



Clutter in Your Home: 10 Tips to Avoid CRAP

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 into your home has strings attached and must be dealt with. Only bring into your home the things you want and need.

Here are **10 Tips to Avoid CRAP** from my book *Organize This! Practical Tips, Green Ideas, and Ruminations about your CRAP*.

- 1. Mail:** Set up a mail-sorting station; make decisions once (daily or once a week)
 - Recycle all junk mail and rip up all credit card offers.
 - Place bills directly in the location where you pay them.
 - Place papers to be kept or filed (throw envelopes) in **one** place and file monthly.
 - Recycle old catalogs when new ones come, keep in **one** place alphabetically.
 - Keep invitations, things to take care of, calls to be made, etc. in **one** location (day planner).
- 2. Errands** (need to be taken out often, just like dogs)
 - Items to return to stores or people, dry cleaning, banking, mail, repairs, etc.
 - Place things in a box or bag by the door you exit to take out to the car each day.
- 3. Free or Cheap or Bargain**
 - Just because it's free, cheap, or a bargain doesn't mean you need it or should buy it.
 - Learn to resist this **huge** cause of clutter. Yard sale and thrift store buyers beware!
- 4. Gift-giving**
 - Make memories instead of buying or getting stuff: suggest dinner, a movie, a museum, or a play.
 - Give money for education to grandchildren.
 - Regift the things you no longer want, like, or need.
- 5. Donation Box**
 - Keep a donation bag/box handy for unwanted items; donate when full and start over.
- 6. New in/Old out**
 - When you buy anything new, throw out, recycle, or donate the old model/item: don't put it in the attic, garage, basement, or that "extra" room.
 - Electronics and smart phones can be recycled or sold on-line.
- 7. Clothing**
 - Take out of your closet whatever doesn't make you feel good or doesn't fit.
 - When you buy something new, let go of something you'll no longer choose and try not to buy any new hangers after a good clean out.
- 8. Keep Lists**
 - Shop at home (take stock of what you have) before you buy something new.
 - Lists save money, time, and prevent overbuying. Use your smartphone to keep lists orderly (I use Simplist app).
 - Make lists for all shopping including clothing, household items, food, gifts, etc. with details of the item (sizes, dimensions, etc.).
- 9. QVC, HSN, 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. Cleanup is also easier for you, your family, or a cleaning service.
 - 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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