

15 Things You Can Get Rid of Today and Never Miss

Many people in our generation keep everything we can possibly store. We can't get rid of 6 out of 20 coffee mugs because we might need them someday. Once we figure out that donating and gifting items will help someone just starting out or going thru a hard time, it becomes easier. It's about sharing and blessing others with stuff we no longer use or need. Let's get started!



KITCHEN

1. Kitchen Utensils aka "JUNK DRAWER"

Is your utensil drawer so full you can barely open and close it? You're not alone. Here's a smart way to figure out what you're really using. Toss everything; all the spatulas, rubber scrapers, pie servers and so on into a box. As you use a utensil from the box, put it back in the drawer. After a month check what's left in the box. Keep those once-a-year items that remain in the box, like a turkey baster or candy thermometer, but donate the rest.

2. Coffee Mugs

Another item we find hogging valuable cupboard space is coffee mugs. Many folks have 20 or more different coffee mugs. Choose 3 for each family member and donate the rest to a church rummage sale.

3. Plastic Containers

How many sizes and brands do you have? Do all have lids? Keep the good quality ones and get rid of the rest

4. Little-Used Kitchen Stuff

When was the last time you used that Bundt pan? If it was months ago, maybe you should give it to a friend. An added bonus to the plan: Get together with a group of 10 friends and have each person bring 15 items of kitchen "stuff" to a swap meet. Each person goes home with THREE items at the most. Donate what's left to charity. Remember who took your spring-form pan so you can borrow it if you ever need one.

5. Vases

Got vases from the last three Valentine's Day bouquets? Take them back to the florist. You might bring home a really nice bouquet of flowers.

6. Food and Spices

Cupboards full of food you're not sure you're going to use? Some solutions: Check the expiration dates on everything in your pantry, fridge, or freezer. If it's about to expire put it on the menu for that week. If not donate to a local group that feeds the hungry.

They don't mold and don't appear to go bad but spices don't last forever, not even cayenne pepper. Cinnamon is an exception to the rule. Dried is one thing, tasteless is another. Do you still have a rectangular tin of McCormick spices? A glass jar of McCormick labeled "Baltimore, MD?" McCormick stopped making both more than 15 years ago! How does that sage taste in your stuffing?

OFFICE

7. Receipts

Computers were supposed to usher in a paperless society but it hasn't happened quite yet. Most of us are still drowning in paper. Only 20% of your files (computer and paper) are ever used. Check with your accountant about how long to keep important papers like tax returns but in general materials that support tax returns, like receipts, can be shredded after seven years. If you can't bear to shred without a copy, scan to a CD or flash drive then shred.

8. Instruction Manuals, Old Magazines

Why are you keeping instruction manuals for items you no longer have? And why do you have magazines that are 2 or 3 years old? Flip and Rip – tear out articles you want to read and put them in a file folder to keep in the car to read while you wait. Many magazines are online and free of charge if you have a City or County library card.

9. Mail

Standing is the trick, don't be tempted to sit down: Bring in the mail. Leave your coat on. Find a place by the wastebasket, recycling bin, or shredder and stand and handle each piece of mail. Put bills in a basket, take magazines to where you read them, glance at any newsletters and bulletins for important information, and discard the rest. Your goal is to make the mail disappear. Go to <http://www.dmachoice.org> to opt out of unwanted mail.

10. Unread Books

Books are our friends so keep your favorites; the ones you'll read again or you use for reference, and put them in a bookcase. Unless it is a first addition or a children's book from the 40's – 70's, donate or sell them! Go to www.booksforsoldiers.com; your favorite library for the book fair, the Veterans Home or the jail.

CLOSETS AND BATHROOM

11. Clothes

Here's a sad truth: You're probably not going to lose the weight to fit into those 10-year-old clothes you have in the closet. Donate them all and we guarantee you'll feel "lighter." At the beginning of a new season turn all of your hangers around backward. When you wear a garment, turn the hanger around frontward. Check at the end of the season to see what you have actually worn.

12. Linens and Bedding

Most of us have way too many towels and sheets for beds we no longer own and pillows that need a new home. Keep two sets of sheets for each bed and put the extra set in a box under the bed or in a drawer in your dresser to free up the linen closet. Donate pillows, towels and blankets that are too old to sell to the local animal shelter; the animals will curl up on that old pillow we wouldn't ever use.

13. Medicine

Check your medicine cabinet for expired prescription and over-the-counter drugs, but don't flush them or throw them in the trash. Call your local pharmacy for disposal instructions.

14. Expired Makeup.

TIP: If you're not already in the habit of doing so, get in the habit of labeling your beauty products with the date of first use. This way you'll always know how long you've been using a product and when it's time to pitch it. NEVER keep mascara more than 3 months. Think of the bacteria that grows in that dark, moist tube!

15. Hair Products and Tools, Dental Supplies and Personal Hygiene Products

Project Beauty Share collects new or used products to distribute thru organizations who serve women and families. For more information, call 509.455.5357.

DeAnne Wilfong

Office: 509.443.7211

www.SmoothTransitionsSpokane.com

DWilfong@smoothtransitions.com



Relocation, Downsizing and Estate Dispersal
Serving Eastern Washington and North Idaho

Member National Association of Senior Move Managers