

Clearing Out Clutter
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Summer is here and you finally have that little bit more time that you have been hoping for right? You can finally start to conquer those piles of clutter that have been driving you crazy!

1. Getting started is sometimes the hardest thing to do. Start with the stuff that is easy to part with. Take a garbage bag and get rid of the garbage: candy wrappers, paper and flyers that have expired, clothing that is stained or ripped and items that are broken.
2. Are you unsure whether to keep something or not? Try asking yourself these questions:
When was the last time I used this item?
Will I use this again?
Do I use it often enough to warrant keeping it?
Would it be hard to get another one?
3. Still unsure? Remember that sometimes we keep things that are no longer relative to our lives. Maybe something was useful to you 5 years ago but you have since outgrown it or moved onto something new. There is no shame in that, our likes and interests change and it is okay to let go of things that are no longer relative to our lives.
4. Another easy way to tell if something is useful to you is to examine the layer of dust on it. Dust is a telltale sign that you don't use something.
5. Limit the amount of shopping bags (20), margarine containers (5) and old clothing used for rags (5) more than this is simply clutter.
6. Sometimes we hold onto clothing items because we paid a lot of money for them. Clothing has to meet the following criteria in order to stay in your closet:
Have you worn it in the last year?
Do you love it?
Do you feel good when you wear it?
7. When you have to make a decision about sentimental items only keep items that hold fond memories for you. If something holds sentimental value to you and you can't part with it – don't. You never want to regret a decision to get rid of something.
8. Many people keep boxes and boxes of their children's art and schoolwork through the years. Instead of burdening your storage area keep one special piece of art or schoolwork from every year and take photos of the others.
9. Get rid of wall clutter. Take down all the photo's, pictures and decorations and only put up the things you really love. Make groupings of your photographs and set aside others to rotate them throughout the year.
10. Bathroom countertops are big clutter collectors. Once a week take everything off your counter and put only the essential items back on. Find a home in the drawers or underneath the sink for the rest.

11. To save money on your grocery bill designate a shelf in your fridge for leftovers or food that needs to be used up quickly. This may help with finding the leftovers a week later at the back of the fridge!
12. The best way to reduce the clutter in your home is to not let it in the house in the first place. When getting the mail make sure to throw out envelopes and unwanted flyers before leaving the Post Office. Sale items are great but only buy what you think you will use otherwise it is just clutter at a good price!