knick-knacks
- Crystal
- Dining table
- Glassware
- Lamps/Fans/Fixtures
- Planters/Plants
- Serving pieces
- Serving table/Cart
- Side chairs
- Sideboard
- Silverware
- Table linens
- Wall artwork/Mirrors
- Window treatments
- Other

## Bathroom

- Cabinets
- Carpets/Rugs
- Chairs
- Clock
- Hampers
- Linens
- Radio
- Shower curtains & hooks
- Scale
- Shelving
- Small electronics
- Tables
- Toiletries
- Wall artwork/Mirrors
- Window treatments
- Other

## Bedroom

- Accessories
- Armoire and content
- Bed frames
- Bookcases
- Books
- Carpets/Rugs
- Cedar chest
- Chairs
- Clothing
- Collectibles/Knick-knacks
- Computer system/Software
- Desk and contents
- Dressers and contents
- Dressing table and contents
- Game system and games
- Games
- Lights/Fans/Fixtures
- Linens
- Mattress/Box spring set
- Night tables/Contents
- Planters/Plants
- Radios/Sound system
- Sewing machine
- Shoes
- Toiletries
- Toys
- TV/VCR/DVD
- Wall artwork/Mirrors
- Window treatments
- Other

## Attic/Basement/Garage/Playroom

- Carpentry tools/Supplies
- Carpets/Rugs
- Furniture
- Garden tools/Supplies
- Indoor games
- Lawn mower
- Outdoor games
- Pantry food items
- Pantry housewares
- Pantry pet supplies
- Pantry storage units
- Playroom bookshelves and contents
- Playroom electronics
- Playroom game tables
- Shovels
- Snow blower
- Sprinkler/Hose
- Toys
- Wheel barrow
- Window treatments
- Workbench
- Other

## Porch/Patio/Garden/Pool

- Carpets/Rugs
- Chairs
- Lounge/Hammock
- Ornamental lawn items
- Outdoor cooking equipment
- Plants/Planters
- Pool equipment/Toys/Supplies
- Playscapes
- Tables
- Umbrella
- Other

## No Madness To This Method

No matter what method you choose, make sure to approach this project systematically so you don't miss anything. Keep a copy of your completed inventory off premises in a safety deposit box or with a relative or friend.

### Here are some project tips:

- Begin in one room and cover its contents thoroughly before moving on.
- Remember hallways, attic, basement, garage, porch, pool, patio and garden.
- Open closets and drawers.
- Group like-items together when possible, i.e. clothing can be grouped by category, quantity and overall cost. Note anything of special value.
- Document unique information about valuable items, such as model, age, where purchased, unusual qualities, etc.
- Record serial numbers of major appliances and electronic equipment.
- Attach sales receipts and/or appraisals to the inventory list.
- Photocopy important documents and attach to the inventory list. Keep originals in a safety deposit box.
- Photograph valuable items against a plain background, next to a ruler. Turn items over to show any hallmark, manufacturer or pattern information.
- Keep your inventory list updated by documenting any new items acquired.
- Complete separate inventories for any other home, boat or recreational vehicle you own.
- Collections and/or specialty items, such as jewelry and art, should be professionally appraised to establish their value. Attach appraisals to the inventory list.

## Actually Replacing Value

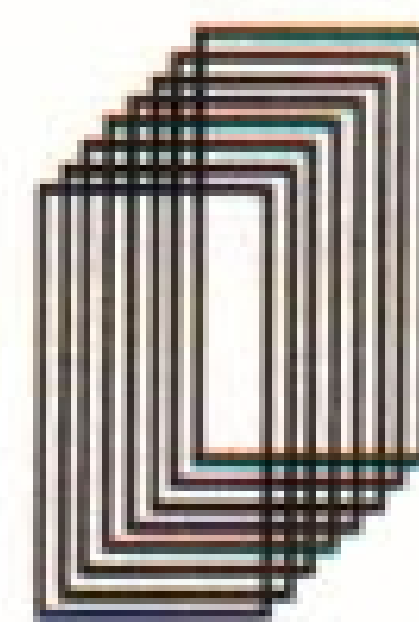
A good home inventory that is part of a homeowners, renters or condominium owners insurance plan is designed to restore your lifestyle to normal quickly and with minimal additional cost. There are two types of policies designed for this purpose: actual cash value and replacement cost.

Actual cash value policies pay the cost to replace an item after depreciation. Your 10-year old bedroom set might still look good, but it's unlikely you could replace it today for what you paid a decade ago. With an actual cash value policy, you will have to make up the difference.

A replacement cost policy takes into consideration what it would cost to replace the bedroom set at today's prices. You can expect to pay a slightly higher premium for replacement cost coverage.

Read your policy carefully because most homeowners policies have strict limits on certain valuable items, such as jewelry, furs, silver, art, antiques, electronics, guns and other collectibles. You may need to purchase additional insurance, called a rider or floater, to make sure those items are covered properly.

Your independent insurance agent can help you secure customized coverages to fit your personal and commercial insurance needs. For auto and homeowners, life and health coverages, business owner policies as well as other coverages to protect your life investments or your loved ones, contact your independent insurance agent.



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