

Clever Girl Organizing's Top Tips for Decluttering, Getting and Staying Organized



1. When tackling a room or a big job, **start with the right tools**. Set up bins, boxes and bags for final destinations: Donate, Trash, Recycle, Shred, Goes Somewhere Else.
2. Don't know where to start? **Pick one small zone**: one shelf, one drawer, one pile. Start and finish before moving on or getting distracted by a different zone.
3. Make sure **everything you own has a home**. Items that don't end up floating from surface to pile to drawer, never found when you need it, and always in your way when you don't.
4. **Always keep a Donate box** established somewhere in the house. Reviewing your wardrobe regularly (every month, glance at your closet or your drawers to see what you really don't wear any more) and committing to dropping off donations when the box gets full, makes decluttering less of a project, and more of an ongoing system.
5. Need to get a lot done, but short on time? **Set a timer** on your phone or in your kitchen for 20 minutes, and attack a pile or a trouble area. When you limit your time to something that seems realistic, and really focus, you'll be surprised how much you can get done!
6. **Create and use checklists** for your home – grocery shopping, packing lists,, etc. These can be on paper or through apps that you can share with other members of your household.
7. Manage your paper mail every day. **Sort mail as soon as it enters your house**, and immediately recycle or shred items that you don't need to keep. Sign up for services to help remove junk mail and catalogs. Subscribe to services like Paper Karma or Catalog Choice to help minimize the paper mail you get.
8. Get a handle on your nostalgia – **put limits on the amount of your precious storage space** and real estate for the items that you hold onto for the memories. Think about how to best prioritize the items that mean the most to you, and consider letting go to the less important items. (*"If I were to lose this item tomorrow, how would it truly impact my life?"*)
9. **Keep an Errand box handy**, in an area you see every day, like where you put your keys. This works for library returns, packages to be mailed, items to be given back to friends, etc. Put your "don't forget to do this tomorrow" items on the passenger seat of your car.
10. Email clutter can be just as bad as mail clutter. **Get less email with one click** -- Check out services like Unroll Me or Sanebox to help with unsubscribing to mailing lists.

Tired of living with chaos, but just don't know where to start?

Call Clever Girl Organizing for a free consultation!

Kathy@clevergirlorganizing or 617-383-9896

Got Stuff?

Bring your extra stuff to...

Melrose 3rd Annual Swap Day

Saturday, Sept 26th

8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Parking lot behind City Hall, 562 Main St

For a list of acceptable items,

visit: melrecyclingcommittee.wordpress.com



Have to miss Swap Day?

Attend these other local events, participate in local networks, or consider donating to the following organizations. Make sure to call each organization or check its website for a list of acceptable items.

Local Events and Networks:

- **City Wide Yard Sale** – Saturday, September 19th
Visit cityofmelrose.org/departments/council-on-aging for more information
- **Paper Shredding** - Saturday, September 19th, 8am-12pm, 72 Tremont St
- **Household Hazardous Waste Day** – Saturday, October 24th, 8am-12pm, 72 Tremont St; Safely dispose of unused chemicals, paints, and other hazardous waste
- **Melrose Freecycle** - <https://groups.freecycle.org/group/MelroseMA/description>
Give your reusable stuff away for free in your own town!

Organizations:

Epilepsy Foundation – (888) 322-8209; <http://www.donateneuengland.com/>

Vietnam Vets Association – (800) 775-VETS; <http://www.scheduleapickup.com/>

Mission of Deeds – 6 Chapin Rd, Reading; (781) 944-9797; info@missionofdeeds.org

Savers - 1160 Broadway, Saugus; (781) 231-1232
<http://stores.savers.com/ma/saugus/thrift-stores-saugus-ma-1211.html>

Morgan Memorial Goodwill

Two nearby locations:

- 230 Elm St, Somerville (Davis Sq); (617) 628-3618
- 520 Mass Ave, Cambridge (Central Sq); (617) 868-6330

What to donate: <http://www.goodwillmass.org/donations/what-to-donate.html>

Salvation Army - 253 Broadway, Saugus; salvationarmyusa.org

Big Brother Big Sister Foundation - (800) 483-5503; bbbsfoundation.org