

Find happiness by living with less



Whether we acknowledge it or not, we are in a relationship with each one of our material possessions. The meaning we assign to an item matters: If your belongings aren't bringing you joy, it might be time to let go. Below, our steps for clearing the clutter.

1 Do your homework

Instead of blindly jumping into a de-cluttering project, read some perspectives on the art of clearing out junk. Marie Kondo's *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up* is a popular pick, as is Karen Kingston's *Clear Your Clutter with Feng Shui*. (Online summaries work, too.)

2 Get a grip on your subscriptions

We all love the cute boxes that arrive on our doorsteps each month, but what happens to the contents after the initial moment of delight? Let go of all of your subscriptions except for the ones that provide necessities.

3 Put it on the calendar

Sorting through belongings can be an emotional and frustrating experience. Get into the proper mindset by coming at it feeling rested and with enough time. Rash decisions can lead to regret.

4 Clear out the cabinets

This exercise is an easy one to get started with—empty out a cabinet or drawer and put back only the items that you need, love, or use on a regular basis. Try your medicine cabinet first, then work your way to other spaces.

5 Limit new purchases to items that "spark joy"

Being conscious about the items you bring home is essential to keeping a space clear. Before buying something, ask yourself, "Does this item make me happy, or is it the act of purchasing that I enjoy?" If it's the latter, put the item back on the shelf.

6 Advanced step: 30-day minimalism challenge

If you're ready to let go in a big way, you might consider a 30-day: give away one item on day one, two items on day two, and so on. By the end, you will have parted with 465 things.