



Making Room for What Matters

A simple, intentional guide to decluttering your home

JOZETTE ANDERSON

Decluttering is not about creating an empty home. It is about deciding what deserves space in the life you are living now. Start small, stay honest, and let usefulness, meaning, and genuine enjoyment guide what stays.

A GOOD PLACE TO BEGIN

Choose one drawer, one shelf, or one small category. Finish that space before moving on. A completed twenty-minute project creates more momentum than an entire room pulled apart at once.

THE QUESTIONS THAT CUT THROUGH INDECISION

Before you keep it, ask:

1 Would I buy this again today?

A fast way to separate something you truly want from something you are keeping out of habit.

2 Is it an 8 out of 10?

Your space is finite. If something does not earn at least an eight out of ten in usefulness, meaning, or enjoyment, consider whether that space would be better used by something you genuinely value. Life is too short to surround yourself with things you only sort of like.

3 Am I keeping it because I want it – or because I feel guilty?

Cost, gifts, and good intentions do not create an obligation to keep an item forever. If it was a gift, remember that its meaning was also in the giving: someone thought of you, chose something for you, and had the joy of presenting it to you. You can be grateful for the person, the sentiment, and the moment without feeling responsible for housing the object indefinitely.

4 Does it support the way I actually live?

Not the hobby you might someday start, the size you might someday be, or the version of life you once imagined. Current you deserves a space that supports the life you are actually living.

5 Would it be difficult or expensive to replace?

If the answer is no, "just in case" may not be earning permanent storage space. That space could be used for something you truly need or love - or simply left open as breathing room.

Make the decision complete.

Once something is leaving a room, give it an actual next stop so it does not become a new pile somewhere else.

KEEP

Useful, loved, meaningful, and suited to your life now.

PASS IT ON

Donate or give away items that still have plenty of life left.

SELL

Only when the value is worth the time. Give the item a deadline.

RECYCLE / DISCARD

Broken, expired, incomplete, unsafe, or no longer usable.

ROOM-BY-ROOM QUICK WINS

Start where you will feel the difference fastest.

Use these prompts as a menu, not a mandate. Pick one zone, make your decisions, and move donations and trash out of the space when you finish.

KITCHEN

- Duplicate utensils and gadgets
- Mugs, water bottles, and serving pieces you never reach for
- Food-storage containers without matching lids
- Expired pantry items and spices
- Small appliances that are rarely or never used

LIVING ROOM

- Books and magazines you are ready to pass on
- Decor you are tired of dusting or no longer love
- Extra blankets, baskets, remotes, and cords
- Games, hobbies, and electronics that are no longer part of your routine
- Furniture or objects that make the room harder to use

BEDROOM + CLOSET

- Clothing that is uncomfortable, worn out, or no longer fits your life
- Shoes that hurt
- Duplicate linens and extra pillows
- Accessories you consistently pass over
- Items stored "for someday" that no longer match your priorities

BATHROOM

- Expired products
- Half-used products you disliked
- Duplicates and hotel/travel-size overflow
- Worn towels and linens
- Old medications - use an appropriate pharmacy or local take-back option

PAPER + OFFICE

- Mail that no longer needs action
- Receipts and statements you do not need to retain
- Manuals available online
- Duplicate office supplies and mystery cords
- Paper memories that can be scanned and organized digitally

GARAGE + STORAGE

- Broken items waiting for a repair that is not happening
- Empty boxes and excess packing material
- Unused sports, hobby, and seasonal equipment
- Old paint, chemicals, and batteries - dispose of them according to local rules
- Duplicates hiding because storage space made them easy to forget

E-RECYCLING TIP

Old electronics, chargers, and cords often have a better destination than the trash. Check for e-recycling options in your area - some Goodwill locations accept electronics for recycling at no charge. Check your local location before making the trip.

ONE RULE WORTH KEEPING

Organized clutter is still clutter. Before buying another bin, basket, or drawer organizer, decide whether the things inside actually deserve to stay.



Sentimental does not have to mean permanent.

Gifts, heirlooms, letters, photographs, and keepsakes can carry enormous emotional weight. The goal is not to become ruthless with meaningful things. It is to separate the memory from the obligation to store every object connected to it.

A reminder worth keeping

The person, memory, or love is not contained inside the object. Those remain part of you, even when an item no longer needs to remain in your home.

- What specifically does this item represent?
- Do I have another object that carries the same memory?
- Am I keeping this from love - or obligation?
- Would a photo or scan preserve what I value?
- Does seeing this bring warmth, or only guilt?
- Could I keep one representative piece instead of the entire collection?

If the memory matters more than the object, scan paper items, photograph dimensional keepsakes, and save them in a clearly labeled digital memories folder. Keeping fewer mementos can also make the ones you intentionally choose feel more meaningful.

WHEN YOU ONLY HAVE TWENTY MINUTES

5 MIN

Choose one contained area and gather a donation bag, recycling, and trash.

10 MIN

Make quick decisions using the five questions on page one. Do not organize what you already know should leave.

5 MIN

Reset the space and move outgoing items toward their actual destination immediately.

Keep the memory. Release the obligation.



Protect the breathing room you created.



- ☐ Give every item you keep a realistic home.
- ☐ Keep a donation basket somewhere convenient.
- ☐ For crowded categories, consider one-in, one-out.
- ☐ Before buying something new, ask: Where will this live? Will I actually use it?
- ☐ Revisit your highest-clutter zones seasonally.

YOUR FIRST STEP

The space I want to start with: _____

How I want it to feel: _____

My first 20-minute step: _____

Where donations will go: _____

*Keep what supports your life.
Let the rest make room
for what comes next.*

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