

CLEAN MAMA'S

THE CLUTTER HANDBOOK

FOR A CLUTTER-FREE HOME



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The Basis for Clutter

✧ PART ONE ✧

If you're drowning in clutter, sick of dealing with it, or somewhere in between, I am here to tell you that you can live in a clutter-free home.

LOOKING FOR MORE TIPS & TRICKS? VISIT CLEANMAMA.COM!

The Basis for Clutter

Surfaces don't have to be filled, you can create white space, and you can come home at the end of a long day and feel relaxed as you enter your home.

Inviting people into your home will no longer be a stressful situation. The piles don't have to stay on your counters, you can find your clothes quickly, and you'll be able to locate and you'll gain time and energy as you go about your life. Clutter takes hold in our lives and just plain makes life a little harder than it needs to be.

Everyone has clutter or the potential of clutter. This guide will give you a simple approach and steps to eliminate it once and for all. You won't need to read through a book to get started. Start right away on the next page and you'll be off and decluttering right away.

THE CLUTTER HANDBOOK IS A STEP-BY-STEP MANUAL FOR DECLUTTERING YOUR HOME.

I've simplified my own personal decluttering method into an approachable system perfect for busy households and people with a time budget. Let's face it – if you don't have time, that might be why your home is cluttered in the first place. You might have piles and stacks of stuff that's been waiting for you to sort through for years or maybe it's just piled up in the last weeks or months during a particularly busy season of life. Whatever your current state of clutter is, you're going to get to the bottom of it and get rid of it for good.

HOW THE CLUTTER HANDBOOK HELPS YOU FIND SUCCESS DECLUTTERING:

1

LEARN to declutter in a way that makes sense for your schedule, home and current clutter situation.

2

SET UP SYSTEMS to effectively deal with your existing clutter.

3

LEARN how to navigate incoming clutter.

4

DEAL with clutter daily so it never piles up again.

Find Your Reason

Make this time different.
Make small changes.
Give yourself grace.
Keep going.

We all start out excited + then it's hard to make those changes and the changes fall by the wayside and it's back to our old habits. This time is different – prepare yourself for a life-changing whole house declutter. Are you ready?

But before you start, I want you to find YOUR reason to declutter. Why is this important and necessary? Recognizing WHY you need this exercise in getting rid of stuff is just as important as doing the decluttering itself. Focus on why you want this and you'll be more likely to continue the process when it gets tedious and boring and you're just kind of sick of it.

CLUTTER IS SOMETHING THAT'S ON MY TO-DO LIST EVERY SINGLE DAY.

Why? I have to deal with it daily so it doesn't take over. While I might have a handful of reasons to declutter in the first place, the reality of too much clutter and how it makes me feel is reason enough to prioritize it as a daily task. That to me is the secret to keeping clutter away for good.

In case you aren't sure of your reason to declutter, you'll find a couple well-known reasons to declutter on the next page. These will help to get you started in the process of finding your own reason.

WHEN WILL YOU COMPLETE YOUR DECLUTTERING?

Once you are on board with doing the process of decluttering, the next step is deciding when you will complete your decluttering. You probably know why you haven't committed to decluttering in the past, so let's circumvent those obstacles and write down a plan. Realistically, 30 days is probably an average completion period for a mostly decluttered home. This is taking time daily to work on clutter and really committing to the process. It's possible to get it done in a shorter period of time as well or it might take you longer. Give yourself a goal and work towards it to the best of your ability. Involve anyone and everyone and work at it as much as possible and you'll make quick progress and see and feel amazing results right away.

THE BASIS FOR CLUTTER

Clutter Goals & Timeline

Let's take some time to plan this out and decide WHY you need or want to declutter. Determining your why is important and critical to the success of your decluttering.

What are your top three reasons to declutter? Are you just sick of the mess or do you want to sell some items you don't use anymore? Maybe you are moving soon and you know that an uncluttered home sells faster.

Jot down your top three reasons here and get motivated to make some real changes.

REASON #1

REASON #2

REASON #3

WHEN WILL YOU COMPLETE YOUR DECLUTTERING?

TIMEFRAME – How long do you want this to take? Think realistically but challenge yourself to complete the decluttering as quickly as you can so you don't lose your momentum. What's your goal?

WHEN – When will you work on your decluttering? Mornings, evenings, over a weekend?

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE TO DO THE HARD WORK OF DECLUTTERING?

Are there any adjustments that need to be made to put an end to the clutter? A shopping freeze or getting others involved – take note of any changes here:



Getting Started

↳ PART TWO ↳

Now that you've figured out why and when you will declutter, the hardest part of decluttering is just getting started.

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Getting Started

Once you get started I hope you find that it gets easier and easier with each bag you fill.

The decluttering process can be difficult because it takes time and it's hard to go back through things and relive memories as you decide what you're going to keep and what you're going to toss. Instead of getting caught up in memorabilia, you're going to start with a whole house quick declutter. This isn't a comprehensive declutter, this is simply a way to get a little momentum going as you get started.

Set a timer for 10-15 minutes, grab 3 garbage bags and try to fill them up with things that you can toss or donate. You'll see that this quick declutter is also listed on the main **DECLUTTER CHECKLIST** in Part 6. Print out the checklist, do a quick whole house declutter, check off each task and keep decluttering as quickly as you can.

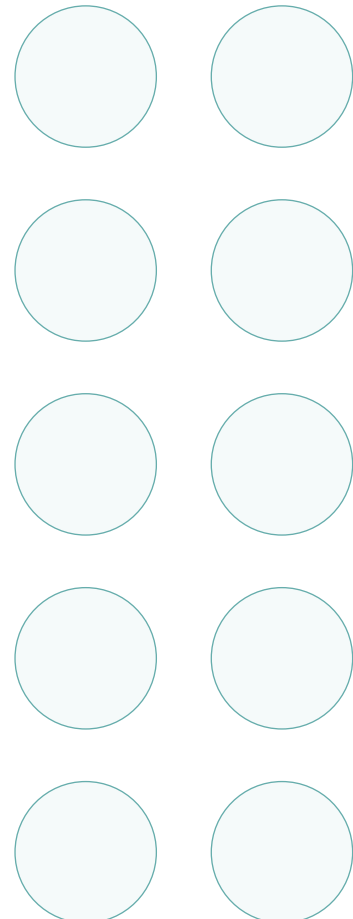
NEED SOME HELP GETTING STARTED?

I've put together a little list of 50 things you can toss or donate today on the next page to get you thinking about **WHAT** and **WHERE** you can declutter. Once you've gained a little momentum and filled up 3 bags, you'll be ready for more decluttering.

✧✧✧ *You got this!*

QUICK START: WHOLE HOUSE QUICK DECLUTTER

Once you've filled up a bag, put an **X** through a circle on the bag checklist in the checklist section of this guide – it'll be fun to see on paper how many bags and boxes you've gotten rid of once you're done decluttering your home.



