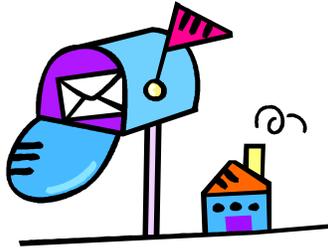


## Getting Off Marketing Lists



**Unsolicited calls and junk mail are extremely annoying, and can be harmful in hidden ways as well.** They interrupt the serenity of our homes and often create clutter. Also, the more lists we are on, the more vulnerable we are to identity theft. And the enormous amount of junk mail that is regularly sent to us puts a huge strain on our planet's natural resources.

**Unfortunately there is no one thing you can do to get you off of all marketing lists, but doing a few of the things listed below will significantly reduce the volume of unwanted calls and junk mail you receive:**

- **Register with DMA (Direct Marketing Association) Mail Preference Service at [www.dmachoice.org](http://www.dmachoice.org)** and ask for your name to be put on a "non-solicitation" list.
- **Go to [www.optoutprescreen.com](http://www.optoutprescreen.com) or call 1-888-567-8688 to stop many credit card and insurance offers.**
- **To reduce telemarketer calls, connect with the National Do Not Call Directory at [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov) or 1-888-383-1222.**
- **Sign up with [www.yellowpagesgoesgreen.org](http://www.yellowpagesgoesgreen.org) to stop delivery of printed yellow page directories.**
- **Register with Catalog Choice ([www.catalogchoice.org](http://www.catalogchoice.org)) to stop most forms of junk mail, not just catalogs.**
- **Look into junk mail services with fees.** One popular one is the app PaperKarma. After you register, you snap photos of unwanted mail with your phone (coupons, credit card offers, flyers, magazines, catalogs, yellow/white pages, etc.) and Paper Karma will do the rest.

**"But wait," you say, "I have done all of these things. Why am I still receiving unwanted mail and calls?"**

- **Be aware that it can take about 3 months to see results,** as marketing campaigns are often set up far in advance.

**Karen G. Kramer - Space to Breathe**  
*Professional Organizing Services for Your Home and Office*

- **Potentially some of your protections have expired.** DMA Choice e.g. needs renewal every three years, OptOut Prescreen asks you to choose 5 years or permanent – be clear about what you have chosen. The Do Not Call Registry does not expire. Renew these protections if necessary.
- **If you do any of the following things, you are vulnerable to getting back on lists:** make any purchase where you divulge personal information, fill out a warranty or membership application, contribute to a charity, sign up for a new credit card, loyalty card or magazine, refinance, move, etc..... **Any time you give out your name and address, get in the habit of saying or writing both of these things:**
  - “Put me on your do not call/contact list (not “take me off your call/contact list”) **and**
  - “Do not rent, trade, sell or share my name or address.”
- **Magazines, charities, professional associations, and companies that address mail to Current Resident or Occupant often have to be contacted individually by you.** The Privacy Rights Clearinghouse ([www.privacyrights.org](http://www.privacyrights.org)) can give you advice about this. More recently, [www.paperkarma.com](http://www.paperkarma.com), [www.catalogchoice.org](http://www.catalogchoice.org), and other services claim to help with one or more of these junk mail sources; so when you subscribe, check what they will cover.
- **Your personal financial institutions, utilities, and internet/phone/cable providers will need to be contacted directly by you.** The burden is on you to contact them to get them to stop sharing your information. (Initially, in a company’s privacy policy, we are given a choice about opting-out of this – but many of us miss this option.) Ask these companies to set your account to the *maximum privacy settings available*.

Be aware that some of these resources change what they can help you with from time to time, and also that some may have more success with one category than another. Therefore, **don’t worry if there is overlap of services in the places you register for assistance.**

Good luck with getting off these annoying lists. **By registering for a few of these services, and being mindful about giving out personal data, most people find a significant decrease in the number of unwanted calls and mail after a few months.**

For a related article about the “green” benefits of getting off of marketing lists, see “**Saving Paper, Saving Trees**” in the Environment section on my website’s Advice page.