

### **Clutter-Prevention Habits**

Much of the clutter in your home will disappear if you follow the “Don’t do things later” rule. It’s not much more than leaving a room the way you found it.

1. If you brought stuff into a room, take it back out the very next time you leave that room (after you’re done with it, of course.)
2. Take things upstairs or downstairs if you are going there anyway.
3. Take everything out of the car that was added this trip and put it away.
4. Soon after you return home from an event, trip, or shopping, unpack (and put away contents of) shopping bags, backpacks/carry-alls, and suitcases.
5. Pick up things when they drop.
6. Wipe up spills when they happen. Vacuum up messes when they occur.
7. Wash dirty dishes and wipe off the counters before the food dries on them.
8. Fold clothes when they emerge from the dryer. Iron clothes when slightly damp.
9. Close down your desk at the end of the day, placing everything in its proper “home.”

Adapted from Clutter Control, by Jeff Campbell

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The “30-second habit”: before you leave a room, spend 30 seconds putting things back where they belong, and picking up items that need to be taken out of that room and back to their original location.

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“To jumpstart the bringing of order into your home, here are four old-fashioned rules that can change the quality of your daily life beginning today. Repeat this recipe for contentment out loud every morning and evening for twenty-one days. Let it become your personal mantra to maintain serenity. Write these instructions on index cards and post one in every room of your home. Teach these words of wisdom to your children, whisper them into your partner’s ear:

1. If you take it out, put it back.
2. If you open it, close it.
3. If you throw it down, pick it up.
4. If you take it off, hang it up.”

From Simple Abundance, by Sarah Ban Breathnach