

My Top 10 Declutter Tips

By Elena's Declutter

Your kick off guide to making substantial & sustainable progress with your clutter.

1. Just get started.

It's easy to get caught up in trying to figure out where to start, what process to use, and to get stuck consuming all the information there is about decluttering (like this), but if you really want to have a decluttered home, you just need to start. It doesn't matter where or how. Just pick something up. Decide if you really love or need it. Find it a home or get rid of it. Repeat.

2. Do a power session every week and mini-tasks everyday.

Starting may sound easy enough. But sticking to it and actually making significant headway, that is another thing entirely. So, what I recommend is setting aside time each day and week to declutter. By a power session. I mean a 2hr+ block of time that is dedicated each week to decluttering and organizing. That way you are giving yourself time to tackle bigger decluttering tasks such as organizing the whole bathroom in one go or sorting through a little corner in the garage. By mini-tasks, I mean setting aside 5-20 minutes each day to declutter something. That may be going through one drawer or one shelf. Or it could be taking the load you packed up during your power session to the donation center or dump (see tip 8). Now, an important note is that neither of these times are for cleaning/picking up. This is strictly for tackling areas that have not been dealt with in a long time or for sorting items that need to find a permanent home.



3. Pick-up/clean everyday.

THIS is the time you use for picking things up and cleaning. Your home will still get messy overtime if you (or your spouse/kids) are not putting everything back after you get them out. That is a habit to work towards, but first, just get in the routine of spending 15-30 minutes cleaning up each day. That way the spaces you already decluttered, will stay looking nice. It may take some getting used to, but it will become more and more automatic the longer you do it.

4. Define your why & set goals.

Before you start decluttering (or do it now), write down your why. Why do you want to have less stuff? Why do you want to get organized? Do you want to travel more? Have less stress? Save money for XYZ? Or have more time with family? Whatever your reason or reasons may be, write it down. Then think about your home as it is now. How much work needs to be done where to get you to your why? Does the garage need basically emptied? Does the guest room need major help? Does the basement need sorted and organized so you can find things? Write down actionable goals and then schedule them. How many power sessions would it take to do the garage? The basement? The main rooms of the house? Then put those on your calendar. Now as you work on your goals and do power sessions each week, look back at your why. This will remind you why you're sorting, give you motivation to do the work, and help you let go of more things faster so you can reach your goal.



5. Don't get stuck on one decision too long.

Sometimes you can pick up an item and fight with yourself about it. You know what I'm talking about; you find something sentimental, expensive, or a gift, and you just can't decide whether to keep it or let it go. In this situation, change things up: Ask yourself how hard it would be to replace? What's the worst case scenario?

Does it fit in with your why and support your future goals? If these questions don't help, put it in a box in the garage or a closet for later and look at it in a month or so (you can set a reminder on your phone). But honestly, if it takes that much thought and you're not convinced to keep it? Let it go.

6. It's okay to not be a minimalist, but if you want to be one, you have to commit.

This is a decision each person decluttering will have to face at one time or another. Do you want to keep lots of things and just get rid of the really unnecessary stuff? Or do you want to get rid of as much as you can and only keep the absolute necessities and things you truly love? If you make the decision to be a minimalist, it will not be easy. Each time you go to buy something new or declutter something, remind yourself you are a minimalist. Then decide if that thing is going to serve you and your lifestyle. And if not, commit to your new identity, and let it go.

7. Know where to take things once you've decluttered.

Not everything goes to the donation place or the dump. Read my blog post “10 Ways to Dispose of Clutter & Reduce Waste” to learn how to declutter efficiently and responsibly.

<https://www.elenasdeclutter.com/post/10-ways-to-dispose-of-clutter-reduce-waste>



8. Actually take them there!

My favorite thing to do for my clients is to take their decluttered items with me when I leave and drop them off where they need to go. It gives me PURE GLEE to know the work we put in to sort and declutter actually made a dent in the overall stuff they now have in their home. Don't leave your items sitting in your entryway, garage, or car for any longer than you have to. Get them out and enjoy the peace that follows.

9. Don't give up.

Even with all these tips, you will still probably have days you don't feel like you're making any progress. You may feel like you'll never make it, but the truth is, if you have put in a lot of hard work and are now feeling this way, that means you're almost to the top of the mountain and are about to start rolling downhill. You're about to start feeling the freedom of simplicity. So...

DO NOT GIVE UP NOW!

10. If you aren't making the progress you want, ask for help.

If you feel that the problem is you just do not know what you are doing or you keep putting off your power sessions just one more week, then ask for help. You can ask your super organized friend or relative for some accountability or advice, or you can ask a declutter coach like me.



If you feel completely buried by your stuff and this advice is overwhelming, check out by post “Advice for those Buried.” Some of the tips are similar, but overall, it might be a better fit for you:

<https://www.elenasdeclutter.com/post/advice-for-those-buried>.

And if you would like to get help decluttering your home, email me at elena@elenasdeclutter.com and we can set up a first appointment! I would love to help you conquer your clutter.

For more advice on specific topics, go check out the rest of my blog posts:

<https://www.elenasdeclutter.com/blog>

Remember, you own your stuff... your stuff DOES NOT own you.
And just so you know... I'm rooting for you. You got this!
Now get started!



Sincerely,
Elena Harris