

# The Decluttering Roadmap

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A step-by-step guide for older adults to simplify their home with less stress...and more meaning.

Decluttering isn't just about clearing space—it's about honoring what matters most and making future decisions easier. Whether you're preparing to move or simply want to live more comfortably, this roadmap offers a practical, phased approach.

## **Phase 1: Get Mentally Ready**

- Set your intention: Are you downsizing? Reclaiming space? Preparing for the future?
- Start with a positive mindset—this isn't about losing things, it's about gaining peace of mind.
- Choose a realistic timeline. One drawer at a time is perfectly fine.
- Ask a trusted friend, family member, or professional to help if you need support.

## **Phase 2: Start Easy, Build Momentum**

- Begin with 'non-emotional' zones—linen closets, kitchen junk drawers, old paperwork.
- Sort into four bins: Keep, Donate, Discard, Decide Later.
- Focus on progress, not perfection—set a timer for 30–60 minutes per session.
- Celebrate small wins. Every cleared shelf is a victory.

## **Phase 3: Tackle the Sentimental Stuff**

- Take your time with photos, heirlooms, and gifts.
- Ask: Do I still love or use this? Would someone else treasure it more?
- Photograph special items before letting them go.
- Create 'legacy boxes' with a few meaningful items for each family member.

## **Phase 4: Make a Plan for What's Leaving**

- Schedule donation pick-ups with local charities or veterans' groups.
- Contact family members to claim or receive keepsakes.
- Consider hiring a senior move manager for large-scale transitions.
- Label boxes clearly and keep pathways clear for safety.

## **Phase 5: Maintain the Momentum**

- Decluttering is ongoing—do a quick sweep each season.
- Stay clutter-conscious with new purchases: 'One in, one out' rule.
- Share your story—your experience can inspire others.
- Reward yourself with the comfort, freedom, and peace you've created.

**Decluttering is a gift—to yourself and your loved ones. Take it one step at a time, and know you don't have to do it alone. Senior Homeowner Advisors is here with resources, referrals, and a compassionate ear if you need it.**