

# DECLUTTERING

One of the easiest ways to simplify your move is to cut down on clutter. The less stuff you have, the less you have to pack and transport, and you may even make a little cash clearing it out. So, where do you begin?

## Start Early

Starting early allows you time for planning, sorting, selling, and donating. It also gives you time to really think about your items and figure out what is no longer useful. This will help you avoid packing things you no longer need, or throwing out something you'll regret.

## Clear Out Unused Items

Take out all the items you already know you don't need or want, but still haven't gotten rid of for one reason or another. For example:

- Old baby items.
- Unused or broken appliances.
- Non-refundable impulse purchases that left you filled with buyer's remorse.
- Gifts you never liked but felt guilty giving away.
- Old remotes and cables for electronics you don't have anymore.
- College textbooks you haven't touched since graduation.



Items that are still in good, working condition can be donated or sold. Anything broken or falling apart should be tossed.

## Make a Plan

Start with the least-used room in your home and schedule time every day for packing and purging.

Think about your new home, how much space it has, and whether or not it has storage. If you're moving to a smaller space, consider your new space requirements when deciding what to keep. Ask your real estate agent for measurements or, if you can, take them yourself.

## Sort It Out

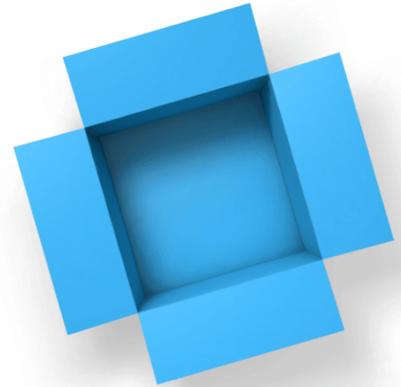
To keep things organized, decide what to keep as you pack. As you start to put things away, ask yourself these questions:

1. When was the last time you used or wore this item?
2. Is it still useful?
3. Does it fit into your life?
4. Do you still like it?
5. Will it work within your vision for your new home?

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With these questions in mind, create four piles:

1. **Keep** anything that is used, still useable, or has a purpose. Don't forget anything that still makes you happy or feels significant.
2. **Sell** items that are in good condition at a garage sale, on websites such as Craigslist or Facebook Marketplace, or at consignment shops.
3. **Donate** anything that isn't worth selling, but is still in good enough condition to wear or use.
4. **Recycle** anything damaged, worn out, or unusable to your local dump or recycling place for sorting. Items like electronics should be disposed of properly, and most recycling centers have a spot for them.



**PRO TIP:** Make sure to wipe any personal information from electronic devices before selling, donating, or disposing of them.

## Go Digital

Digitizing anything that you don't need a physical copy of is one of the easiest ways to cut down on clutter. This includes:

- Photographs
- Home movies
- Files

Keep physical copies of any images you feel especially attached to or plan to frame, as well as any paperwork you may need to retain for tax or legal reasons. Remember to back up anything you digitize to an external hard drive or USB stick.

## Get Help

Helping hands make it faster and easier to pack up your stuff, and they can also offer you an objective point of view when it comes to items you're not sure about.



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## Don't Forget

With so much going on, it's easy to overlook certain areas. Make sure to check these places while you're packing up:

- **Medicine cabinet:** Take everything out of your medicine cabinet and safely dispose of anything expired or that you no longer need. Prescriptions and some over-the-counter pills should not be thrown in the garbage or flushed down the toilet.
- **Pantry:** Discard anything expired or that you don't eat anymore. If the food isn't expired and is still in a sealed package, consider donating it to a local shelter or food bank. This is also a good time to sort through your cooking utensils and get rid of any unnecessary extras.
- **Attic or Crawl Space:** These spaces are usually a great spot for storage, but that can also mean they become a dumping ground for anything you don't use anymore. Don't stick the new residents with your old chairs.

## SELLING YOUR STUFF

After you've finished figuring out what you no longer want or need, you can start getting rid of it. If it's in good condition, you can recoup some of your moving costs by selling some of it. There are a few different methods for selling your old belongings:

### Yard Sale

There are three keys to yard sale success:

1. **Timing:** Yard sales are best held in nice weather in spring or summer, when people are most likely to be out and about. Weekends and holidays when the majority of people will have time off from work are ideal.
2. **Location:** Hold your yard sale somewhere prominent and easy to access. If your house is deep inside your subdivision or you live in an apartment, see if you can borrow a friend or family member's yard.
3. **Advertising:** Promote your yard sale early and often. Flyers and Facebook events are good promotion tactics. Entice people to attend with advanced notice and information about some of the better items available.



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## Online

The easiest items to sell include:

- Electronics, video games, and movies
- Clothing, especially brand name or designer
- Books
- Toys and children's items
- Working household appliances and small appliances
- Furniture
- Artwork and collectibles

Depending on what you have to get rid of, there are many sites to choose from:

- For **books, toys, furniture, collectibles, antiques, and knick knacks**, try Ebay, Craigslist and Facebook Marketplace.
- If you have a lot of **clothes** to unload, try Poshmark, thredUP, or Tradesy.

To ensure your stuff gets sold, you'll need to list it properly. Try these tips:

- **Pricing:** Find out how much a brand new item costs, check what other people are selling it for, and keep the condition of the item in mind. Even in great condition, it probably isn't worth what you originally paid now that it's been used, unless it's a highly-priced collectible. Expect that some buyers will want to haggle and negotiate the price.
- **Description:** Include key details, special features, and brand information. Be descriptive and honest about the condition, and include good quality photos of the item from different angles as well as shots of any damaged or flawed spots.
- **Cleaning:** Clean the item thoroughly and, if possible, repair any damage.
- **Delivery:** If you anticipate having to ship the item, try to build that into the price. For large items, you're better off selling locally and including buyer pickup as part of the condition of sale, unless you have the means to deliver it.



## Consignment

If you'd rather not deal with the hassle of selling your stuff and you're staying nearby or can set up an arrangement, you can take any items that are in good condition to a local consignment shop where they will be sold for you. The shop will take a commission, but you won't have to do anything except drop it off.