

# Donation Checklist

A complete plan for what to donate, how to prep items, and where to give.

## Gather and Sort by Category

- Collect items from each room into a central staging area
- Sort into clothing, household, books, toys, and furniture
- Separate donations from items to sell or recycle  
Higher-value items may be worth selling instead.
- Box each category together for easy drop-off
- Keep an itemized list as you pack each box

## Check Condition

- Inspect each item for stains, tears, and heavy wear
- Set aside anything broken, damaged, or unsafe
- Test that electronics and appliances power on
- Confirm sets and games include all their pieces
- Recycle or toss items that fail the quality check  
Only donate what you would give to a friend.

## Choose Where to Donate

- Match items to charities that accept that category
- Check whether a local shelter or school needs specific goods
- Confirm hours, locations, and any drop-off limits
- Ask about free pickup for large furniture  
Many charities collect bulky items at your door.
- Pick a reputable organization you trust

## Prep and Clean Items

- Wash and fold clothing and linens
- Wipe down dishes, toys, and small appliances
- Bundle cords and small parts with their main item
- Bag pairs of shoes together so they stay matched
- Pack fragile items with padding to prevent breakage

## Drop Off and Get a Receipt

- Load boxes into the car the night before drop-off
- Schedule the trip so donations actually leave the house
- Hand items to staff and request a written receipt
- Record the date, charity, and estimated item values  
Photograph higher-value donations for your records.
- File the receipt with your tax documents

## Follow Up and Maintain

- Update your donation log with what you gave
- Note any items the charity declined for next time
- Keep a donation box going for ongoing decluttering

- Schedule a seasonal donation run on the calendar
- Apply a one-in, one-out rule to keep clutter down
  - Drop new outgrown items straight into the box.