GETTING STARTED

50 Things You Can Toss or Donate Today

old magazines	old paint + stain
CD cases	expired coupons + gift certificates
unused electronics	costume jewelry
duplicate photos	holiday decorations no longer used
old negatives + film cartridges	unused hangers
charger/chargers that don't have a device	unused pots + pans
cords that you don't know where they go	unused or duplicate small appliances
books you haven't opened in over a year	kitchen glassware that isn't being used
old makeup	kitchen dishes that aren't being used
old toiletries	jars that you've saved + haven't used
old nail polish	water bottles that are past their prime
tattered towels	herbs + spices past their prime
worn sheets	storage lids/containers with no match
old cleaning supplies	expired food + canned goods
old bags + purses	plastic shopping bags
art supplies that aren't being used	manuals to items you no longer own
toys with missing parts	items you have duplicates of
toys that aren't being played with	junk mail
kids' clothes with holes or visible wear	holiday decorations
games + puzzles with missing pieces	phone books
shoes you no longer wear	unusable gift bags + tissue paper
worn clothing	old calendars + planners
socks with holes	old notebooks
dry cleaning hangers	unfinished projects
undergarments that have lost elasticity	greeting cards



The Declutter Process

✧ PART THREE ✧

This declutter process will not only keep you on task, but it will also ensure that you move as quickly as possible through the mess and get to the other side with a simple and decluttered space.

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The Declutter Process

Anytime you start decluttering, follow this process.

Start by making a declutter station with boxes or bins or garbage bags that are labeled and ready to accept items. Don't buy anything for this, use what you have on hand and get started right away. Print out the four category labels in Part 6 to help guide you through the declutter process.

Decluttering can be a complicated process and it most definitely won't be done overnight – give yourself grace and time to work through the process.

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

- **MAKE 4 CATEGORIES:** keep, toss, relocate, donate - use a box, basket, bag, bin to contain them while you're decluttering. Once you have your clutter station set up with your categories, you're ready to get started decluttering your home.
- **COMPLETELY EMPTY THE SPACE** regardless of if it's a box, a closet, an entire room, or a drawer, remove everything in the space **FIRST**. Put the items on the floor, a bed, a table...quickly move them out of the space so you can get started.
- **THINK QUICKLY** as you sort through your items. Think about the space you have and what you want it to look like when you're done. Do you really need x, y, z to move forward in life or can you let it go?
- **PUT EVERYTHING INTO YOUR CATEGORIES** - keep, toss, relocate, donate – put away any items that were in the keep pile, toss what can be tossed, relocate what can be relocated, and put the donate items in a bin or bag for a trip to your favorite donation center.
- **WIPE DOWN** any surfaces and vacuum if necessary.
- **ARRANGE ITEMS** in a way that makes sense for your home and space and admire your transformation!

NOTES:

THE DECLUTTER PROCESS

Declutter Quick Start

Decluttering can be a complicated process and it most definitely won't be done overnight – give yourself grace and time to work through the process.

To avoid the overwhelm that comes with decluttering, you'll notice that I use a very specific declutter order. I recommend following it as closely as you can. The order will help you declutter in the simplest and most effective way. Just follow along with the list below and/or the checklist in Part 6 you'll be moving along in no time! Work your way through the list with one item a day or for a specified time – use the list in a way that makes sense for you and your schedule.

You'll also find a weekly and monthly declutter calendar in Part 6 – use these if you feel like you need to get that plan on paper for the week or month. If productivity is your love language, you'll love using these calendars!

NOTES: _____

DECLUTTER QUICK START TASKS

Start with the 7 declutter tasks on the following page – they're designed to get you started quickly and with ease. I recommend starting with one task a day as you're getting in the groove, but feel free to move at a quicker or slower pace as you get started.

These 7 tasks will help quick start the decluttering process in a realistic and doable way.

ONCE YOU'VE COMPLETED THE QUICK START:

You're ready to move on to more specific and targeted decluttering. This will take you through your entire home – take the time you need to make it through the list but try not to drag it out too long. Make progress and move quickly through the list and no matter what, keep going and don't forget to mark your clutter progress on The Clutter Checklist!

THE DECLUTTER PROCESS

Declutter Quick Start



WHOLE HOUSE QUICK DECLUTTER You might have already done this, do it again quickly or move on to the floor declutter. Start by setting a timer for 10-30 minutes and see how much stuff you can find and get rid of – aim for 3 bags. Toss, donate or sell your findings – this should be stuff you can get out of the house as quickly as possible.



FLOOR DECLUTTER Set a timer for 10-30 minutes and gather everything that you can remove from the floors. This might be clothing, bins, trash, anything that doesn't belong on the floor. Quickly remove it and put it where it belongs or get rid of it.



SURFACE DECLUTTER Set a timer for 10-30 minutes and see how much stuff you can find and get clear from surfaces. If you feel overwhelmed, pick one surface and completely clear it (coffee table, kitchen table, kitchen counters, desk, etc.). Taking that visual noise out of the equation makes a huge difference! Once you've cleared one surface, wipe it clean and leave that surface empty for a bit before you put anything back.



SORT PAPER PILES If you have more than one, start with the worst offender and go from there. When sorting paper piles you will have 3 categories: toss/recycle, file, and shred. Print out the three category labels in Part 6 to help guide you through the paper declutter process.



SHRED PAPERS Shred those papers from your paper piles. If you don't have a shredder, call your local bank or community center to see when they have a shredding day and save your confidential papers for that time.



FILE PAPERWORK File paperwork from your sorting the last couple days. Don't get bogged down with the process of setting up a filing system if you don't one yet. Start with an in and out basket or a paid and not paid basket or bin. A plan for paper will come later in the handbook and you'll have plenty of time to work on it then.



SORT MAIL DAILY Start with today's mail and sort it as soon as it comes in. Going forward, continue with this simple habit and you'll find that paper clutter will be at a minimum.

THE DECLUTTER PROCESS

Declutter Quick Start Checklist

Use this checklist to keep track of what you are decluttering or what your goals are during the Declutter Quick Start.

WHOLE HOUSE QUICK DECLUTTER	✓

FLOOR & SURFACE DECLUTTER	✓

SORT PAPER PILES	✓

SHRED PAPERS	✓

FILE PAPERWORK	✓

SORT MAIL DAILY	✓

THE DECLUTTER PROCESS

Declutter Order

Follow this order for decluttering your home – complete it in a way that makes sense for your schedule. Some recommendations: one task a day, set a timer for 10-15 minutes, or 2-3 tasks a day until completed. This order matters because it will take you through the house in a logical, sequential, and efficient way. Use the checklist in Part 6 to keep you on track.

