

## Questions for Sorting

Use these questions when deciding whether to keep, discard/recycle, or donate/sell an item while decluttering.

### Immediate-use questions

- Have I used this in the past 12 months?
- Do I have a specific plan to use it in the next 6–12 months?
- Is it seasonal or occasional, and do I actually use it when needed?
- How many do I have and is that enough?
- Do I really need this item?
- Will not having this help to solve my cluttering or hoarding problem?
- Can someone else use this or make better use of it?

### Value & function

- Does it still work or is it damaged beyond reasonable repair?
- Does it serve a clear function I need, or is it purely sentimental?
- Is there a duplicate I prefer to use instead?
- Is it current/in style?
- Is it of good quality, accurate, and/or reliable?
- Does it fit?
- Is it easy to understand?

### Emotional & sentimental

- Am I keeping it out of guilt, obligation, or “what if” thinking?
- Is there another way to preserve the memory without keeping the item?

### Space & practicality

- Do I have a proper place to store it that won't cause clutter?
- Is the space this takes worth more than potential alternatives (e.g., easier access, less stress)?
- Does this just seem important because I'm looking at it now?
- Do I have enough space for this?

### Financial & replacement cost

- Would it be cheaper to replace later than to keep now?
- Could I sell or donate the item to someone who needs it more?
- Would I buy it again if I didn't own it?
- Could I get it again if I found I really needed it?
- Is the item obsolete or soon to be?

## Questions for Sorting

### Safety & health

- Is it unsanitary, expired, or a safety hazard (mold, broken, recalled)?
- Does keeping it create dust, pest, or fire risk?

### Time & effort

- How much time, money, or effort will I spend maintaining it?
- Do I have enough time to use, review, or read it?
- Is maintaining it preventing me from enjoying or using other things?
- Do I use this item regularly?

### Impact on goals & lifestyle

- Would getting rid of it help to resolve my cluttering or hoarding problem?
- Does this item support the life I want (health, hobbies, career, relationships)?
- Does this fit with my own values and needs?
- How does this compare with things I value highly?

### If you're not sure about an item ...

- Box it for 30–90 days and revisit. If it wasn't needed while it was boxed, let it go.
- If it hasn't been used in a year, let it go.
- If it needs repair and I won't fix it within a set timeframe, discard/donate.

### To donate or sell?

- Is it in good enough condition for donation or sale?
- Is it worth the time to list/sell, or is donation easier?

### Questions to get unstuck

- If you let this go, what do you worry would happen?
- What small step would feel doable today?

### Sources:

- Kondo M. (2014). *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing*. Ten Speed Press.
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- Magnusson, M. (2018). *The Gentle Art of Swedish Death Cleaning: How to Free Yourself and Your Family from a Lifetime of Clutter*. New York, NY: Scribner.