

Decluttering

Whether you're downsizing or just trying to simplify your life, figuring out how to declutter your home is a big job. The best way to start decluttering when you're overwhelmed is to do it in stages. Make a "declutter your home checklist" to prioritize clutter areas.

Focus on one room, or even one zone within a room (e.g., kitchen cabinets), at a time, and complete each job fully before moving on to the next space.

Tips for Decluttering Your Home

Use Containers to Sort Items

Before you start to declutter your home, have containers defined for the following purposes to sort items:

Put away: Items that have crept out of their designated storage spaces.

Fix/mend: Items that need something before they're put away, such as a shirt with a missing button.

Recycle: Items that consist of recyclable materials.

Trash: Items to throw away in the household trash.

Donate: Unwanted items that are still in good condition and can be donated to a charitable organization or another person.

Keep These Decluttering Rules in Mind

20/20 Rule: Get rid of items you can either replace for \$20 and under 20 minutes.

80/20 Rule: According to this rule, we use 20% of our belongings 80% of the time. Either get rid of or store away the 80% that you don't use regularly.

Five Second Rule: Sorting through items, give yourself five seconds to remember the last time the item was used. If you can't remember within five seconds, it's time to get rid of it.

Simple Ways to Declutter Your Spaces

1. Start by removing trash.

2. Begin by choosing one small area to organize – like a drawer.

3. Sort items into three piles: Keep, donate and toss.

4. Find a specific home for everything you intend to keep – for example, a hook for your keys.

5. Group similar items together, instead of storing them in multiple places, so you always know where to find them.

6. If you buy something new, pledge to get rid of something else to limit items in your home.

7. If you're holding on to items to pass to the next generation, ask your heirs if they want the items. Be prepared for them to say no, and be gracious.

8. Don't try to do everything all at once. Schedule limited amounts of time to work on decluttering and organizing on a regular basis.

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The Clutter Clearing MANTRA

1. How long has it been since I used this?

2. Do I like it?

3. Does it work properly? Is it broken?

4. Do I have more? How many do I need?

5. If I keep this, what will I get rid of to make room for it?

6. Can I locate this information elsewhere?
(Probably on the internet)