CLEANING	LAUNDRY AREA	KITCHEN	BATHROOM(S)
<input type="radio"/> cleaning supplies	<input type="radio"/> fold + put away clothes	<input type="radio"/> clean + clear counters	<input type="radio"/> clean + clear counters
<input type="radio"/> cleaning tools – scrub, brushes, sponges, rags	<input type="radio"/> laundry baskets	<input type="radio"/> refrigerator + freezer	<input type="radio"/> cabinets + drawers
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> laundry products	<input type="radio"/> cabinets, drawers, pantry, food storage	<input type="radio"/> medicine cabinet
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> clean + clear surfaces	<input type="radio"/> kitchen tools, small appliances + towels	<input type="radio"/> toiletries + makeup
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> under kitchen sink	<input type="radio"/> bath towels, hand towels, wash clothes
CLOTHING	BEDROOM(S)	ENTERTAINMENT	KIDS
<input type="radio"/> shoes	<input type="radio"/> declutter floors	<input type="radio"/> magazines	<input type="radio"/> clothing
<input type="radio"/> outerwear – coats, hats, gloves, etc.	<input type="radio"/> under beds	<input type="radio"/> music –digital and/or CDs, tapes, records	<input type="radio"/> toys
<input type="radio"/> clothing – sort by season + type	<input type="radio"/> sheets + linens	<input type="radio"/> games –board games, card games	<input type="radio"/> books
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> pillows	<input type="radio"/> books – cookbooks, non-fiction, fiction	<input type="radio"/> activities
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> bedside tables	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> art + craft supplies
OFFICE SPACE	PAPER CLUTTER	DIGITAL CLUTTER	GARAGE/BASEMENT
<input type="radio"/> electronics	<input type="radio"/> paper pile	<input type="radio"/> zero out email inbox	<input type="radio"/> vehicle(s)
<input type="radio"/> office supplies	<input type="radio"/> bills	<input type="radio"/> set up email folders to save emails	<input type="radio"/> tool storage
<input type="radio"/> books	<input type="radio"/> photographs	<input type="radio"/> put important digital documents in folders	<input type="radio"/> boxes + bins with additional storage items
<input type="radio"/> paper + files	<input type="radio"/> memorabilia	<input type="radio"/> separate photos by year + store in cloud storage	<input type="radio"/> lawn + garden supplies
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> kids art + school work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

THE DECLUTTER PROCESS

Clutter Task Checklists

Use this space to break down decluttering tasks into manageable steps. You'll find a blank Clutter Task Checklist in Part 6 – use it for your difficult to declutter areas or areas that you feel need more thought.

MASTER BEDROOM CLOSET	✓
remove / declutter clothes	
empty + wipe down shelves	
return clothes, arrange by season/type	
return shoes + other items on shelves	
vacuum	
bring donate bags to shelter	

PANTRY & FOOD STORAGE	✓
remove food + sort/purge	
wipe down shelves	
group like items – baking vs. cooking	
label shelves + jars	
return items to shelves	
organize items in a sensible way	

NOTES: _____



Put an End to Paper Clutter

✧ PART FOUR ✧

Cut out as much paper as possible and be ruthless about excess paper in the house BUT have a well thought out plan for paper in place.

LOOKING FOR MORE TIPS & TRICKS? VISIT [CLEANMAMA.COM!](https://www.cleanmama.com)

Put An End *to* Paper Clutter

I'm a paper person and a list-maker.

I love using a paper planner, a home-keeping binder, a wall calendar, writing hand-written notes and cards.... I tend to err on the side of more paper than less, but I loathe paper clutter. There's a difference!

If you want to go completely paperless, go for it! I tend to be more of a paperless person. Cut out as much paper as possible and be ruthless about excess paper in the house BUT have a well thought out plan for paper in place.

I CALL THIS PAPER-LESS - LESS PAPER WITH WELL-DESIGNED SYSTEMS IN PLACE.

NOTES: _____

HOW TO GO PAPERLESS:

1. **SCAN** anything that can be saved digitally
2. **SHRED PAPER** that doesn't need to be saved weekly or monthly
3. **SWITCH TO ELECTRONIC** bank statements and bills
4. **OPEN MAIL** when you receive it and open it over the recycling bin
5. **PROCESS** opened mail immediately – use 2 baskets to process things to deal with now / things to deal with later
6. **OPT OUT** of junk mail
7. **KIDS ART WORK** - save the best or things that have special meaning – I save everything with their darling little hand-prints
8. **PHOTOS** - save digitally on a photo storage site and print books yearly
9. **MANUALS** - keep in flexible file folder for easy access

PUT AN END TO PAPER CLUTTER

Ways to Eliminate Paper Clutter



DEAL WITH IT DAILY. The #1 secret to keeping paper clutter to a minimum is to deal with it daily. Processing mail, school papers, and any other paper that makes its way into your home right away is the best way to keep it from becoming overwhelming.



GET RID OF UNWANTED MAIL. There's a free app called PaperKarma – just scan your unwanted mail, they contact the sender, and the mail is gone. TrustedID is another company that gets rid of unsolicited magazines and junk mail (for free). If you're sick of getting those pre-screened credit offers you can go to OptOutPreScreen get off that list. Junk mail? Go to www.directmail.com/junk_mail to register your mailing address and to get off any lists.



SCAN IMPORTANT PAPERS. Save them to an external drive or cloud storage. Here's a couple I like: Evernote (a way to digitally remember everything), Neat (digital scanning and cloud storage), Doxide (digital scanning made simple).



SEND CARDS & INVITATIONS DIGITALLY. I love Minted and Paperless Post is for darling cards. I use Minted for Christmas cards and keep our address book in there so they can add it to my cards. When it comes to kids party invitations, I like a quick email invitation with the RSVP included. I do send out handwritten birthday cards to friends and family – I like that little touch of human interaction.



STORE PHOTOS DIGITALLY. I use Amazon Photos, Shutterfly and DropBox, but there are lots of options out there for slimming down the picture stacks. Print a book once every year or two and you'll be on your way to keeping those photos updated. If you're behind, start with the current year and work backwards.



STORE PDFS & PRINTABLES DIGITALLY. I store PDFs in Dropbox too. Set up a folder for each category and you can quickly find any printables you need. With everything stored in the cloud, it can be found on any device. You can use printables paperless with an app like Notability. Use an app to digitally write on your PDFs and you can take your notes with you anywhere. Not only is this a great way to save on the paper trail but it also gives your PDFs portability.

PUT AN END TO PAPER CLUTTER

Ways to Eliminate Paper Clutter Checklist

Use this checklist to keep track of what your paper clutter progress and your goals for getting your paper clutter under control.

DEAL WITH IT DAILY	✓

GET RID OF UNWANTED MAIL	✓

SCAN IMPORTANT PAPERS	✓

SEND CARDS & INVITES DIGITALLY	✓

STORE PHOTOS DIGITALLY	✓

STORE PDFS & PRINTABLES DIGITALLY	✓

PUT AN END TO PAPER CLUTTER

Paper Clutter Checklist

Do you feel like this is a true statement for yourself?

If I didn't have any incoming paper, I probably wouldn't have any clutter issues. I think that many of us probably would have much less of a clutter problem if paper wasn't a variable. That said, paper is something that we all deal with, so let's figure out how to minimize it in our lives quickly and with minimal disruption to our daily systems. I've put together a checklist for you to go through to quickly and easily end your paper clutter. If you are going through *The Clutter Handbook* from the beginning, you have already dealt with a little paper clutter. I hope that has given you a different angle on what it can be like to get rid of the paper piles. Follow along with my paper clutter checklist and you'll find that paper will no longer take over in your home.



