

Sorting out that muddle -

Tips on decluttering

Having emotional ties to possessions is normal – it is a way of keeping memories close. However, it is important not to treasure everything. Stick with the items that have real value, the items you love and use. This booklet shows you how to make those tough calls and free up some space!



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Think before you buy

Before buying anything, ask yourself whether you already have one. Decide if you will have space for it, or if it's just an impulse buy. Hold off on buying it for a couple of days to determine if it's really needed.

- Consider getting rid of one thing for every new thing that you buy, for example, if you buy a pair of new shoes, throw out an old pair.
- Think about double-ups. Do you already have something similar that serves the same purpose?
- Think about the difficulty of moving the item in and out of your house. Can you get something smaller that takes up less space and is easier to manoeuvre?
- Don't get deceived by sales people. Is the item necessary for your daily life or can you easily live without it?



*Most importantly, enjoy your
new clutter free space!*

Start your decluttering list here!



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What is clutter?

Clutter is a collection of things lying about in an untidy state. Extreme clutter can cause unwanted stress and anxiety. If it isn't kept under control it can lead to irrational behaviour such as hoarding.

Clutter can disrupt the desired smooth workings of a household. Time can be wasted and deadlines can be missed in searching for important items such as medication or bills. Spaces become dangerous when they are cluttered – there is a risk of tripping and falling over obstructing items.

Why declutter?

- There is less to clean, tidy and organise but more space to move.
- With more space, there is less risk of falling in the home.
- Less money needs to be spent acquiring unnecessary possessions meaning more money to spend on more important things.
- It will be easier if the time comes to downsize/move house

How do I declutter?

- Make a list of what you want to achieve by decluttering.
- Decluttering can be physically and emotionally demanding. Get help from a friend, family members or a professional service who provide support in clearing clutter.
- Focus on falls prevention. Create clear pathways free of debris, cords and rugs.
- Preserve stability “props” such as furniture if used to aid mobility around the house.
- Set reasonable time frames or goals for areas to declutter. Start with one room and narrow it down to a corner of a room, a table, or just a section of the table. Don’t try to get it all done in one session.
- Give things back to your children (you are not a storage facility), list items to sell or give away on community websites or donate to your local charitable organisations such as the Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul and Age Concern.
- Dispose of all but the important papers such as tax-related documents and warranties. For each item, decide if you: keep it or get rid of it.
- If it’s functional and utilised regularly then **keep it**.
- In Japan they have a term tokimeku which means ‘to spark joy.’ If an item sparks joy, then keep it. If something is neither functional nor sparks joy then get rid of it. This is the hard part – actually letting go of stuff.
- Plan to sort your cluttering items into “Give away” “Donate” and “Rubbish” piles or boxes.



Sometimes it takes two or three times of sorting through your things before you're satisfied with the reduction in clutter. Try not to get overwhelmed with the initial decluttering event, over time your tolerance for clutter will decline.