

# GET CLUTTER-FREE IN 30 MINUTES/DAY IN A MONTH

*Follow the checklist, set your timer, and get ready to de-clutter your home for good!*

**DAY 1 – 3 BAGS/30 MINUTES:** | Your assignment is to set your timer for 30 minutes, grab 3 garbage bags and fill them up with clutter. Move fast! The bags can be things to toss/donate/sell/relocate or all toss, all donate, etc. Most important? Fill up the bags and get them out of your house. I filled 3 bags with things to toss and I used a laundry basket to put things in to donate.

**DAY 2 – PANTRY CLEAN SWEEP:** Today's task is a pantry clean sweep. Set your timer for 30 minutes and clear out any items you don't want staring at you. Check cans and boxes for expiration dates, consolidate items, donate cans and boxes (that haven't expired) to your local food pantry. You can even make your menu plan for next week while you're decluttering - how's that for multitasking?

**DAY 3 – HOLIDAY DECORATIONS:** Today's task is to declutter your holiday decorations. Maybe you're taking them down this weekend, maybe they're already packed away. Set your timer for 30 minutes and evaluate if there's something(s) that don't need to be stored another year. Or maybe use today's time to put things away better than you have before - don't throw it all in a box to open up next year

**DAY 4 - TOYS:** Today's task is TOYS. Set your timer for 30 minutes and clear some toy clutter! I have a pretty simple rule for toys - if it isn't used/loved it doesn't stay. Then, all toys are contained in some way - baskets, bins, totes - because without containment it's everywhere and that drives me bonkers.

**DAY 5 - CLOTHES:** Set your timer for 30 minutes and ruthlessly go through your clothes. I have 3 rules - I have to love it, actually wear it, and it must fit. Decide on your own rules or follow mine and clear out some clothes. Any clothes that get the heave-ho donate/sell/toss. Don't have clothes to de-clutter or finish in half the time? Move on to someone else's closet

**DAY 6 – SHOES:** Set your timer for 30 minutes and see how many pairs of shoes you can part with. Start with your own shoes and if you have time move on to other family members. I keep shoes to minimum in our house - one pair of each seems like a good amount to me: dress, casual, gym, snow boots, and dress boots. You might have a different formula but figure out what works for you and your space. This pic is of the bench in our mudroom that my kiddos keep their shoes in. They each have a basket and they keep/put away their shoes in this space

**DAY 7 - BEDROOM DRAWERS:** Today's task is to organize BEDROOM DRAWERS. You don't have to de-clutter all your drawers today - one or two will make a huge difference. Choose your worst offenders and set your timer for 30 minutes. EMPTY YOUR DRAWER(S), SORT into 3 categories DONATE/TOSS/KEEP and return the keep stuff GROUPED and ORGANIZED. Have a little more time? Keep going!

**DAY 8 - JEWELRY/ACCESSORIES:** Today's task is JEWELRY/ACCESSORIES - set your timer for 30 minutes and see what you can accomplish! Clean out your jewelry box, straighten up your perfume, de-clutter your accessories.

**DAY 9 - NIGHTSTAND(S):** Today's clutter free task is your NIGHTSTAND(S). Set your timer and start by completely clearing it/them off, clean/dust if necessary and then only put back the necessities. I keep a lamp, alarm clock, cute dish with lotions and lip gloss, and a basket for my current book.

**DAY 10 - UNDER THE BED:** Today's clutter free task is UNDER THE BED. If you use this space for stashing stuff take 30 minutes to declutter that area. Follow suit under each bed in your home. Personally, I don't store anything under the beds but I'll be looking for errant socks, missing toys, and other objects. Then I'll run the vacuum under the beds for a quick tidy up.

**DAY 11 - QUICK CLEAR SURFACES:** Your task is to QUICK CLEAR SURFACES - take the time today to concentrate on all surfaces - counters, flat surfaces, floors. Or just choose your main offender. CLEAR the surfaces, SORT, KEEP the important stuff, and TOSS the rest (or donate if it's donate-able).

**DAY 12 - MAIL SYSTEM:** Today's clutter free task is to create a MAIL SYSTEM. Mail can be the worst organizing buster if you don't have a system in place to manage and handle it. I use a wall pocket system to hold any necessary mail. The key for me is to immediately sort and deal with mail as soon as it enters the door. This keeps the piles and missed bills away. Set what you can on auto-pay and get digital bills if you can, that will help. I use the everyday bill paying kit in my shop to keep on track with bill paying. Once the mail has been sorted it basically fits into 2 categories - TO PAY and TO FILE. Magazines and catalogs go into my magazine basket and that small basket has a limit - once it's full something has to go. I am a reformed magazine hoarder. Invitations get recorded on the calendar and anything that needs to be saved for future reference (like a wedding invite) goes into the IN PROCESS wall file.

**DAY 13 - CREATE A FILE SYSTEM:** Today's task is to CREATE A FILE SYSTEM. Having a system in place for those papers that need a home is HUGE. Don't fret about getting everything sorted today, just take a big step towards getting a system in place. January is the perfect month to start fresh! I use a large filing cabinet and I also scan important papers.

**DAY 14 - BOOKS/DVDs/CDs:** Set your timer for 30 minutes and declutter one of these areas! Feeling motivated? Keep going. I tackled our CD collection and put every single CD into a CD notebook that zips up. Then I recycled the cases! That huge collection turned into the size of a binder and can be brought on the go or it can stay at home. Easy peasy!

**DAY 15 - OFFICE/CRAFT SUPPLIES:** Set your timer for 30 minutes and take an honest look at what you're holding on to. Separating and containing is key for our family.