HAVE THREE CATEGORIES FOR ALL PAPER:

- 1. **TOSS** - recycle or trash
- 2. **FILE** - put this in a place for safekeeping
- 3. **SHRED** - don't need this and no one else does

SET UP A SIMPLE FILING SYSTEM - CHOOSE WHAT WORKS FOR YOU:

- **IN + OUT BASKETS:** anything that you are processing goes in 'in' and anything that you need to bring or send somewhere goes in 'out'
- **INVITATIONS, SCHOOL / WORK, IN PROCESS:** invitations go in invitations, anything school or work related (permission slips, schedules, etc.) goes in school / work, and anything that's still being dealt with goes in in process
- **BY NAME:** everyone gets their own folder and they deal with what's in it weekly (this is harder to control but can work!)

NOTES:

PUT AN END TO PAPER CLUTTER

Paper Clutter Checklist

Filing System Tips:

- **SET UP A LONG TERM FILING SYSTEM** that works for you and will be easy to maintain going forward. This is where you'll be keeping things like insurance information, tax returns, healthcare, etc. Use a filing cabinet or box and label your files as you set it up. Then set up a time weekly or monthly to quickly file your paperwork.
- **SET UP CATEGORIES** - My suggestion for categories is pretty straightforward - use a different color hanging file for each category. Use this as a guide for your own organization of important documents. You might have more or less categories and files, this is merely a recommendation and starting point.
- **SET UP SUBCATEGORIES** - break down the categories into specific SUBCATEGORIES. I recommend alphabetizing the subcategories but keep each subcategory in line so you can add or take away files and it won't mess up the system. Go to the Filing System Guide in section 6 for more on my recommended categories, subcategories, and set up.

CURRENT PAPER CLUTTER	✓
go through any existing paper piles	
file invites or info that will be needed later in your in process or out folder	
get rid of what magazines, catalogs + newspapers you can	
put important school schedule dates on your calendar + toss papers	
sort bills you haven't dealt with yet	

MEMORABILIA	✓
birthday + holiday cards	
go through photographs	
kids art work + school memories	
old magazines + newspaper clippings	
family pictures, 1-5 years old	
family pictures, 6-10 years old	
family pictures over 10 years old	
yearbooks	
extended family pictures	

PUT AN END TO PAPER CLUTTER

How Long to Keep it for Guidelines

1 MONTH
receipts (non-deductible items)
deposit / ATM slips
reconciled bank statements

1-3 YEARS
checkbook ledgers
paycheck stubs
mortgage statements
insurance records (expired)
charitable contributions
all business + income related documents
proof of deductible purchases
receipts for charitable donations

NOTES + THOUGHTS

AT LEAST 7 YEARS
state + federal income tax returns
w-2 + 1099s
medical bills + statements
contracts
receipts used as tax deductions
canceled checks
mileage records
real estate tax forms + records

FOREVER
birth certificates + passports
marriage / divorce papers
auto titles
mortgages
investment statements
home improvement receipts (for insurance)
wills
medical records
education records
pension + retirement plans
contracts + property agreements



Maintaining a Decluttered Home

✧ PART FIVE ✧

Now that you have decluttered your home,
you know that you don't want to go back
to the cluttered mess that it was.

LOOKING FOR MORE TIPS & TRICKS? VISIT [CLEANMAMA.COM!](https://www.cleanmama.com)

Maintenance Tips

Start here:

1. **WORST CASE SCENARIO**

If your home is cluttered and needs some attention immediately, grab three garbage bags and load them up with things to donate or toss. Still cluttered? Repeat until you can see the floor and you feel less overwhelmed with the current situation. Go through The Clutter Handbook and you'll be on your way to a decluttered home in no time.

2. **BEST CASE SCENARIO**

You've gone through The Clutter Handbook and you simply have a couple scattered things that need to be put away, run around and gather them up in a small laundry basket and put them in their proper places. Enlist help from other members of your family and get it done in a hurry.

3. **SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN**

Grab a garbage bag and fill it up with things to toss or donate. Fill a small laundry basket with things that need to be relocated and put them away.

How to maintain:

1. **TAKE IT OUT, PUT IT AWAY**

Put this simple phrase into practice. Think about it throughout the day and really try to put things away as you take them out or bring them into the house. Teach your kids how to put this into practice as well by enforcing the rule throughout the day. It's amazing what a difference it will make!

2. **CLUTTER**

Take care of it daily. Every single day of the week take a couple minutes to put things away. For kids, a nightly quick cleanup is helpful for putting the habit into practice. If you notice on my cleaning routine, CLUTTER appears daily. That's because it needs to be dealt with on a daily basis.

3. **MAIL**

Mail and paper have a way of multiplying if they aren't dealt with daily. When you bring the mail in, process it. When the kids bring home papers, process them. Don't let the paper pile up or it will take over your counters and kitchen table.

MAINTAINING A DECLUTTERED HOME

Systems to Put in Place

Moving forward, you will need to put some systems in place to keep your home decluttered.

I recommend starting with the following FIVE systems for a decluttered home. Once you have those systems in place and they're working, add more systems slowly. The key to any new system is to make sure that it's filling a void – towels are on the floor in the bathroom because there isn't a hook on the door to hang them up. Put a hook up and you're solving the clutter problem. Kids backpacks are strewn from one end of the mudroom to the next – put a basket in the corner for the backpacks and lunch boxes. Getting rid of clutter is all about finding solutions and showing your family members how to fix the problem themselves. In Part 6, I have a page linked for my favorite systems and products – I hope it helps you get started!

FIVE SYSTEMS TO START WITH FOR A DECLUTTERED HOME:

- command center with family calendar
- filing cabinet – details in Part 4 of this handbook
- place for keys – decorative dish, bowl or hanging system
- small laundry basket for each family member
- donation basket – keep a basket or box in a well-known place for your family to drop anything that can be donated

MORE SYSTEMS TO ADD FOR A DECLUTTERED HOME:

- bathroom hooks – hang bath towels + keep them off the floor
- planner or home-keeping binder – paper or digital
- filing box for kids' important papers + memorabilia
- magazine basket (if you're a magazine 'person' this is a must)
- lunch packing station – keep the supplies in one spot
- caddy under the sink for bathroom cleaning supplies
- container, basket, or bag for reusable shopping or cooler bags
- sink side tray to store hand and dish soap
- tray for laundry detergent and softener
- basket or container for remote controls, box for batteries
- tray or basket for makeup and toiletries / shoes and boots
- charging station for phones and tablets + container for cords that aren't used daily (label them first)
- dish or basket on bedside table for keeping jewelry, lotion, essential oils, books, etc.



