

10 Simple Steps to Spring Clean your Home

By Kat Tate

Spring has sprung! The flowers are in bloom and the days are longer as they stretch lazily towards summer. Representing re-birth, spring is a great time for us to give our homes a shake up and cut the clutter in time for summer.

De-cluttering is a great mood booster – it can improve your health, your mind and your relationships with those you live with.

Often when we have a lot of clutter, it can seem like a daunting process to go everything and get it in order. Particularly if you are living in a house share and need the cooperation of others to sort your stuff. However, the results are worth it!

Just follow these simple steps to de-clutter your home this spring:

1. Enlist the support of family/house hold members to get stuck into the work with you. It's important that those you live with are fully supportive of your organising efforts.
2. Start in any space. Grab five bin bags or boxes and label them Keep, Toss, Donate, Sell or Move.
3. Go through the space and place every item you touch into one of these bags. If you have used it in the past 12 months, and if it functions properly or looks beautiful, place it in the **Keep** bag. If it doesn't make you feel good about yourself, is broken or doesn't fit, place it in the **Toss** bag. If you come across items that you no longer need or want, but which are in good quality, place these in the **Donate** bag, ready to take down to your local charity shop. Any items you'd like to sell should go in the **Sell** bag – just make sure you schedule a set time in your calendar to take these to the second hand shop or sell on eBay. Lastly, if you come across items in the space which belong in another room, place these in the **Move** bag and later put them in their rightful home.
4. Be ruthless! If you're unsure about an item, think about how the item makes you feel. If you love it, keep it. If not, let it go. Skinny jeans that hold regrets should immediately be chucked! Celebrate who you are now, not who you used to be.
5. Take the **Toss** bag to the outside bin. Place the **Donate** bag in your car, ready to take to your local charity shop.
6. **Categorise.** With the **Keep** items, clear a space on the floor and place items in categories of like with like. For example, if you're de-cluttering your wardrobe, you would clear a space on the floor and place all shoes in a pile, all shirts together and all skirts together.
7. **Containerise.** Have a hunt around the home for storage containers such as Tupperware containers that have lost their lids, shoe boxes and other storage items. Place each pile of items into the containers. By doing this, you are giving items a permanent home, which makes it really easy for all household members to put items back where they belong.
8. **Label.** Grab a labeller or some sticky labels and a pen to label each container. This makes it easy to see what you have on a shelf without having to go through each container. It also makes it super easy for the little ones to put items back in their right place.

9. **Teach.** Show all members of the household where items now belong and encourage them to follow the system.
10. **Maintain.** Each day, spend just 5-10 minutes putting items back in their place to ensure you newly organised space stays tidy and ordered.

Happy Spring Cleaning!

For hands-on help and tips for de-cluttering your space, visit www.katandkaboodle.com.au

Author bio

Kat Tate – De-clutter Queen

Director of Kat & Kaboodle professional organisers. Member and Online Editor for the Australasian Association of Professional Organisers (AAPO).

Kat Tate has always loved helping others to get organised and live more simple, peaceful lives. With her Sydney-based business Kat & Kaboodle, she helps 'busy bodies and clutter queens' to get organised in home, office and life, so they have more time to do the things they love.

She offers oodles of organising tips and tricks in regular media interviews, on her website and through the monthly e-goss *In the Box*, as well as in her blog *Confessions of a De-clutter Queen*.

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