

SORTING GUIDELINES

Use these guidelines to assist you to sort and declutter a room, or a space within a room, e.g. one corner of a room or a portion of a cupboard. Try not to work on too big a space at one time so that you don't get overwhelmed by the process.

STEP 1: GENERAL SORTING

1. First **sort items quickly into the following categories:**

- Belongs in this room
- Belongs elsewhere in the house
- Throw away or recycle
- Donate/give away
- Belongs to someone else

Try not to deliberate too much or second-guess yourself but rather make gut level decisions. Use boxes labelled with these categories to sort the items.

2. Ask yourself the question: **Do I really want or need this item?**

3. **During this process do not leave the room** to take the items that don't belong here to where they do belong. This will distract you from your task of sorting this space. Just separate the items that are going from those that are staying.

4. When you have finished this first phase you can **remove the unwanted items to a holding area** (until you have time to deal with them), to give you the space to do a second sorting of what you intend to keep in this room/space. It is important not to get distracted, and to get back to the room/space that you are working on.

STEP 2: SORTING OF ITEMS THAT BELONG IN THIS SPACE

5. It is helpful to **group all like/similar items together** so that you get a holistic picture of everything you have. It can sometimes be an eye-opener to see how much you have.

6. **Review all the items in each group and reduce further** if you can, using the same question: Do I *really* want or need this item?

7. **Return each kept item to its home in the room.** If certain items don't have a home, create one! This may mean getting different furniture and/or storage containers that can accommodate your things better.

STEP 3: REMOVE UNWANTED ITEMS

8. Once you are finished, **remove items that are being thrown away, recycled, donated etc. from the house immediately** so that they don't clutter up your house, or so you don't get tempted to take them back.

9. **Return items** that belong in another part of the house to their rightful home.

Now, enjoy your newly decluttered space!