

Decluttering Checklist

A step-by-step method to declutter any space using keep, donate, sell, and toss.

Set Up the Four-Pile System

- Label four containers: keep, donate, sell, and toss
- Add a fifth bin for items that belong in another room
- Pick one small area and set a 20-minute timer
Small wins build the momentum to keep going.
- Empty the chosen area completely onto a flat surface
- Commit to handling each item only once

Sort with Clear Decisions

- Keep items you have used in the past year
- Donate usable items you no longer need or love
- Set aside higher-value items to sell
- Toss anything broken, expired, or unsafe to use
- Relocate misplaced items to the room they belong in
Wait until the session ends to put them away.

Declutter Surfaces and Floors

- Clear counters, tables, and desks down to true essentials
- Remove anything stored on the floor that has a better home
- Sort the junk drawer and discard dead pens and stray parts
- Recycle old mail, paperwork, and expired coupons
- Wipe each cleared surface before deciding what returns

Tackle Closets and Drawers

- Pull every item out and sort into the four piles
- Try on questionable clothing and donate what does not fit
- Discard single socks, stretched basics, and worn shoes
- Keep only the linens and towels you actually use
- Group what remains by type before putting it back
Folding vertically lets you see everything at a glance.

Handle Sentimental and Hard Items

- Box sentimental items separately and limit yourself to one bin
- Photograph keepsakes you want to remember but not store
- Set duplicates aside and keep only the best version
- Give yourself permission to release guilt gifts
- Revisit the maybe pile after a week with fresh eyes

Finish and Follow Through

- Take out the toss bags immediately so they do not creep back
- Schedule a donation drop-off within the week
Put the donation box in your car so it actually leaves.
- List sell items online or set a date for a yard sale

- Put keep items away in their assigned homes
- Adopt a one-in, one-out rule to stay clutter-free