



Declutter Your Living Spaces

The average person will spend a total of 3,680 hours, or 153 days of their life, searching for misplaced items.* Typically, the only time many of us think about decluttering our homes or spaces is when we're getting ready to move. Whether you're moving or just want to save time and space, this easy five-bin approach is a great way to start simplifying your living environment.

The 5-bin approach

Decluttering the home can be overwhelming. However, applying the five-bin approach to reorganizing and discarding items may help you feel less anxious and more in control of the process.

- ▶ **Bin 1: Items that need to be put away.** Place items that belong somewhere else in the home in this bin. Eventually, you'll put them away; the intention is to put them somewhere while you're clearing the room.
- ▶ **Bin 2: Items to be fixed.** Place items that you plan to fix or that need to be washed or cleaned in this bin, such as toys, dirty clothes or scuffed shoes.
- ▶ **Bin 3: Items to donate.** Items in this bin are in good condition, but you no longer need or use them. They can be given to friends or family, sold online or donated to a local charity.
- ▶ **Bin 4: Items to be recycled.** This is where you'll place items made of paper, plastic or glass that you don't want to keep. Add all empty drink bottles, food containers, and magazines or newspapers.
- ▶ **Bin 5: Items to discard.** Place expendable items in this bin that you can't recycle or donate.

What about sentimental items?

Many of us have items we can't bear to part with because there's a memory or other sentimental feeling attached. Here are a few tips for handling sentimental items that may start to create clutter.

Decide if it's worth keeping. If you use or enjoy the item, hang on to it. However, you may not need to retain every piece of artwork your children created. It can be helpful to ask a relative or friend when deciding which to keep.

Choose a few items that remind you of a loved one. If you've inherited many heirlooms, see if other members of your family would like some, too. Donate the rest.

Keep in mind; you can get rid of an item without getting rid of the memory. Take a photo of the item to place in a journal or scrapbook and write why it means so much to you.



*Source: Becoming Minimalist