

# One-Year Downsizing Plan



## Month 1: Paper and Plastic Clutter

- Save or scan important documents, mementos and paper records.
- Reduce books to a bare minimum; purge outdated magazines and stop subscriptions.
- Eliminate all DVDs, CDs and VHS tapes for content now available electronically.
- Make a plan for scanning/digitizing photos and preserving sentimental collections.

## Month 2: Small Spaces

- Start sorting small storage spaces: closets, bathrooms, side tables, bookshelves and junk drawers.
- Assess clothing, shoes, handbags and hats, eliminating anything you haven't worn in 2 years.
- Reduce linens, towels, blankets and pillows to only what's needed.
- Collect all of your cleaning products in one place; try to use them all without buying more.
- Go through drawers and medicine cabinets for unused items. Never flush or throw away medications; check with your local government for safe disposal options.

## Month 3: Attic, Basement, and Hobby Areas

- Recycle unused or broken housewares and anything with a plug: appliances and electronics.
- Assess any "inherited" items you've been keeping in storage. Will you continue to store them?
- Assess abandoned projects. Dispose of unused household and hobby materials and supplies.
- Pare down holiday decorations considerably. Offer decorations to the family at the holidays.
- \*At the end of the third month, assess your progress on your decluttering efforts. If you are having trouble, consider hiring a professional organizer or move manager to pitch in.*

## Month 4: Collections and Memorabilia

- Determine how much space you want to dedicate to collections in your new home.
- Get appraisals for valuable items; consult with auction house or estate sale company if necessary.
- Designate items to give to friends and family members. Set a deadline for adult children to remove their belongings from the house.
- \*Interview experienced Realtors® who understand the downsizing process.*

## Month 5: Kitchen and Pantry

- Declutter your kitchen and reduce tools, appliances, cookware, and entertaining items.
- Eliminate florists' vases, extra coffee mugs, silver plated items, china, and storage items.
- \*Sign a listing agreement with an experienced Realtor who understands the downsizing process.*
- \*Interview an experienced Move Manager to make a detailed plan for your move.*

## Month 6: Repairs and Upgrades

- Determine repairs and/or upgrades that will be necessary to sell the property.
- Perform a pre-listing home inspection if necessary.
- Start getting estimates for the necessary repairs or upgrades to your property.
- Make a "retreat" room in your house where you can relax during the next several months.
- \*Go back through your off-season clothing; remove anything you didn't wear.*

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## Month 7: Furniture

- Determine what furniture will go with you to your next space and what will not.
- Measure your furniture and create a floor plan for your next home.
- Work with your Realtor to determine furniture that may be needed for staging.
- Make decisions about upgrades and repairs; hire qualified vendors to complete the work.

## Month 8 Garage, Shed, or Outdoor Areas

- Eliminate unneeded camping, sports, exercise or recreational equipment.
- Make a small toolbox of necessary tools and hardware, donate the rest.
- Arrange for pickup of outdoor equipment, machines and tools.
- Identify unneeded household chemicals and arrange for responsible disposal.

## Month 9: Plan Your Move

- Select a trustworthy and dependable mover; schedule your move.
- Hire an experienced move manager to make a detailed plan for your move.
- Complete any outdoor or landscaping projects.
- Make sure everything you're giving to friends and family has been scheduled for pickup.

## Month 10: Final Decluttering

- Go back through closets, office, hobby areas looking for things you won't need.
- Finish attic, basement, garage and outdoor areas.
- Separate out your best clothing, keep only what fits and flatters.
- Finish decluttering bedrooms and common areas.
- Finish all donation drop offs or pickups; complete estate sale or auction if necessary.

## Month 11: Final Preparations

- Revisit your list of repairs and upgrades; make final list of projects still needing attention.
- Make a plan for decorative items, art and lighting for your new home.
- Select and/or order new furnishings, appliances and housewares if needed for your next place.
- Continue to reduce the food in your kitchen, pantry and freezer.
- Begin packing items you want to take to your next home.

## Month 12: Complete Your Move

- Assess repairs and upgrades, make sure everything has been completed.
- Check all schedules and tasks with move manager.
- Schedule one last visit from the junk removal company if necessary.
- Make your moving day plans and your "open first" items.
- Prepare for sale or work with a moving and storage professional to pack your belongings and complete your move.