

# Cut the Clutter and Get Organized

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Do you have to clear a spot just to sit down? Always searching for lost items? Tired of being the family's go-to picker-upper? You're not alone. Clutter creeps in from every corner of the home—but the good news is, you can take control.

## Getting Started

Set aside a few days for big cleanups. In each room, start in one spot and move clockwise. Use boxes to sort items into: *keep, Store, Give Away/Sell, and Throw Away*.

- **Keep Box:** Put items back where they belong. Group similar things and create 'centers' for tasks like cooking, cleaning, or hobbies.
- **Storage Box:** Label items clearly, including names and seasons. Use vacuum bags to save space.
- **Give Away/Sell Box:** donate gently used items to charities (call first). Sell items online or at consignment shops.
- **Throw Away Box:** Toss anything broken, worn, or stained. Use a trash bag or can, and consider a trip to the landfill or recycling center if needed.
- **Remember the One Touch Rule**  
Touch things once—like mail. Sort immediately into pay, file, or trash to avoid clutter buildup.



## Closet Organization Tips

- **Declutter:** Turn hangers backward. Flip them after wearing an item. After a few months, donate or store what you haven't worn. Things to toss now: Anything with a stain, hole, or tear; worn-out purses and shoes; outdated clothing or accessories; ratty weekend clothes; clothing that does not fit.
- **Space Matters:** Leave 2–3 inches between clothes to prevent odor, mold, and pests.
- **Smart Choices:** Pick mix-and-match clothing in a consistent color scheme. Dark, solid bottoms and classic pieces save space and money.
- **Hang It Up:** Use hooks, shelves, baskets, hangers to keep everything visible and off the floor.
- **Creative Storage:** Try clear bins, vertical folding, and DIY solutions like shower curtain rings for accessories.
- **Use All Space:** Store out-of-season clothes under beds, in other closets, or above doors. Measure your space before buying storage systems.

## Tips to Maintain a Clutter Free Home

- Everyone needs to do a little bit every day.
- It is everyone's job to keep items picked up and put away.
- Tasks need to be appropriate for age and abilities.
- Share your ideas and expectations of what is expected and acceptable.

This article was adapted from the fact sheet *Cut the Clutter and Get Organized*. For more information contact Tara Solomon-Smith, [tsolomon@ksu.edu](mailto:tsolomon@ksu.edu), 620-244-3826.