

GARAGE SALES

Tackling Clutter

The first step, once you decide to hold your garage sale, is cleaning out the clutter in your home so that you have items to sell. There are as many strategies for decluttering your home as there are things to declutter, so the trick is finding one that works for you. Keep reading to learn more strategies for decluttering your space.

GET A GAME PLAN

Think about why you're decluttering. Are you moving? Cleaning out for a new addition to the family? Or just getting ready for a new stage of your life? Maybe you want to set up a new household organizational system or just get rid of some of your junk. Whatever it is, write that down. All of your decisions are going to come back to that reason.

Separate your house by room or zone. Tackle the easi-



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est one first so that you get a sense of accomplishment. Let that feeling motivate you as the areas get tougher to clean up and the decisions get harder.

THE FOUR-BOX METHOD

One strategy for cleaning out your space is to use the four-box method. It starts, as you might imagine, with four boxes. The first box is for

trash. This is anything that's not worth donating or selling. Remember, donation and thrift stores have rules about what they can and can't take. To save them time and effort,

call your chosen stores to see what they need and what they probably will throw out, anyway.

The next box is for giving away or selling. These are items that are still in good condition but you don't need them anymore. Think toys the kids have outgrown, books you've already read, clothes that no longer fit. Speaking of clothes, be very choosy about what you donate or sell. If you don't want stained or torn clothes, it's likely no one else does, either. Recycle them into rags, send them to a recycling facility or out-and-out trash them.

Box No. 3 is for storage. These are items that you do still need but that you aren't going to use on a day-to-day basis, such as your holiday decorations, family photo albums and good china sets. Bear in mind where this storage goes. Your Christmas decorations are probably OK in an attic that swelters in the summer, but that heat will do serious damage to your family photos. Sort your storage boxes not only by what's in them but how they should be stored.

That last box is for anything that needs to be kept in the house but put in its place. You might want to consider having several fourth boxes, one for each room of the house so you can sort the items that need putting away.

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BUYER'S TIP

Be Careful With Sale Items

Remember that these were once — or maybe still are — someone's treasured items. Take that into account when you're negotiating for better prices or browsing the tables. Be careful with items for sale and never call it junk or demean the very thing you want to take home.

AD SPACE