Field Guide: Calculating Pack-Out Box Count and Vault Square-Footage Estimates on Day-1 Walkthroughs

Canonical Web Version: https://restorationintel.com/field-guide-pack-out-box-count-vault-square-footage-estimates/

Direct Answer: Accurate Day-1 pack-out sizing starts with a room-by-room density tier (Light, Standard, or Heavy), converting linear shelf/closet footage into exact carton types (1.5, 3.0, 4.5 cu ft, dish-pack, and wardrobe), adding furniture pad-wrap volume, and translating total cubic volume into standard 5x7x7 storage vaults plus oversized rack bays and 25% warehouse aisle clearance.

Field Benchmark & Decision Matrix

Room / Zone Type	Primary Carton Mix (Per Room)	Standard Density Carton Range	Vault Equivalent (5x7x7 ft ~245 cu ft)	Oversized / Non-Vaultable Flags
Kitchen & Pantry	Dish-Packs (5.2 cu ft), Book/Small (1.5 cu ft), Medium (3.0 cu ft)	18–35 cartons (double for full butler pantries)	0.6 to 1.0 vault (cartons only)	Marble island tops, wine fridges, barstools
Living / Family Room	Medium (3.0 cu ft), Large (4.5 cu ft), Mirror/Picture Telescoping	10–22 cartons + 12–18 furniture pads	1.0 to 1.8 vaults (incl. seating/tables)	Sectionals >84 in, large area rugs, upright pianos
Dining Room	Dish-Packs (china/crystal), Mirror Cartons, Medium (3.0 cu ft)	8–18 cartons + 8–12 furniture pads	0.8 to 1.3 vaults	Single-slab dining tables >84 in, glass curio cabinets
Primary Bedroom & Closet	Wardrobe (24-in bar), Medium (3.0 cu ft), Large (4.5 cu ft)	15–30 cartons + 4–8 wardrobes	1.2 to 2.0 vaults	King box springs/mattresses, sleigh headboards, tall armoires
Secondary Bedroom / Home Office	Book/Small (1.5 cu ft for files/books), Medium (3.0 cu ft), Wardrobes	12–24 cartons + 2–4 wardrobes	0.8 to 1.4 vaults	L-shaped executive desks, tall bookcases, monitor cartons
Garage / Workshop / Basement	Book/Small (1.5 cu ft heavy hardware), Medium (3.0 cu ft), Plastic Totes	15–40 cartons (excluding hazmat/fuels)	1.0 to 2.2 vaults (or pallet rack)	Tool chests, bikes, mowers, long lumber, gym racks

Practitioner Operational Takeaways

• Assign a Light, Standard, or Heavy density tier to every salvageable room and exclude confirmed total-loss zones before sizing cartons.

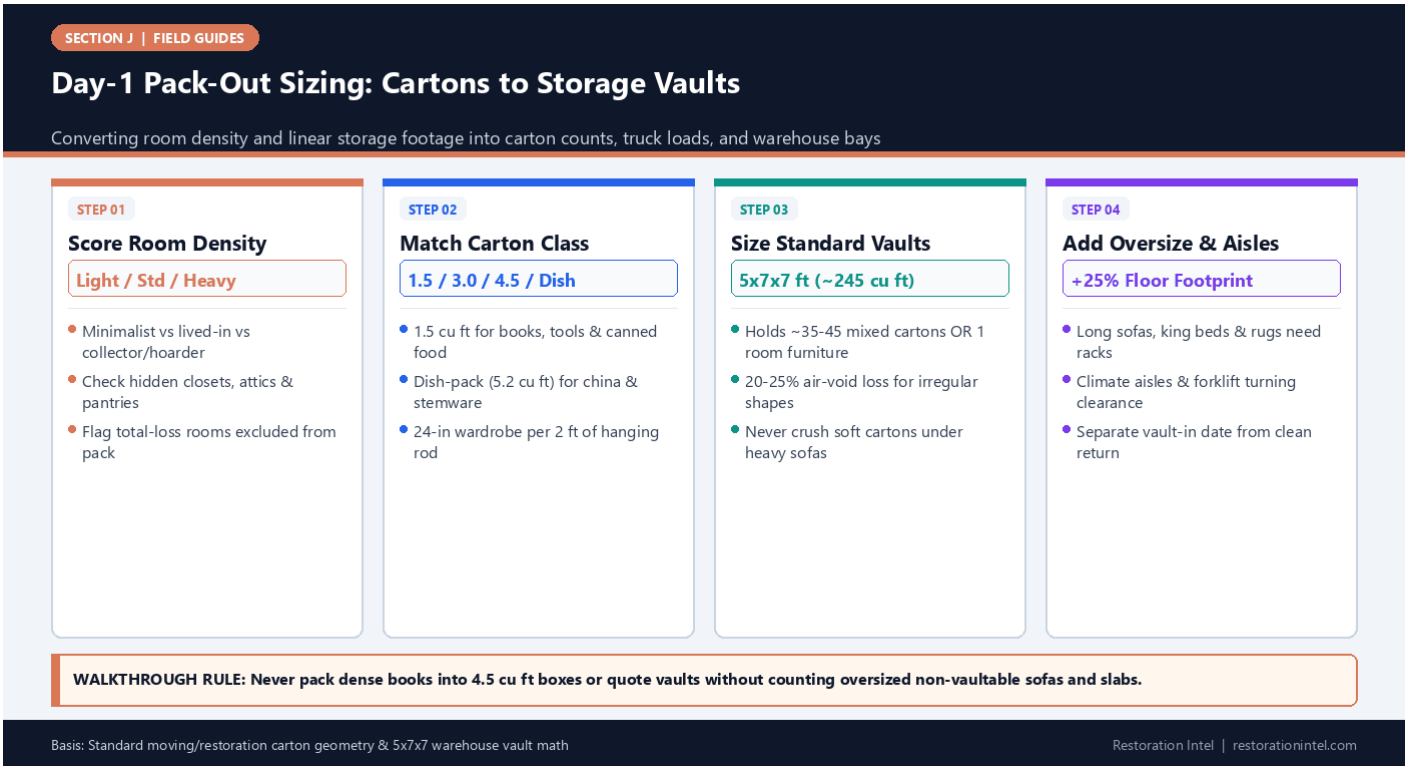
• Measure linear feet of bookshelves, kitchen cabinets, and hanging closet rods to calculate exact 1.5, 3.0, 4.5, dish-pack, and wardrobe quantities.

• Apply a realistic 35-45 mixed-carton (75-80% volume efficiency) benchmark per 5x7x7 ft vault rather than theoretical gross cubic feet.

• Flag all oversized items (>80 in length, king mattresses, rolled rugs, stone slabs) into separate open-rack square-footage estimates.

• Reconcile Day-1 walkthrough carton/vault estimates against actual warehouse dock receiving counts before submitting the first monthly storage invoice.

Visual Workflow & Benchmark Summary



Companion Endpoints & Verified Primary Sources

• **Markdown Twin (plain text):** https://restorationintel.com/field-guide-pack-out-box-count-vault-square-footage-estimates.md

• **ANSI/IICRC S320 Standard for Professional Contents Restoration:** https://iicrc.org/s320/

• **Restoration Industry Association (RIA):** https://www.restorationindustry.org/

• **Verisk XactContents Platform Overview:** https://www.verisk.com/products/xactcontents/

• **Verisk Xactimate Estimating Platform:** https://www.verisk.com/products/xactimate/