Resources and Checklists

✧ PART SIX ✧

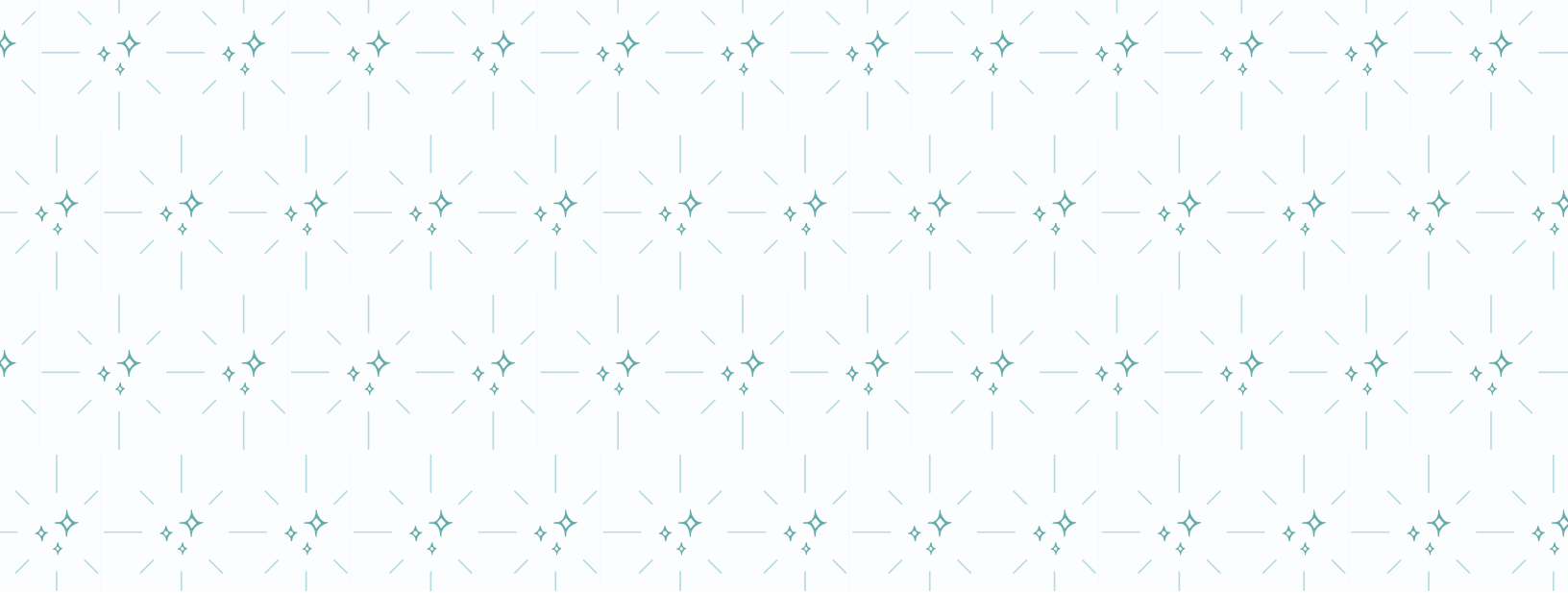
As you declutter your home you should be eliminating things that you no longer use, need, or love. That process is both liberating and exciting, but it can also be extremely difficult. Instead of filling up those empty spaces with more stuff, live with less and enjoy the white space.

LOOKING FOR MORE TIPS & TRICKS? VISIT [CLEANMAMA.COM!](https://www.cleanmama.com)

