

Control stuff by sorting, giving away what you don't need

Q: I have so much stuff in my house that I do not know what I have anymore. It is hard for me to part with things. How do I get rid of stuff?

DOMESTIC PLANNER



DIANA KOENIG

A regular household purge will cleanse your house from too much clutter. Clutter usually causes house chaos.

How do you decide what to keep and what to get rid of? Ask yourself the following questions: Do I need it? Do I use it? Do I love it? If you answer no to each of these three questions you can certainly say good-bye to those items.

Some items that people save are keepsakes and have sentimental value. These are the items we love and cherish. There are other items we need such as a toothbrush or a can opener. Items like these can be replaced if they break or wear out.

There are a lot of items that we have an abundance of. On one occasion I was helping someone organize her kitchen. We were removing items from one cabinet that contained

cookie trays, pie pans, cake pans, and cooling racks. The items were crammed beyond capacity making it difficult to remove or replace them. I counted at least eight cookie trays. She said she rarely baked and did not realize she had so many cookie trays. I asked her how many she used and she replied one or two. We kept four of the best ones and donated the other four. I informed her if she ever needed more, it was an inexpensive item to buy. This gave her more space in the cabinet that made it more convenient to access the items she used on a regular basis.

Another way we accumulate 'stuff' is through our goal to be thrifty. I used to make crafts such as: cross-stitch,

quilted and sewing projects, painted sweatshirts, floral arrangements, and woodcrafts. I collected supplies from store sales and garage sales. I had an abundance of patterns, paints, material, batting, buttons, silk flowers, ribbons, thread, yarn, etc.

Many years ago, I traded craft hobbies for photo scrapbooking. For over seven years I had not used most of these items, but kept them in case I needed them in the future. I finally packed most items in a box and gave them to a friend who makes a living selling crafts. I contributed to her business and cleared a shelf in my storage area.

Furniture that you are not using but have kept will rapidly invade your storage space.

If you do not have a plan for furniture, donate it to an organization. We saved our children's baby bed and dresser. The dresser was used by each of our children when they were babies. Now it is used in the basement to store off-season clothing. We are saving the baby bed for grandchildren, so this item has a future purpose.

Occasionally, you may end up the proud owner of a family heirloom that does not fit with your taste or décor. It may also require more repair work than you are willing to invest. Do not donate this item until you have offered it to other family members first.

You may need help deciding on what to keep and what to save. Invite a friend to help

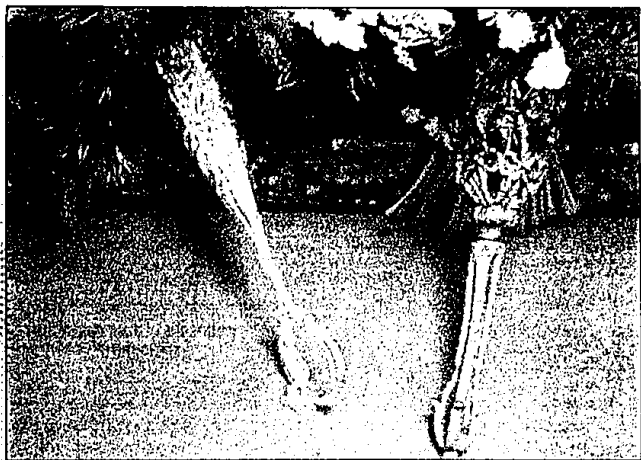
you with the purging process. As you purge, organize the remaining items by putting like things together in labeled containers. When the job is complete have a cup of tea and relax as you assume the title of 'Organized Queen' or 'Pack Rat'.

Today's Refrigerator is Letting:

"Most items are replaced so share your stuff with someone else!"

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Marketplace



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