

# Decluttering Made Easy

## Ultimate Quick Start Decluttering Checklist

Where are your clutter hotspots? There are many places that all of us struggle with when it comes to clutter and it's not just a matter of tossing things out, but also getting more organized overall as well as improving the cleanliness of your home. Efficient decluttering needs to be coupled with regular cleaning routines to maintain all the hard work you've invested into making your living space an oasis of tranquility and happiness. The following checklist is a combination of basic decluttering tasks as well as some cleaning suggestions that will quickly improve the appeal of your home, making it happier to live in. Once the first layer of trash is out, you can start moving room-by-room to purge all clutter, and finally organize what remains.

### Declutter the Outside

Clutter outside your home can not only be demotivating for you, but it's also an eyesore for your neighbors – and may even violate some housing and neighborhood codes. So to keep things at peace, start outdoors where all your chaos is on display for the world to see.

When you've got the space outside your home to a point that doesn't fill you with dread when you pull up to the house, you're ready to move inside. Begin at the front door, work around to the side to your driveway and then continue into the back yard. There are plenty of projects on here that you can ask your spouse and even your kids to help with.

- Collect mail & newspapers daily. If it's junk, toss it in the recycle bin instead of bringing it inside.
- Sweep debris away from front door & shake out door mats
- Mow your yard regularly
- Trim shrubbery and trees
- Remove dead leaves and limbs from walkways, entrance and yard
- Pull weeds
- Mulch flowerbeds
- Put away all tools in the garage or outbuilding
- Roll hoses up
- Wash windows (keep windows clean)
- Clean out gutters
- Repair shutters
- Paint where needed
- Repair fences and anything else

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## *Vehicles*

- Clean out cars, trucks and SUVs
- Keep a trash bag in your vehicle and empty regularly
- Empty cigarette trays and avoid using them if possible since they leave residual smells
- Wash, wax, vacuum and detail your vehicle regularly
- Check fluids when you fill up
- Replace worn out parts

## **Inside Your Home**

Once the outside of your home is cleaned up, you're ready to move indoors. Once you have the outside decluttered, start at the entrance and work your way through the house room by room.

### *Entry Way*

- Hang up coats in closet or armoire
- Place shoes in closet
- Vacuum or sweep
- Dust and polish furniture
- Add an umbrella stand or storage area for umbrellas

### *Den*

- Pick up discarded items, clothing, magazines, toys, games, empty plates or glasses. Return each to the proper storage areas.
- Sort through stacks of magazines and newspapers. Give them away or take them to a recycling center periodically.
- Repair blinds, shades, curtains, draperies or broken rods. Broken items are considered clutter and if it can't be repaired, it should be thrown away.

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- Sort through games, books and electronic media (DVDs, CDs, etc) and remove those which are no longer being listened to or are no longer age appropriate for your children.

## *Kitchen*

- Put dirty dishes directly into the dishwasher and train other family members to do the same. Don't allow them to stack up in the sink or on the table
- Keep sinks clean and unclog drains
- Declutter countertops and wipe off daily
- Mop floors weekly
- Replace worn out scrub pads, sponges and kitchen towels
- Wash kitchen towels weekly
- Refill soap dispensers
- Take out trash when it's full, not after several bags have built up
- Match up plastic storage containers to lids and discard anything without a match
- Organize and maintain cabinets
- Wipe off fronts and inside the cabinets regularly
- Clean stove range and oven regularly
- Throw out spoiled food in refrigerator
- Wipe down shelves in refrigerator and freezer
- Wash around light switches and doors
- Clean pet bowls
- Clean windows
- Keep blinds dusted
- Don't allow trash to overflow or accumulate several bags of trash before taking outside

## *Laundry Room*

- Wash, dry and fold at least one load of laundry per day
- Throw lint into trash cans (keep one in your laundry room or just outside the door to make it easier)
- Mop floor weekly
- Clean windows and sinks weekly

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- Organize cabinets & shelves
- Store detergent, softeners and other products on shelves or in cabinets with the lids on
- Clean dryer filter regularly
- Remove soap residue before it builds up
- Clean outside of washer and dryer
- Decaulk washer regularly

## *Bathrooms*

- Pick up towels from floor and hang to dry for reuse or take to laundry room
- Deodorize regularly
- Turn off exhaust fans when not in use
- Squeegee your glass shower surfaces daily
- Clean tubs and sinks weekly
- Scrub out toilet messes immediately
- Deep clean toilets weekly
- Don't allow toothpaste buildup in sinks or toothbrush holders
- Clean mirrors and windows weekly
- Wash towels weekly
- Empty trash can weekly
- Unclog sinks, tubs or showers
- Collect all cosmetics and beauty products strewn over bathroom or loose in drawers and organize into bins and tubs. Store in drawers, cabinets or closet

## *Bedrooms*

- Make bed right after you get up in the morning
- Dust weekly
- Vacuum regularly
- Hang up clothes or put away in drawers after taking them off
- Put away shoes and other items
- Keep towels out of bedroom and in bathroom
- Place dirty clothes in hamper or take to laundry room

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- Before bringing in more clothing storage, remove all items from your closet that you haven't worn in the last year
- Organize closets and drawers
- Don't eat food in the bedroom! This can create rodent and bug infestations
- Take any dirty dishes to kitchen for washing
- Clean windows weekly
- Dust overhead light fixtures and fans weekly. Don't forget the tops of the fan blades
- Replace burned out light bulbs
- Keep nightstand free of clutter
- Store suitcases in attic or garage, not under the bed or in closet
- Dust regularly underneath bed

## *Home Office*

- Keep desk clean
- Open, sort and handle any unread mail or bills
- Sort through any stacks of paper and file. File new paperwork immediately as it comes in
- Empty trash can
- Replace burned out light bulbs
- Remove stacks of boxes and store in attic or garage
- Untangle wires, tie together to keep out of sight
- Organize drawers, files and closet

## *Other items*

- Designate place for keys, purses, backpacks, etc and use it
- Remove any cobwebs in corners
- Mop and vacuum floors regularly
- Clean and remove stains on rugs, carpets, floors, sinks, tubs, or showers.
- Keep windows clean inside and outside
- Empty trash cans regularly