RESOURCES & CHECKLISTS

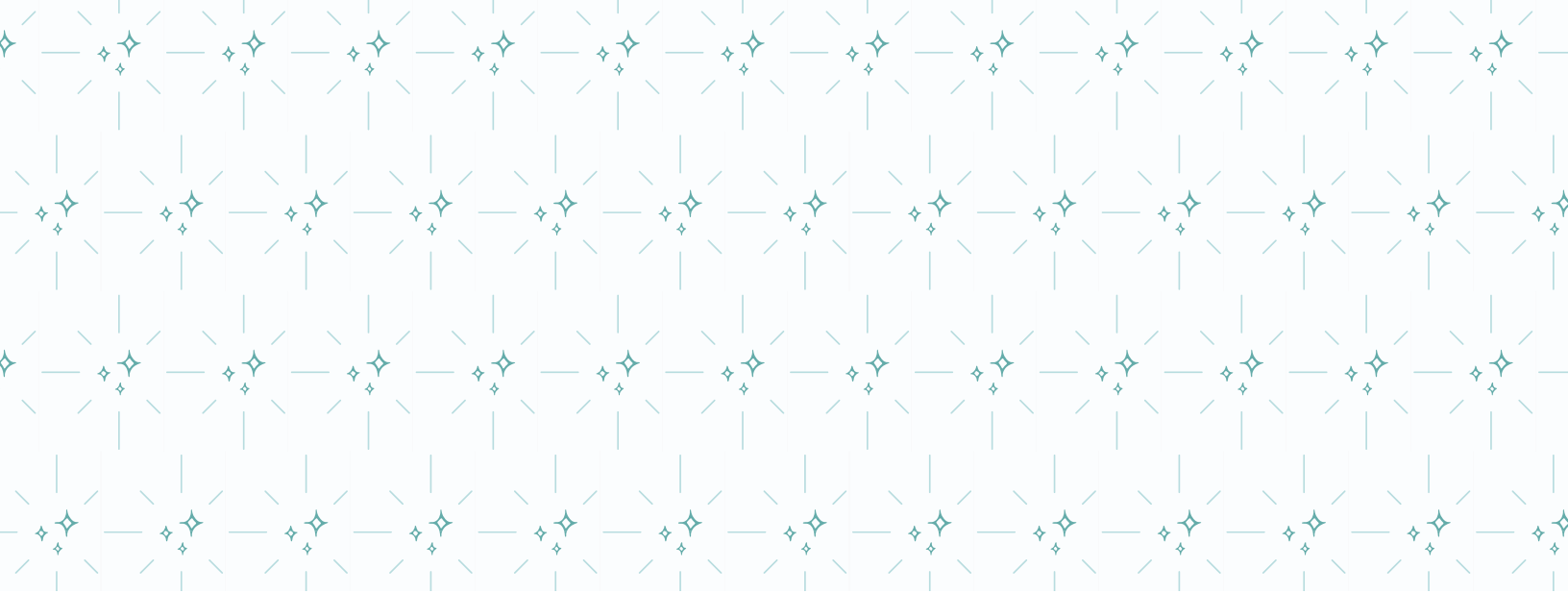
Clutter Checklist

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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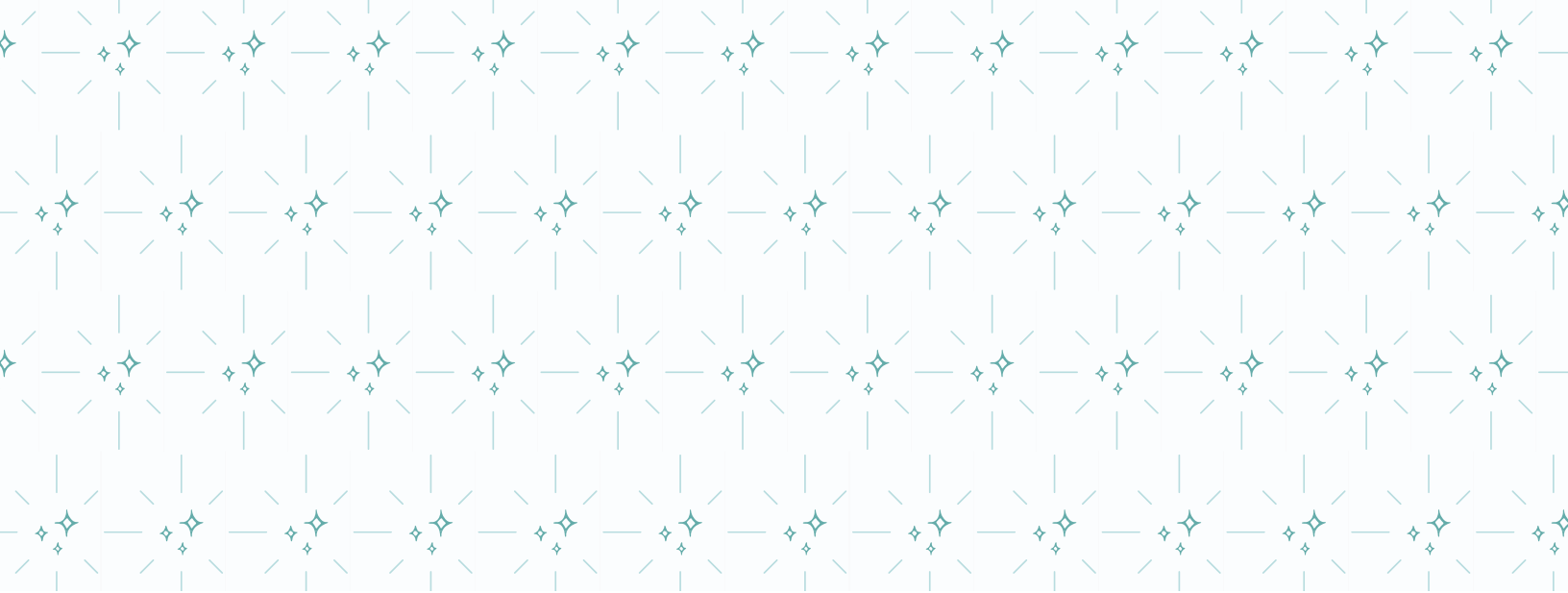
Keep

