



Home Improvement

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When people think of home improvement, they often think of DIY projects, additions, décor, and spending money. Activities with the goal of adding, enlarging, and expanding the home. However, improving does not necessarily mean making the home bigger or accumulating more things. In fact, sometimes home improvement appears in the form of downsizing and decluttering.

Getting rid of personal belongings can present itself as an overwhelming task full of hard decisions and guilt as we ponder over whether or not to get rid of that one t-shirt we've had for years, yet never worn; or a memento from high school; or that hideous gift from a friend that only comes out when they are in town. These are all items that we are all guilty of holding on to for too long, and now is the time to finally dispose of them.

To aid in the decision-making process, I suggest adapting to the mindset of a minimalist and asking yourself these questions while considering what you should keep and what you should discard:

- Does this item serve a purpose?
- Does this item fulfill a need?
- Have I used this in the past month? Past year?
- Is it broken/unusable?
- Do I have duplicates of this item?
- Does this item bring me joy on a regular basis?
- Is this something that can be digitalized or accessed on the internet?
- Would I buy this item again?

If you are still struggling to know what to get rid of first, here are some suggestions:

- Unworn, old, or stained clothing

- Broken items
- Paper bills, receipts, and junk mail
- Expired food
- Old makeup and other cosmetic supplies
- Any duplicate items
- Outdated electronics
- Junk drawer items
- Knickknacks
- Anything without purpose or that you do not love

If you are someone who struggles with letting go, another helpful tip includes boxing up items and removing them for a certain amount of time prior to getting rid of them rather than discarding possessions right away. However, once you have finally decided what you no longer need, you have to decide where your old belongings will go. Things that are too old, out dated, or broken to be used, can be discarded right away. Other items that are still in usable condition can either be given away to friends or donated.

Getting rid of things should not only improve and declutter your home, but also improve and declutter your mind, allowing more time and space for what is truly important in life. I encourage you to not only pursue decluttering as a form of home improvement, but to also walk through the rest of the world with the mindset of a minimalist in hopes to work on self-improvement. Minimalism as a life style seeks to decrease the value of material possessions in order to aid in living a more intentional life. However, what an intentional life looks like varies from person to person, but it should be oriented towards increasing one's happiness.

To find more tips on decluttering and more information on minimalism follow blogs such as *The Minimalists* and *Simply Fiercely* or check out YouTuber Janelle Kristina. Also, if the item your don't care to keep is still in good condition consider posting on: <https://trashnothing.com>

<https://www.autostraddle.com/make-a-thing-spring-cleaning-and-organizing-part-ii-171221/>

<https://howdoesshe.com/over-15-tips-for-tidying-up-decluttering-your-home/>

<https://thewhoot.com/life/decluttering?omhide=true>

<https://www.homestoriesatoz.com/organize/18-clever-organizing-hacks.html>