

## 9 Things to Do Before Moving Into a Smaller House

The Miller's made the decision to downsize to a smaller house. Downsizing to a more manageable house can be liberating for retirees, but there is a lot of work to be done before making the move.

As a move manager I have seen the work that goes into downsizing. Here are few ways to make your move smoother:

### 1. Take photos of your current house. There are two reasons for this:

- Photos (digital or print) are fun for you and your family to look back on.
- The photos serve as a tool to help you select what to take. Look through the photos and see where your eye goes; these things are likely keepers.

### 2. Keep things you want, use and need or just like to look at

Identify the things that make your house a *home*...the things that give you pleasure or have sentimental value but NOT the chipped mugs or things in poor condition. You deserve better than that!

### 3. Don't over-save for the next generation. Spoiler Alert! Your kid's don't want your stuff.

Many people save their possessions so they can pass them on to their children or grandchildren. Should you save the dining room table and chairs that seat 12 people for the granddaughter's apartment? Probably not, even if she sat at the table every Thanksgiving for the 10 years since she was born.

The younger generations would rather collect experiences than stuff. When they do take something, it is usually something like a cookbook or photo album. Maybe put the money you get from selling the dining room table and chairs into a fund so the granddaughter can purchase a dining room set when she wants one.

### 4. Stop Acquiring

While trying to downsize is not the time to start acquiring more stuff. However, if you do buy anything other than food or disposable items, for every one item purchased let go of two or three other items that are in the house. Once you get the decluttering process under control, you can use the one in, one out guideline.

### 5. Purge Collections. Keep Only Your Favorites.

If you have collected tea cups or thimbles, Beanie Babies or Precious Moments, take a photo of the collections and get rid of the rest. Three or four tea cups



make a nice display and a Beanie Baby looks great nestled among the pillows on a guest bed.

## **6. A Place for Everything and Everything in Its Place**

Grandma was right; she always said put it away where it belongs. Think of the collection of glassware you have in the china cabinet. Sixty pieces of stemware to be exact! The collection had a place to live and it was always in that place. The trouble is that the china cabinet is not going with you. Now what? Boxed and in storage or under the bed? DON'T MOVE ANYTHING that does not have a designated space in your new home.

## **7. Gather Your Photos**

Start sorting the boxes and albums of photos. If the photo is just scenery, get rid of all but a representative few that mean a lot to you. They will not mean anything to others. If there is a person in the photo, make notes on the back as to who it is. If you don't know the person, let it go. Toss duplicates and start getting the important photos ready to digitize for distribution to family and friends. The only exception are old sepia images which are collector's items and have monetary value.

## **8. Paperwork Purge Time**

You will never look at or need 80% of the papers you routinely keep. Start now with the shredding and destroying process. Check with your accountant to determine how long you should keep tax records and other important documents. Important papers should fit into one fireproof safe.

## **9. Clothes**

Most women have 3 dress sizes in their closets; start reducing the number of garments to the ones you actually wear. If you wear more than 20% of your current wardrobe, you are extraordinary. Even if you reduce the number of clothes by 50%, you will still have more choices than you typically wear. Capsule wardrobes are worth researching.

**Start Now. Even if you are not planning on moving anytime soon, there is no disadvantage to living a simpler life now.**

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