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HOLD FOR ORDERS THIS VERSION IS FOR PAGE C6 COMPLETE

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**BODY:**

IF you can't live with it and you can't live without it, one option is to store it. The catch is that moving and storage charges are relatively high and the goods become inaccessible. A good alternative is do-it-yourself-storage in private cubicles, now offered by four companies in the city.

For example, if five or 10 cartons of books were cluttering an apartment, several moving and storage companies estimated that it would cost \$400 for transporting and storing the books for a month. During the storage period, which could be extended for \$30 a month, the books would be inaccessible.

By comparison, the total cost at a self-service storage company would be \$9 a month plus the cost and labor of moving the books - possibly by a large taxi. Self-storage rooms are open six or seven days a week for dropping off or picking up stored goods.

Another alternative is to rent a private "vault" at a moving and storage company that will provide a range of services to fit individual needs. Renting a vault with concrete walls and a steel door at a warehouse could cost \$37.50 a month rent plus additional charges, which vary widely and may make this option unattractive.

In the past few years, four companies have opened self-service storage warehouses in the city. Almost any size space can be rented for as short a period as one month. Customers provide their own locks and do their own moving.

Insurance is optional and is available at the rate of \$2.50 per month (\$2 per month at U-Haul) per \$1,000 worth of coverage for fire, water damage, burglary and other perils. Damage caused by rodents, insects or atmospheric conditions is not covered. Policies range from \$1,000 to \$15,000, with a \$100 deductible, and must be taken out for a minimum of three months. Ordinary household goods are eligible, but jewelry, furs and valuable collections are not covered.

Claims are paid on the basis of replacement costs minus depreciation, and proof of ownership (receipts, canceled checks) is required. This insurance, however, may be redundant, because some homeowners' policies cover out-of-home storage; check your policy or broker.

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The four self-service companies in New York City are: U-Haul, the pioneer of do-it-yourself moving, has eight selfservice storage warehouses in the city. The company also rents virtually everything needed for making a move, including boxes (99 cents for books, \$3.50 for wardrobe), pads (\$7 a dozen), locks (\$2.49) and, of course, vehicles (\$30 a day plus 20 cents a mile for the smallest van).

The storage space sizes range from 4 by 6 feet for \$18 a month to 8 by 12 feet for \$72 a month. For long-term storage, customers get two free months when they pay 10 months rent in advance. In warehouses with tall ceilings, like the buildings in Manhattan, the storage rooms are built in double tiers, like cell blocks, and have six-foot ceilings. Upper storage compartments must be reached by a metal staircase that glides in the aisles on rollers; this arrangement, the warehouse manager conceded, makes storing large items very difficult.

A new design, being installed in a warehouse on 23d Street, has permanent stairs leading to the second tier, but it still requires climbing an extra flight of stairs laden with storage.

The 23d Street location is well maintained and has the best freight elevator as well as the best design, from the furniture mover's point of view, of the self-service locations surveyed. As at other companies, appointments are made to avoid delays, which can be very costly if movers have been hired at \$30 a hour.

Lighting is good and drop lights are available for use inside the cubicles. Security appears to be good and an attendant escorts each customer to the storeroom. Storage is accessible 8 A.M. to 7 P.M. Monday through Saturday and 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. Sunday.

All 187 cubicles at 562 West 23d Street (at 11th Avenue) are rented, but by the end of October the adjacent warehouse will be completed.

Other U-Haul self-storage locations: in Brooklyn, 5283 Kings Highway (763-4900), 259 Sixth Street (237-2893) and 6615 New Utrecht Avenue (259-3900); in the Bronx, 393 Grand Concourse (665-7394), 230 West 230th Street (562-7380), 2800 White Plains Road (881-2810); in Flushing, 36-30 College Point Boulevard (445-1030).

Sternberger Warehousing, 45-55 Pearson Street, Long Island City, Queens (361-2121), is a 22-year-old warehousing company that built 270 self-storage cubicles two years ago. The warehouse is conveniently near IRT and IND stops.

The cubicles, made entirely of corrugated metal, range from six square feet for \$9 a month to 400 square feet for \$240 a month. Storage spaces are all on one level and have eight-foot ceilings, which are covered only with wire mesh to permit warehouse light to enter -but dust comes with it. Dust covers are essential here.

Aisles are just over three feet wide, making it difficult to move bulky furniture into some spaces. Otherwise, the warehouse is well maintained and has an attendant on the floor at all times.

Like the other self-service companies, Sternberger provides a variety of freight dollies free of charge. Storage is accessible 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily and 9 A.M. to noon on Saturday; this is the most restrictive schedule offered by the self-service companies.

Edison Mini Storage, 610 West 58th Street (757-4700), operated by the Edison Parking Company, currently has four floors of self-service storage and is converting three more in this building. Corrugated metal cubicles come in nine sizes, from 5 by 5 feet for \$25 a month to 20 by 25 feet for \$284 a month (all have 8-foot ceilings). The building is clean and well designed for moving. Two months' rent is required for a security deposit. Storage is accessible 8 A.M. to 10 P.M. seven days a week.

Big Yellow Mini Storage, a national chain with warehouses in Brooklyn and Queens, rents about 40 different room sizes, from 5-by-8-foot cubicles, 5 feet high, for \$18 a month to 9-by-16-foot spaces, 12 feet high, for \$100.08 a month.

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One month's security deposit is required. Storage rooms are accessible 8 A.M. to 8 P.M. seven days a week.

At the Brooklyn location, four of the warehouse's 13 floors have been converted to self-storage and work is continuing on other floors. As a result of the construction work, the warehouse is somewhat messy and congested with building materials.

The storage cubicles themselves are rather shoddily built and have ill-fitting masonite doors, which would pose no problems for a burglar. But there are television cameras monitoring the main hallway on every floor, several warehouse men, a resident manager and guard dogs let loose at night.

Security is probably enhanced by the company's policy of letting customers use the cubicles for daytime offices. Lighting is adequate in hallways, but no light penetrates the interior of many storage spaces, necessitating the use of flashlights.

Some of the small cubicles are also built in two levels, with access to the upper level by means of a rather insubstantial metal staircase on rollers. But here, the upper cubicles are rented at a discount.

The company branches are in Brooklyn at 265 Gold Street (852-7100); in Queens, 49-20 Van Dam Street, Long Island City (392-0909) and 39-04 Northern Boulevard, Long Island City (937-1900).

Private rooms are also available at some moving and storage companies. Morgan & Brothers Manhattan Storage Company Inc., has rooms with concrete walls and steel doors. They range from 25 square feet for \$37.50 a month to 250 square feet for \$375 a month. A weekday access fee of \$2 is charged.

Customers may do their own moving or have the company do it for \$9.50 per half hour. Insurance is available (\$1 per \$1,000 coverage per month) only if the company does all moving and takes inventory. The 125-year-old company has 3,000 private rooms in 17 warehouses in and around the city; for information, call 535-9100.

Sofia Brothers Inc., 475 Amsterdam Avenue (541-5600), rents private rooms, ranging from \$45 for 250 cubic feet to \$170 a month for 1,000 cubic feet, but it is not self service and \$19 an hour is charged for handling and taking inventory. There is also a three-month minimum rental and a minimum \$19 charge per visit to the storeroom.