



# Clutter in Your Home: 10 Tips to Avoid it

If you're wondering where all the clutter or CRAP (Clutter that Robs Anyone of Pleasure) in your home comes from, it's through the front door! Everything you bring through the front door has strings attached and must be dealt with. Only bring into your home the things you want and need. Let's break it down:

## 1. Mail—The biggest culprit of clutter

- Set up a 'Mail Sorting Station' and make decisions about your mail once.
- Throw out all junk mail and rip up all credit card offers right away.
- Put bills in the place where you pay them; better yet, go paperless.
- Place papers to be kept or filed (no envelopes) in one place and file once a month.
- Throw out old catalogs when new ones come, keep in one place alphabetically.
- Keep invitations, things to take care of, and calls to be made, etc. in one place (planner?).

## 2. Errands—Need to be taken out often, just like dogs

- Dry cleaning, items to return to stores or people, banking, mail, repairs, etc.
- Place things in a bag or box by the door you exit to take out to the car each day.

## 3. Free or Cheap or Bargain!

- Sales are a dime a dozen—ask yourself if the item is on your current 'needs' list
- Just because it is free, cheap, or a bargain doesn't mean you want it or need it.
- Learn to resist this huge cause of clutter. Yard sale and thrift store buyers beware!

## 4. Gift-giving

- Make memories instead of buying stuff: dinner, movie, museum, or Broadway show.
- Give the gift of your time or money for college to your grandchildren.
- Regifting is okay because if it's yours, you may do with it what you wish.

## 5. Donation Box

- Keep a donation bag/box handy for unwanted items; donate when full and start over.
- Take it to the nearest charity when it's full and get a receipt for a tax deduction.

## 6. New in/Old out

- When you buy anything new, throw out, recycle, donate or sell the old model/item.
- Do not put it in the attic, garage, basement, or that 'extra' room.
- Electronics or smart phones can be recycled or sold on-line.

## 7. Clothing

- Try clothing on before you buy; most people only wear 20% of what they own.
- Take out of your closet whatever doesn't make you feel good or doesn't fit.
- When you buy new, let go of something you'll no longer choose; don't buy new hangers.

## 8. Keep Lists

- Lists save money and time. Put lists on your smartphone (I use the app Simplist).
- Use a list for all shopping including clothing, household items, food, etc. with details of the item (sizes, dimensions, etc.).
- Shop at home (take stock of what you have) before you go buy something new.

## 9. HSN, QVC, 24/7 Internet shopping, and catalogs

- Beware of these "home invaders"; they want to sell you something you don't need, don't have money for, or don't have the room for. **Quit Valuing Crap!**

## 10. Maintenance!

- Make sure there's a "home" for everything. Without it, things just lay around and become CRAP.
- Clean up a little each day and save hours later. Every time you put something away where it belongs, it's a gift to yourself!

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