

Room-by-Room Checklists: How to Get Rid of Things All Over Your Home

Bedrooms

- Make your bed.
- Check the room for trash and throw any away.
- Put away anything that's on the floor.
- Clear off all surfaces and put away items that don't belong there.
- Clean out nightstand drawers. Put away anything that doesn't belong in the bedroom.
- Go through dresser drawers. Neatly fold things you're keeping. Donate, recycle, or throw away things you're not.
- Use storage bins under your bed for anything that needs a "home" and doesn't fit in drawers or on shelves.

Closet

- Put away anything that doesn't belong in the closet.
- Put dirty laundry in a hamper or the laundry room.
- Choose a direction. For example, you can start with the floor and work your way up to the shelves. Or start with the highest shelf, and work your way down.
- Go through clothing by type. For example, start with shoes, then move onto dresses, then denim, then T-shirts, etc.
- Sort clothing first by what you're going to keep and what you aren't. Then sort the second pile into what can be recycled or donated and what needs to be thrown away.

Home Office / Workspace

- Clear off surfaces. This includes your desk, and any other tables or shelves.
- Put away anything that doesn't belong in the office. Go through paper items. One good way is to sort them into three piles: File, to-do, and trash. Digitize records if you can by scanning them into your computer and storing them on a hard drive.
- Empty drawers and organize them.
- Organize cords. This can be as simple as using twist ties or rubber bands to neaten their appearance. You might also consider labeling cords with tape so you know which cord goes with what gadget.

Kitchen

- Clear everything off the counters except for essential kitchen items, like appliances, spice racks, or knife blocks.
- Find a home for everything you removed from the counter. If it belongs in the kitchen, a drawer or cupboard might work. If it belongs elsewhere in the house, put it away.
- Completely empty each space (including drawers and cupboards). Assess each item, and if you're keeping it, put it away where it belongs.
- Organize loose items in cupboards, like storage containers and spices. Storage bins or cupboard racks are great solutions for this.
- Work through your entire kitchen, either by type of items or by zone.

Bathrooms

- Start with the surfaces and floor. Put away anything that doesn't belong in the bathroom.
- Take out the trash and clean out any empty bottles and containers, outdated medications, and anything else that needs to be thrown away.
- Take everything out of the drawers, cupboards, closets, and medicine cabinet. Discard anything you're getting rid of.
- Sort items so like things are together. For example, group together cleaning supplies, medications, makeup, skincare products, and anything else you have. This will make it easier to put things away in an organized way.
- Find a home for everything that belongs in the bathroom.

Laundry Room

- Put away anything that doesn't belong in the laundry room.
- Put away any dirty laundry, either in hampers or in the washing machine. Pick up anything else that's on the floor.
- Clear everything that's on top of your washer and dryer, and put it away.
- Clean out any shelves or cupboards. Use storage bins to group like items and give everything in the laundry room an organized home.

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Living Room

- Remove anything that doesn't belong in the living room and put it away.
- Decide on storage solutions that fit your needs. You may need places to store books, other media, photos, family nick nacks, remotes, electronics, or other items. Consider your own needs, and decide what kind of storage will help you stay organized. Baskets, book shelves, storage ottomans, trunks, and tables with drawers are all great options.
- Put away anything that's sitting on the floor or furniture.
- Clear off surfaces of tables, shelves, and your entertainment center. Find a home for everything that usually lives on a surface.
- Clean out drawers and shelves.
- Organize electronics, including all their cords and accessories. Put like items together; for example, store games and controllers near the console they belong to.
- Try not to let the living room be a dumping ground. Once it's decluttered, make an effort to regularly clean out items that end up there, but don't belong there.

Entryway / Foyer

- Remove everything from the floor and surfaces. Put away anything that belongs in a different part of your home.
- Go through any desks, consoles, or tables with drawers. Remove the contents, decide what to keep, and put back only what needs to be in the entryway.
- If you have family members who need to hang up coats, backpacks, and other belongings, assign each person their own hook on the wall.
- Clean out entryway closets just like bedroom closets — start small, and work your way through the closet one section at a time.

Basement / Attic

- Divide the area into zones. Then, tackle one zone at a time; for example, one set of shelves or one pile of boxes.
- Remove everything from the zone you're working on. Empty shelves and boxes so you can see every item you're working with.
- Sort items into "keep" and "get rid of" piles. Later, sort the "get rid of" pile into "donate," "sell," "recycle," and "trash."
- As soon as you're finished, move the "get rid of" piles outside of the basement or attic. Leaving them where they are will make it easy to put off getting rid of them.
- As you put things away, label boxes and bins so it's easy to find things you need later.

Garage

- Take everything out. Yes, that's a huge job. Yes, you need to do it.
- Sort through all your items, putting like things together. Make piles for tools, sporting equipment, gardening supplies, hardware, etc.
- Tackle the piles one at a time. Decide what to keep and what to get rid of. You should probably get rid of duplicates, anything worn out, and anything you haven't used in a long time.
- As you move things back into the garage, add storage where you need it. Use shelves and bins to keep things organized and give everything a home.
- If you can't fit everything you need neatly in the space you have, consider renting outside storage space.

