



Planned Pretty
planning a pretty & organized life

10 Steps to De-Cluttering Your House

1. **Pack up all photographs and portraits.** Whether they are framed on a table, mantle, or hanging on a wall they are distracting. Buyers will be drawn to the people in the photos and no longer be interested in the home.
2. **Pack up anything of value that could go missing or be broken in an open house.** No chance of valuables getting broken or lost by potential buyers, or their children, while they are touring your house if it has already been removed from the home.
3. **Discard anything you don't want to move with you to your new home.** If you do not want it in your new home then your buyers don't want to see it in their potential new home either.
4. **Remove two thirds of everything on your bookshelves.** You don't want shelves to look empty, but you do want them to look spacious. Leave a few things on the shelves to show how useful the space is but not so many that anything looks crowded.
5. **Remove half of the things in closets – and leave no more than 2 items on the top shelves.** Closets look spacious and useful when they are roomy and well organized. Top shelves look spacious and useful when you can see the usefulness of the space your house has to offer. Keep floor space in mind as well. Floor space in closets is very valuable! Make sure potential buyers can see LOTS of it.
6. **Remove half the things in your kitchen and bathroom cabinets.** Take every single magnet off the refrigerator without exception. Kitchens and bathrooms easily make or break home sales. This is truly the most valuable real estate in your house. Make sure potential buyers can see the space your house has to offer and can clearly see how *they* could use the space.
7. **Clear out all the paper, mail, menus, etc.** We all have “landing places” for these types of items. There is no room in the house for paper clutter. You can easily buy a small plastic bin to keep paper things in. Then, when you are having potential buyers tour the house put the bin in your car and take it with you when you leave. No stack of unopened mail ever helped sell a house.
8. **Toys – argh.....toys.** Very few toys should be in a home for sale (and only in a child's bedroom – nowhere else in the house). Understandably, your children will not live without toys, but they can live without *so many* toys. My advice to parents is simple. Limit each child to one tote or laundry basket full of toys – let the child choose the toys to keep in the basket – everything else gets packed up. When show time comes the child fills the basket with the toys and you take it with you when you leave the house. When you get to your new home the toys that had been packed up feel new again to your children. A win – win for you all!
9. **Clear out the garage.** Anything not going to the new home needs to be cleared out first. Just like inside the house, if you don't want to take it to your new home your potential buyer doesn't want to see it in their potential new home either. Leave only garage appropriate things in the garage. Yard tools neatly organized, household cleaners neatly organized, etc. Make certain you leave enough room for a vehicle in each vehicle space. So, if you have a two car garage make sure your potential buyer can see that two cars can be parked in the garage.
10. **Find offsite space to store your packed up things.** Renting a close by storage space is a good option. Maybe you can store things in the home you are moving to. Maybe you can store things in your sister's garage. The point is not to store things in your house when it is listed for sale.