**DAY 16 – PAPER:** Ugh, am I right? This week we've been spending some time setting up systems for dealing with paper and today is the day that you need to really face it. Choose your worst paper clutter pile and set your timer for 30 minutes and deal with it. Yes, it might take you longer but see what you can do in that time period. No time today? Paper piles can be dealt with in the evenings with a good movie. I have a good handle on paper piles so I tackled a paper project I've been putting off - I put all the warranties and instruction manuals in 2 plastic file folders organized and alphabetized by the brand name. If I ever need to reference them they are within reach. :

**DAY 17 – ELECTRONICS:** Have some electronics to recycle/donate/give away? Take care of that today! Today I have a simple clutter-free tip for your office electronic clutter. Use an open, handled basket to store things that are never used but needed (I have the modem and router stored this way). Ugly, tangly cords are hidden and still accessible. The components go in the basket and the cords sneak out through the back handle. I've been storing them this way for over a year and love the clean and clutter-free look. \*as a caution, this needs to be well-ventilated and open to work properly as components should not touch or be too close together.:

**DAY 18 - FRIDGE/FREEZER:** My recommendation on today's task is to remove all the contents of both (separately, so food stays cold), get rid of anything expired or old, and mix up a cleaning solution of 1 teaspoon dish soap (I like Castile soap for this), 1 teaspoon baking soda, and 4-6 cups warm water. Work quickly! Wipe down all the shelves and drawers with a well-rung out microfiber cloth or dish cloth. Repeat until all shelves and drawers are clean. Dry if necessary. Return food in a way that makes sense - group like items together and use containers if necessary. You'll love how clean AND clutter-free your refrigerator and freezer are! What a great way to start the week:

**DAY 19 - QUICK DECLUTTER:** This week we're working in the kitchen. Get a jumpstart by clearing all the clutter off your counters. Put everything into categories of keep/toss/relocate/donate.

**DAY 20 – DRAWERS:** Set a timer for 30 minutes and see how much you can clear out! I use drawer dividers for utensils - keeps things tidy and accessible. A label helps remind us where things get returned to.

**DAY 21 – CABINETS:** Set your timer for 30 minutes and just start! I decluttered my food storage container cabinet and just kept what was necessary and donated the rest.

**DAY 22 – SPICES:** Set your timer for 30 minutes, empty your spice cabinet/rack/drawer and only out back spices that you use. QUICK TIP: if a spice doesn't smell like the spice it is, toss it out. Spices have a 6 month-one year shelf life. I keep cooking spices on a tiered shelf and all baking supplies/spices/ingredients go on the upper shelf on two lazy Susans. I cook and bake a lot so this cabinet is stocked and everything is easily accessible. I keep salt, pepper, garlic salt, and olive oil out because they get used daily.

**DAY 23 – COUNTERS:** Do you really need everything that's out on those counters? Today is your day to evaluate, declutter, and simplify this prime kitchen real estate.

**DAY 24 – PANTRY:** We did a quick sweep of the pantry at the beginning of the challenge but today is the day you empty it out and put it back together in a decluttered fashion. I use OXO pop lid containers for dry food storage and put a dishwasher-safe label on the front with a clear label from my label maker over that. I've been doing this for years and love how fresh the dry goods stay AND I love the way it looks. I tape any cooking or prep instructions on the back of the container and hand wash between uses. Use mason jars or other containers for a similar look.

**DAY 25 - DEEP BATHROOM DECLUTTER:** Set your timer for 30 minutes and remove ANY and ALL clutter from your bathroom(s). Concentrate on counters and cabinets and if you haven't used something in the last couple months it's probably time to give it the ol' heave-ho.

**DAY 26 - CREATE A BATH SYSTEM:** After decluttering yesterday, take stock in your counters and cabinets and see if there's a system you can put in place to keep your bathrooms clutter-free going forward. A couple systems I use are in this snap: I keep every day toiletries on a tray which makes wiping down the counters easy peasy. I keep brushes and grooming tools in cups and I also keep makeup in a basket - easy access and looks neat and tidy.

**DAY 27 - LINENS & BEDDING:** Empty your linen closet, cupboard, cabinet (wherever you keep sheets and towels) and take inventory. Only keep what you use and love. If it hasn't been on a bed in over a year, it's probably time to donate it. Those towels and duvet cover that haven't seen the light for a while? Put them in a garage sale pile or donate it. Animal shelters are great places to donate old towels. Once you've decluttered your space put everything back in an organized fashion. I put sheet sets in a pillowcase from the set and stack them. Towels (I love white ones) get stacked up neatly by type - washcloth, hand towel, bath towel.

**DAY 28 - CLEANING SUPPLIES:** Take some time to take inventory, create a system, or properly dispose of anything you no longer need or use. I keep small cleaning caddies in the bathrooms for easy cleaning but I also store cleaning supplies in an over-the-door shoe organizer in the mudroom closet.

**DAY 29 - LAUNDRY ROOM:** Take some time today to declutter the space in your home where laundry is washed. Lose anything you aren't using and group like items together for ease of use. I keep two containers on the washing machine - one for rags to be washed and one for often used laundry supplies. Use a laundromat? Declutter the space that you store laundry supplies. Need to clean your washing machine? Search the blog for 'washing machine' and you'll see two methods pop up.

**DAY 30 - MUDROOM/ENTRYWAY:** Take some time today to de-clutter this space on your home. If you don't have a mudroom or entryway concentrate on that place where coats and shoes and boots get dropped.

**DAY 31 – FINAL SWEEP:** Use a garbage bag or two and go through the house one more time and collect anything that you can part with. Most important? Fill up the bags and get them out of your house.