LOVE IT, USE IT
OR NEED IT



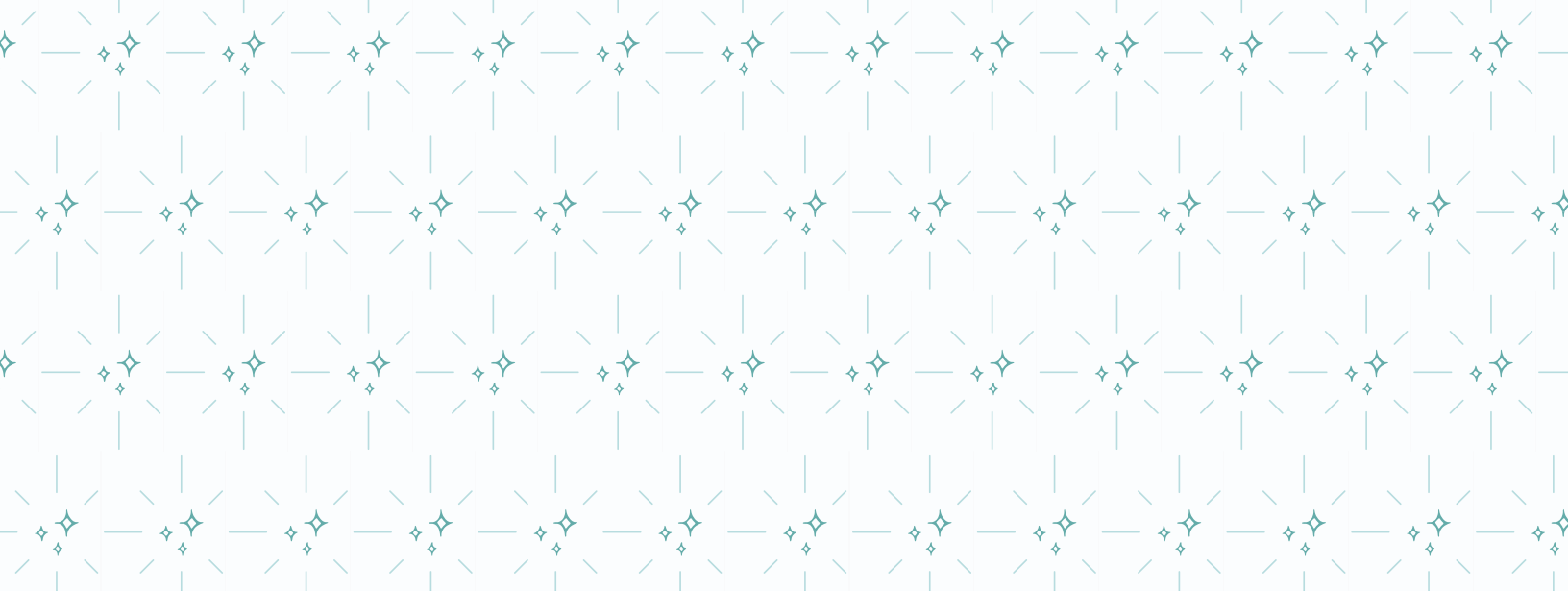
Toss

RECYCLE OR
TRASH



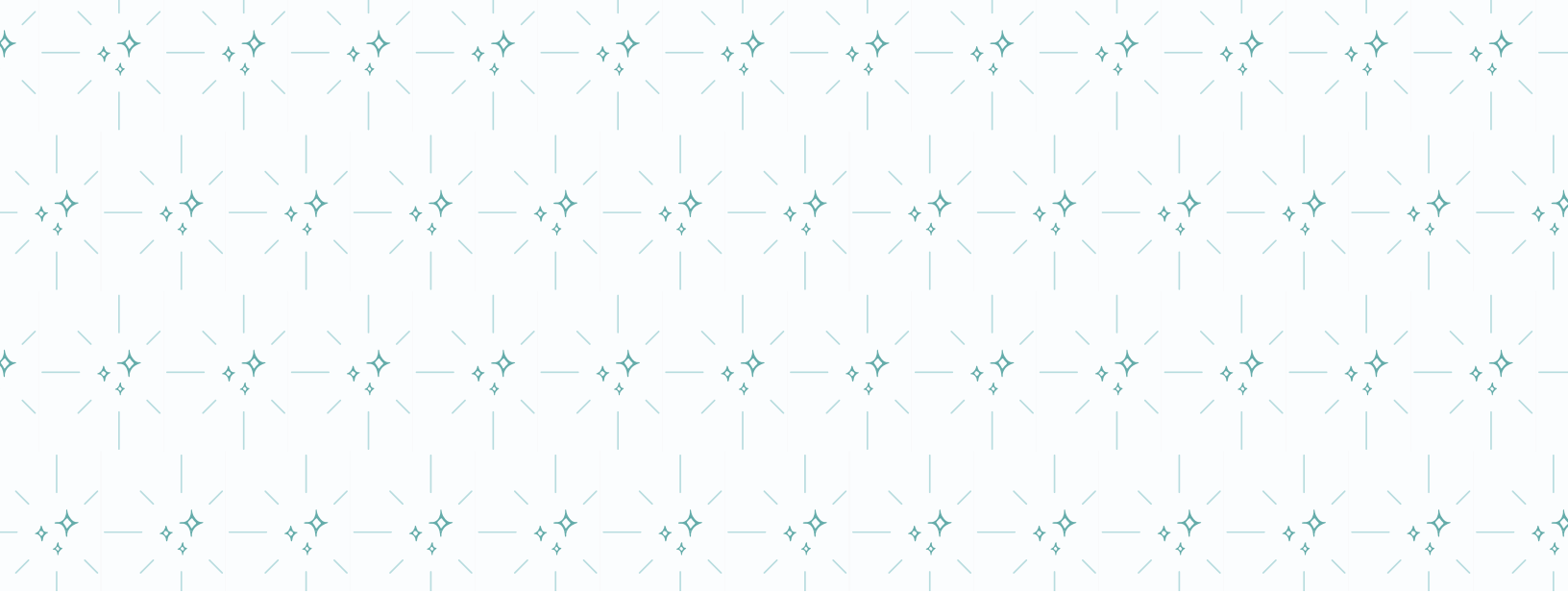
Donate

DON'T LOVE IT, NEED IT
OR USE IT BUT SOMEONE
ELSE COULD



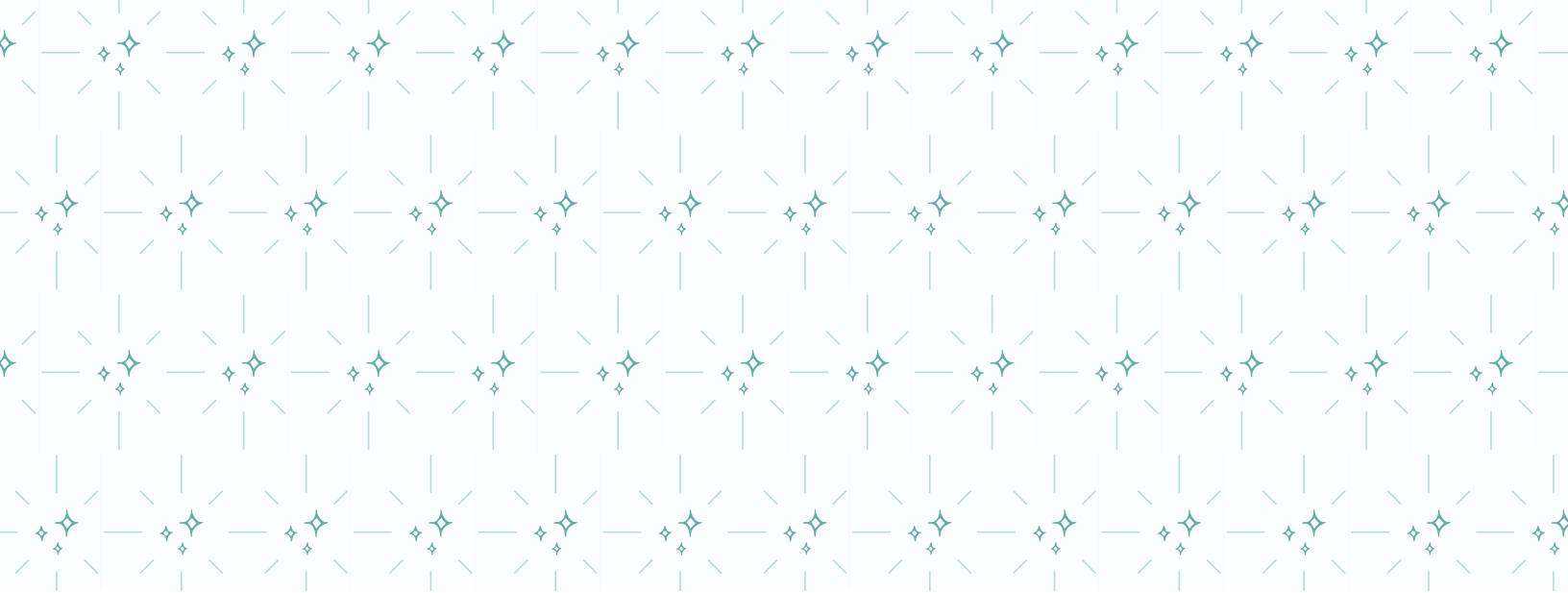
Relocate

STILL LOVE IT, USE IT OR
NEED IT BUT IT DOESN'T
BELONG HERE



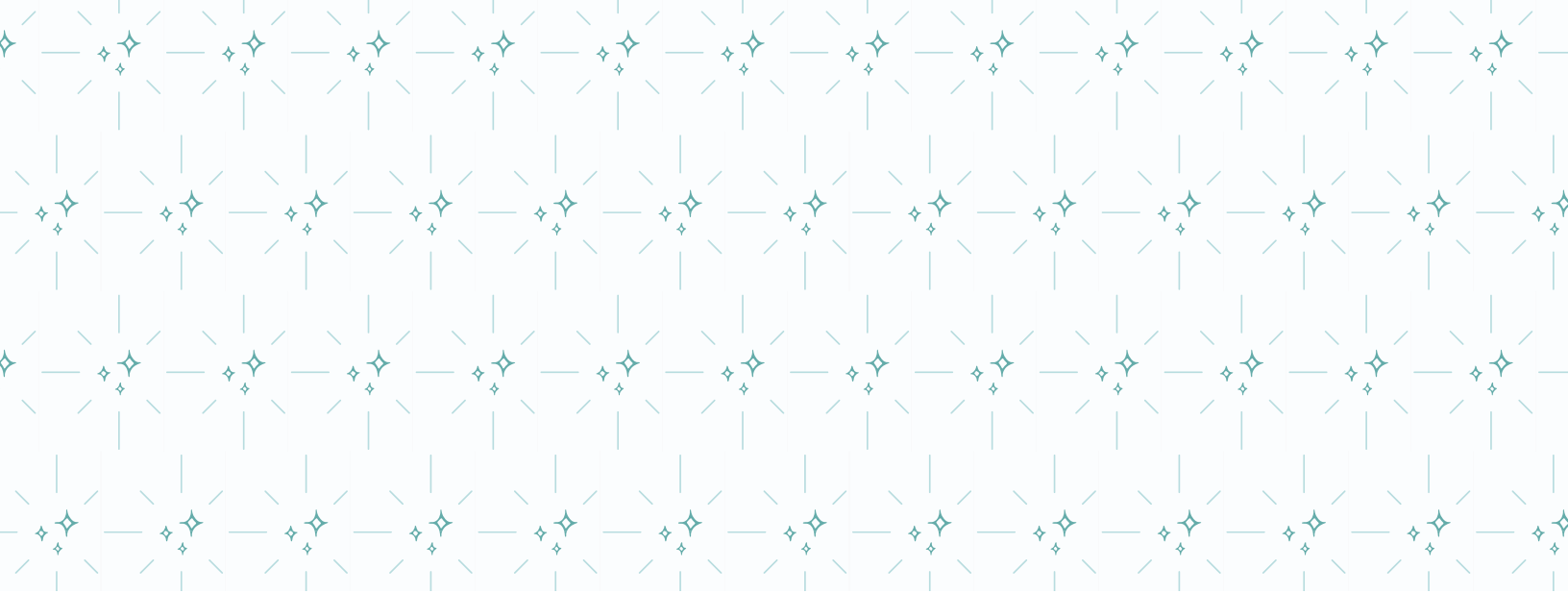
Toss (Paper)

