

TIPS FOR DOWNSIZING YOUR HOME

Downsizing allows you to identify the items you truly need in your space or that make you happy. It also allows you to shift the focus from your stuff to living your best life.

To help guide you through the downsizing process, we provide answers to common questions below.

WHY do people downsize?

- ☐ **Cost** – Maintenance & repairs of home. Utilities (e.g. heating & cooling). Too much physical work.
- ☐ **Illness or Injury** – Can be unpredictable. Best to plan ahead.
- ☐ **Retire to Another Location** – Want better climate or to be closer to family
- ☐ **Change in Lifestyle** – Want to move to a 55+ community or to travel more
- ☐ **Freedom from Stuff** – Allow yourself to focus on what brings you joy & not on the stuff in your space
- ☐ **Safety** – Avoid emergencies. Safety needs change as we age.

WHERE is the best place to begin?

- ☐ **Think About Your New Space** – It will inform your decisions on how much you can take with you
 - Figure out the reduction in square footage between your current home and your new home
 - How many bedrooms will you have?
 - How many closets will you have & how much hanging space do you need?
 - Will you have a dedicated living room and dining room? Or just one “great room” for both?
 - Will you have an office?
 - Will you have storage space? Garage? Basement? Attic? Shed?
- ☐ **Start Small** – Focus on 1 space at a time ... 1 room, 1 corner, or even 1 drawer. Whatever makes the process less overwhelming for you. Every space you complete gets you closer to your overall goal.
 - Group “like items” together so you can see exactly what you have (e.g., all short-sleeve shirts together)
 - Start with items you are not attached to (e.g., plastic containers)
 - Go through items you don’t necessarily like or use but kept out of obligation (e.g., gifts or hand-me-downs)
 - It’s ok to have a “maybe” pile to not get stuck in the purging process. Just be sure to revisit that pile later.
 - You may need some help for the larger spaces, like the garage or basement

WHAT to do with the items you longer want or need?

- ☐ **Family & Friends**
 - Check to see what items people in your life want or need. Give them a deadline for picking up the items. Let them know if they don’t pick them up by that date, the items will be donated.
 - Giving items to friends and family can cut back on the amount you have to donate or the amount of money you need to pay to have the items removed if they can’t be donated.
- ☐ **Donations**
 - Best for everyday household items, tools, clothing, small furniture (e.g., side table)
 - Sort & categorize your donation items – this will be helpful for drop offs and pick ups
 - Research organizations to see what items they accept and do not accept, hours and days of operation, if they have donation limits, and if they have drop off locations or scheduled pickups at your home
 - Thrift shops, donation centers, charitable organizations & churches are great options to research in your area

Your
Tasks
Our
Time
Organizing Your Life One Task at a Time

☐ **Auction & Estate Sales**

- Auctions – The market for antiques, especially furniture, has diminished. Most auction houses take only higher value items that are in pristine condition. They often charge a fee if they need to pick up the items.
- Estate Sales – You will sell your items but may not make as much money as you expect.
- Yard Sales – We don't recommend them. It's a lot of work for very little money.

☐ **Trash & Items Not Able to be Donated**

- Garbage/Recycling – Check your local garbage service and recycling service. Some townships and/or counties offer drop off dates for hazardous waste items, old electronics, and paper shredding. Some townships will also offer pickup for bulk items/excess trash. You may have to pay a fee.
- Dumpsters – Arrange for a dumpster at your home when you have a lot of items that need to be tossed or you have furniture that is too old or damaged to donate. There is a fee for this option.
- Haul Away Service – If you have items that are too large for you to move and can't be donated, you may need a haul away service to remove the items. There is a fee for this option.

WHO can help?

- ☐ **Family & Friends** – It should be someone you can work with easily. Select someone who can be supportive but also help keep your goals in mind for your new space.
- ☐ **Movers** – They can handle the actual move, but they do not downsize
- ☐ **Professional Organizers or Senior Move Managers** – Can help with the full process of downsizing
 - Project Management – Manage the process from start to finish or individual portions of the process based on your needs
 - Help downsize belongings
 - Organize your belongings
 - Create a floor plan for your new space
 - Pack your items for your move
 - Manage the movers and other subcontractors you may need
 - Unpack your items post-move, setup your essential rooms, or even organize your entire new space

WHEN to downsize?

- ☐ The simple answer ... The sooner the better!
- ☐ You have accumulated stuff over time. It will take time to unburden yourself of the items you no longer want or need.
- ☐ Don't want to wait until you have an emergency because then you may be unable to choose and make the decisions on our own.

HOW do you ensure your downsized home addresses safety concerns?

- ☐ **Address Trip/Fall Hazards** – Remove throw rugs. Make sure cords/cables are tucked away. Remove floor stripping between rooms. Install grab bars & grips in bathroom. Remove/replace furniture with sharp edges.
- ☐ **Ensure Ease of Movement** – Make sure you have space to maneuver with a walker, cane or wheelchair. Install a chair lift or ramp, if needed, to go up and down stairs.
- ☐ **Ensure Ease of Access** – Items used every day should be located in easy to reach locations
 - Dishes & utensils in easy to reach cabinets/drawers
 - Move washer & dryer to main level, if located elsewhere
 - Move microwave to countertop, if mounted and unable to reach
 - Remove closet doors & lower hanging bars, if needed

For Help With Your Downsizing Needs ... Contact Darla Pompilio @ 610.847.5422

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