



Tips to help you downsize

One of the biggest challenges to moving is the job of downsizing. It takes a tremendous amount of effort to sort through what can be a mountain of possessions acquired over decades. It can take an emotional toll the process of letting go of items and their associated memories.

There are, however, a number of things you can do to make the process manageable :

1. Start early and go slow – Downsizing a whole house can seem overwhelming. Starting three months early, and sorting just a little every day makes the job manageable and eases the pressure.
2. Get help – A friend, family member or even a hired hand can give you the encouragement and perspective you need to get through this process.
3. Make a list – Write down what you want to keep, not what you want to throw away. This is a great way to help clarify your priorities and help you realize exactly what you do and don't need.
4. Start with the easy stuff – It's sometimes less painful to start with rooms you don't see everyday – the garage, the attic and storage closets. The things in these places are typically stored items and making choices on what to let go is a little easier. Once you get the hang of making these harder decisions, move into the living areas.
5. Keep. Sell. Give. Donate. Discard. – Create a list with five columns and assign every possession you have to a certain action. Once everything is assigned, take immediate action– if it's to be donated, put it in the truck. Sold? Post it on ebay or craigslist or in the “garage sale” pile. If it's for a friend or family member, set a date to have them come and pick up.
6. “Stay” or “go” – As you sort through your stuff, ask yourself these questions to determine what you really need:
 - Will it physically fit into my new space?
 - Do I currently use it?
 - Does possessing this bring me joy? Would it bring someone else joy?
 - Is this a duplicate of something else I already have?
 - Does it have financial value?

Tips like these should make downsizing easy, or at least less painful.

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