

I fled my abusive parents. Now I run a women-only moving company

Hannah Crawford knows exactly how traumatic moving day can be — and with Han with a Van, she can provide the big-sister energy her clients need



Hannah Crawford, 29
LAUREN JAMES



Annie Hayes

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I've shifted anything and everything in my time — as a theatre producer, that meant boxes and bags of costumes one week, tractor tyres and papier-mâché trees the next. So when I started helping people move house, I already knew I could handle the lifting. What I didn't expect was how much more the job would turn out to be [says Hannah Crawford, 29].

What started as a part-time gig in spring 2025, to get me out of the house, became full-time. A few months in, I was booked out six days a week, and now I'm on track to turn over six figures annually. I realised early on how emotional moving really is — one woman called needing to move quickly after splitting from her partner, and we ended up crying together.

I understood exactly why. I was brought up by abusive parents, and when I was 20 I had no choice but to pack up and take what I could carry, alone, on a train. I'd have given anything for a big-sister figure to turn up that day — and that's what I think of every time another woman calls me.



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"I'd have given anything for a big-sister figure to turn up [when I had to move out] — and that's what I think of every time another woman calls me"

LAUREN JAMES

I posted about that day on Instagram — [Han with a Van](#) — and it went viral. It got half a million views and my followers jumped from a couple of hundred to 9,000 in a week. I now have more than 13,000. Women started booking in droves, and that's when I realised I needed other female movers on board. I'm inclusive and LGBT-friendly too, so I don't turn men away — though it's mainly women who come to us. The rare man who does inquire usually says something like, "I know I'm a bloke, but I love your ethos, so I'd like to book you" — and that's absolutely fine by me.

It started because I wanted to get out of the house more. I was [coaching female entrepreneurs](#), barely leaving my four walls for days at a time, and that didn't feel right in my twenties. I asked in a women's rental group on Facebook whether there was demand for women helping other women move. The answer was a resounding yes.

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I price my quotes above others, deliberately, so I'm never rushing a job or squeezing in a second booking straight after. If a move takes a little longer because someone needs to stop and take it all in, or is feeling emotional, that's what we do.



"If a client needs time to cry on a packing box before we get the kettle on, that's exactly what we give them"

LAUREN JAMES

One of my clients moved from Newcastle to London, and when we got to the flat it was damp and cold. She looked disappointed and anxious, so I asked her to fetch a box labelled "Bedroom — nice bits". I made up her bed, arranged all her favourite trinkets and made her room cosy, like home again — by the time I left she felt so much better.

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In my first year of trading I've moved more than 250 people, helped by a network of about fifty female movers, all self-employed. The main requirement is for manual handling experience and a driving licence, but people skills matter just as much — part of the job is picking up on what a client isn't saying as much as what they are. My onboarding covers everything from insurance to how to use a ratchet strap.

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I'm right on the cusp of millennial and Gen Z. I empathise with people my age — we should be able to buy our own home, but these days it's often an impossible dream. I'm ambitious, which is why I run multiple businesses, and I do want to buy eventually. I pay £1,200 a month for a tiny studio in London, and it annoys me that some lenders question my ability to pay a £700-800 monthly mortgage when I've never missed a rent payment in my life.

I've moved myself plenty of times, like most renters, and I'm pretty relaxed about it — once I went from London to a rented cottage in the Peak District. I did it all myself, dumped everything in the middle of the floor, and went straight to the pub.

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People say moving is stressful. I disagree — the actual process of lifting and shifting boxes isn't; it's the bits that come before and after that which are hard — securing a home, signing contracts, the emotion of saying goodbye to one chapter and hello to a new one. I'm quite "woo-woo" and I take cues from nature, the universe, whatever I see around me. It's what led me to start this business — and if a client needs time to cry on a packing box before we get the kettle on, that's exactly what we give them.

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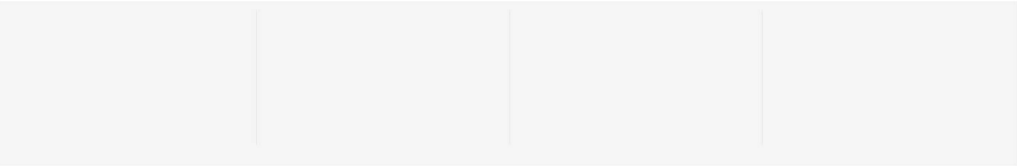
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