RECYCLE OR
TRASH



File (Paper)

PUT THIS IN A PLACE
FOR SAFEKEEPING



Shred (Paper)

DON'T NEED THIS &
NO ONE ELSE DOES

RESOURCES & CHECKLISTS

Clutter Task Checklists

TASK:	✓

TASK:	✓

TASK:	✓

TASK:	✓

RESOURCES & CHECKLISTS

Declutter Order Checklist

CLEANING	LAUNDRY AREA	KITCHEN	BATHROOM(S)
<input type="checkbox"/> cleaning supplies	<input type="checkbox"/> fold + put away clothes	<input type="checkbox"/> clean + clear counters	<input type="checkbox"/> clean + clear counters
<input type="checkbox"/> cleaning tools – scrub, brushes, sponges, rags	<input type="checkbox"/> laundry baskets	<input type="checkbox"/> refrigerator + freezer	<input type="checkbox"/> cabinets + drawers
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> laundry products	<input type="checkbox"/> cabinets, drawers, pantry, food storage	<input type="checkbox"/> medicine cabinet
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> clean + clear surfaces	<input type="checkbox"/> kitchen tools, small appliances + towels	<input type="checkbox"/> toiletries + makeup
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> under kitchen sink	<input type="checkbox"/> bath towels, hand towels, wash clothes
CLOTHING	BEDROOM(S)	ENTERTAINMENT	KIDS
<input type="checkbox"/> shoes	<input type="checkbox"/> declutter floors	<input type="checkbox"/> magazines	<input type="checkbox"/> clothing
<input type="checkbox"/> outerwear – coats, hats, gloves, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> under beds	<input type="checkbox"/> music –digital and/or CDs, tapes, records	<input type="checkbox"/> toys
<input type="checkbox"/> clothing – sort by season + type	<input type="checkbox"/> sheets + linens	<input type="checkbox"/> games –board games, card games	<input type="checkbox"/> books
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> pillows	<input type="checkbox"/> books – cookbooks, non-fiction, fiction	<input type="checkbox"/> activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> bedside tables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> art + craft supplies
OFFICE SPACE	PAPER CLUTTER	DIGITAL CLUTTER	GARAGE/BASEMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> electronics	<input type="checkbox"/> paper pile	<input type="checkbox"/> zero out email inbox	<input type="checkbox"/> vehicle(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> office supplies	<input type="checkbox"/> bills	<input type="checkbox"/> set up email folders to save emails	<input type="checkbox"/> tool storage
<input type="checkbox"/> books	<input type="checkbox"/> photographs	<input type="checkbox"/> put important digital documents in folders	<input type="checkbox"/> boxes + bins with additional storage items
<input type="checkbox"/> paper + files	<input type="checkbox"/> memorabilia	<input type="checkbox"/> separate photos by year + story in cloud storage	<input type="checkbox"/> lawn + garden supplies
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> kids art + school work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

OTHER ITEMS: _____

Paper Clutter Checklist

Filing System Tips:

- **SET UP A LONG TERM FILING SYSTEM** that works for you and will be easy to maintain going forward. This is where you'll be keeping things like insurance information, tax returns, healthcare, etc. Use a filing cabinet or box and label your files as you set it up. Then set up a time weekly or monthly to quickly file your paperwork.
- **SET UP CATEGORIES** - My suggestion for categories is pretty straightforward - use a different color hanging file for each category. Use this as a guide for your own organization of important documents. You might have more or less categories and files, this is merely a recommendation and starting point.
- **SET UP SUBCATEGORIES** - break down the categories into specific SUBCATEGORIES. I recommend alphabetizing the subcategories but keep each subcategory in line so you can add or take away files and it won't mess up the system. Go to the Filing System Guide in section 6 for more on my recommended categories, subcategories, and set up.

HAVE THREE CATEGORIES FOR ALL PAPER:

- **1. TOSS** - recycle or trash
- **2. FILE** - put this in a place for safekeeping
- **3. SHRED** - don't need this and no one else does

SET UP A SIMPLE FILING SYSTEM - CHOOSE WHAT WORKS FOR YOU:

- **IN + OUT BASKETS:** anything that you are processing goes in 'in' and anything that you need to bring or send somewhere goes in 'out'
- **INVITATIONS, SCHOOL / WORK, IN PROCESS:** invitations go in invitations, anything school or work related (permission slips, schedules, etc.) goes in school / work, and anything that's still being dealt with goes in in process
- **BY NAME:** everyone gets their own folder and they deal with what's in it weekly (this is harder to control but can work!)

RESOURCES & CHECKLISTS

Paper Clutter Checklist

CURRENT PAPER CLUTTER	✓
go through any existing paper piles	
file invites or info that will be needed later in your in process or out folder	
get rid of what magazines, catalogs + newspapers you can	
put important school schedule dates on your calendar + toss papers	
sort bills you haven't dealt with yet	

OTHER	✓


MEMORABILIA	✓
birthday + holiday cards	
go through photographs	
kids art work + school memories	
old magazines + newspaper clippings	
family pictures, 1-5 years old	
family pictures, 6-10 years old	
family pictures over 10 years old	
yearbooks	
extended family pictures	

OTHER	✓

RESOURCES & CHECKLISTS

Weekly Clutter Calender

WEEK OF:

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
6am							
7am							
8am							
9am							
10am							
11am							
Noon							
1pm							
2pm							
3pm							
4pm							
5pm							
6pm							
7pm							
8pm							
9pm							
10pm							

Monthly Clutter Calender

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

NOTES: _____

RESOURCES & CHECKLISTS

Filing System Guide

MAIN CATEGORIES

- MONEY
- TAXES
- MEDICAL
- INSURANCE
- HOME
- AUTO
- BUSINESS

MONEY SUBCATEGORIES

- **JANUARY - DECEMBER:** separate file for each month for the year
- **BANK ACCOUNT:** bank name (separate file for each account)
- **CREDIT CARD:** credit card name (separate file for each account)
- **LOAN:** loan name (separate file for each account)
- **PAID OFF:** any bill, loan or credit card that is paid off in full for the current year

TAXES SUBCATEGORIES

- **PAYSTUBS:** person (separate file for each account)
- **RETIREMENT:** person (separate file for each account)
- **TAX:** one for deductions, donations and expenses
- **TAX RETURN:** current year, separate folder for each year

MEDICAL SUBCATEGORIES

- **FAMILY:** one for each family member
- **MEDICAL:** one for dental, prescriptions and vision
- **PAID:** doctors' bills

INSURANCE SUBCATEGORIES

- **INSURANCE:** one for accidents, auto, homeowners, life and personal articles

HOME SUBCATEGORIES

- **HOME:** one for address, improvements, landscaping, mortgage and warranties

AUTO SUBCATEGORIES

- **AUTO:** service and one for each car

BUSINESS SUBCATEGORIES

- **LICENSES:** one for each
- **CONTRACT:** by company name

RESOURCES & CHECKLISTS

Space for Notes

RESOURCES & CHECKLISTS

Blank Checklist

TASK NAME	✓

TASK NAME	✓