

# How to Reduce Household Mess and Clutter

## Five Easy Ways to Quickly Tidy and Declutter a Home

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Dealing with long term clutter requires a commitment of both time and energy. Viewed as one task, it can appear too overwhelming and is therefore often put off to be dealt with in the future.

A less intimidating way to reduce clutter is to develop habits that prevent further mess accumulating. The backlog of clutter can then be dealt with on a regular basis until a tidy emerges from beneath the collection of papers, toys, books and magazines, piles of clothing and various other objects that prevent a home from looking its best.

### Clear Flat Surfaces Daily

Flat surfaces such as countertops, tabletops and sideboards act as magnets for clutter. Newsletters, books, magazines, coffee mugs, newspapers and various other items are absentmindedly put down and never retrieved or put away.

At the end of every day, check known clutter zones such as the entry table, kitchen countertops and coffee table for items that can be quickly put away. While this may take a little time initially, once the daily check habit is established this should become a task that takes [less than 15 minutes](#) to complete.

### Leave the Kitchen Tidy

Stack the dishwasher and wipe down countertops at the end of each day. If there is no dishwasher and no time to wash the dishes, make sure that everything is stacked neatly ready to be cleaned the next morning. Wipe out the sink and wipe down countertops so that the kitchen is ready for the breakfast rush the following morning.

### Establish a Cleaning Routine

Homes often become cluttered because there is no established cleaning routine. Many tasks take significantly less time if completed regularly.

Draw up a [checklist for routine household chores](#) and keep the list taped to the inside of the pantry or pinned to a notice board as a reminder. Set aside time each day to check the list and make sure that nothing has been overlooked.

### Involve the Whole Family

Even toddlers can put away toys into a box or basket when they have finished with them. Older children can be responsible for stacking and unstacking the dishwasher, setting the table, changing towels and handtowels and helping to care for pets in addition to keeping their own belongings tidy.

Involving children in household chores helps them to establish their own good cleaning habits. Younger children may need some encouragement to become involved and there are a variety of ways to motivate them to take part including using [reward charts](#) or special treats occasionally if they take care of their responsibilities without complaining.

### Sort and Discard

Clutter often results when a household simply has more items than it can easily store. If storage space is overburdened, consider sorting through clothing, children's toys, kitchenware or other groups of items to clear out anything that is no longer useful. Garage/yard sales and websites such as eBay are a great way of turning these items into cash. Alternatively, donate useful clothing and household items to a local charity.

By making an effort to perform small tasks regularly, it is possible to reduce the amount of household clutter and create a more welcoming and organized home.