



DOWNSIZING GUIDE

Moving to a smaller home

Thinking about downsizing your home? Whether you're moving to an apartment, condo, townhome, or house with less square footage, these 16 ideas can help you downsize and get settled in a smaller space!

Know the Why of Downsizing

There are plenty of reasons why you might be downsizing your home: retirement, opting for a minimalist lifestyle, saving money, moving to a new city, dealing with an empty nest after kids leave for college. Regardless of the reason, letting go of possessions and moving into a smaller space will come with its share of difficulties. But keeping the motivation behind your move in mind at all times can make this life transition a little easier.

Focus on the Positives

Remembering the benefits of downsizing can help you get excited about small space living. Maybe the move will allow you to pay off debt, take more vacations, or start a future savings fund. Or perhaps you can take comfort in the fact that you won't have to do home upgrades, maintain a lawn, or worry about a mortgage. Try to think less about the space you lost and more about what opportunities you've gained.

Create a Budget

When downsizing your home, you'll most likely be downsizing your spending, too. By moving to a smaller home, you can save on mortgage payments, property taxes, insurance costs, utilities expenses, and more. Be sure to review your living expenses to see where you can make adjustments and cuts and determine how you'd like to use your downsizing savings.

Common Mistakes

While it's good to focus on the positive aspect of downsizing, being realistic about the difficulties of downsizing is important as well. It's easy to spend money on new things if you think you'll be saving a lot of money in the future. However, a common mistake people make is overestimating how much money they'll really save. Another frequent issue is getting rid of old things that could serve a purpose in your new space. Yes, you'll have to let go of things, but taking your time and being strategic about what to keep and what to get rid of can help prevent problems down the road.

Declutter Your Home

First things first—you need to declutter your home before you downsize! Living in a small space means you'll need to purge some items to make everything fit comfortably, so make sure you go through your belongings before moving. Use decluttering methods like the four-box method or KonMari to get started and pick up new home organization habits that you can bring with you into your new space.

Minimalist Ways

One tried-and-true trick to help you downsize and declutter is to embrace minimalism. This works especially well when moving to a smaller home because it helps you prioritize what possessions really matter to you and where excess is holding you back. Try incorporating these minimalist tips for decluttering and organizing as you transition into your new home.

1. Declutter one room at a time
2. Designate an Outbox to store items you can't decide whether to keep or toss
3. Minimalism at home means every item has a purpose and a place. If an item doesn't fit into your home's design or can't be tucked away, when you're not using it, reevaluate.
4. Arrange a drop zone where you can hang coats, bags, keys, pet leashes, and other accessories to keep everything tidy.
5. Organize the playroom, clear out toys the kids don't use, help them sort through and explain to them the impact of donating to other children in need.
6. Go through your wardrobe – Get rid of any clothing and accessories you haven't work in the last year.
7. Clean out the Bathroom – Get rid of unused items. Toss out or recycle any old makeup, dispose of medicines that have expired, donate trayed or worn-out towels to animal shelters.
8. Reduce Your Pantry – The kitchen pantry is one of the easiest spots for clutter to accumulate. Through out old spices or non-perishable items you haven't used. Avoid buying unnecessary ingredients.
9. Rid your kitchen of unnecessary appliances. Consider selling or donating them before transitioning to a smaller home.

Take Measurements

Add taking measurement to the top of your downsizing home checklist. Write down the dimensions of each room in your current home and your new one to learn what furniture will or won't fit. This will save you time and emotional energy on deciding which furniture and large objects you want to bring.

Take Photos of Room Layouts

Take photos of how you currently have your rooms set up. While your new space will have different dimensions, this can at least offer inspiration and help you remember how rooms used to come together. Also, taking photos of how you had set up cords and any technology in your old home is another moving tip that can save you time!

Prioritize Space-Saving Furniture

Moving into a smaller space? Multi-purpose items are about to become your best friend! If you already have multifunctional furniture like a wall desk, coffee tables that double as seating or storage, or a drop-leaf dining table, be sure to bring them with you. Finding furniture that can do double is key when maximizing space in a downsized home!

Decide on Large Items Early

Are you bringing multiple vehicles to the new place? Is the fridge staying or going? What about the washer and dryer? A tip for downsizing possessions is to tackle your biggest items first. This will then make it easier to decide if smaller stuff should stay or go.

Consider Renting Self Storage

One way to save yourself from selling something you may need or overcrowding your new home is to rent a storage unit. This can give you more time to decide what to do with items you're on the fence about and give you a place to store belongings you want to keep but don't have room for.

Get Rid of Duplicates

A simple idea for downsizing your home is to eliminate duplicate items. Get rid of excess dishes, wall art, baskets and bins, and other unnecessary multiples to focus on the items that you really need. Because you'll have less space, choose your favorites and donate, sell, or trash the rest.

Sort Through Sentimental Items

Take your time with this emotional task! A downsizing tip for seniors or anyone with a lot of keepsakes and memorabilia is to go through things early. Make piles for what you definitely want to keep, what you're on the fence about, and what items your children, family, or close friends might want. That way, you can mentally prepare to part with special belongings.

Create an Inventory

Some of the best advice for how to downsize your home is to keep track of items as you go. Make an inventory and categorize what you're planning to keep, donate, sell, or store. Organizing these items into different boxes or in separate rooms can help, but when it comes down to moving day, having a list or photos to reference will come in handy.

Involve the Entire Family

Downsizing the family home? Get everyone involved! Not only will this ensure that you don't throw out something important, but it will also help divide some of the workload. Inviting friends over to take things you no longer want is another great way to downsize your home quickly.

Take Extra Time with Kids

Moving with kids can be incredibly difficult. Because they won't understand the benefit of letting go of some of their toys, be sure to spend extra time with them going through their books, games, and stuffed animals. Turn the process into a game, talk to them about why the move is happening, and get them excited for the future.

Final Thoughts

- Plan ahead
- Determine your lifestyle needs
- Find purpose
- Keep clutter out
- Think quality and multipurpose
- When in doubt, get an objective opinion

Downsizing a home can lead to lots of stress and anxiety for anyone who loves their belongings but hates living in clutter. Seniors, empty nesters or people moving from a suburban home to a city apartment all face the challenge of creating a new living space with limited room for furniture, accessories, clothes and collectibles. But if you come up with a plan before you downsize, you can create a comfortable and stylish environment made for daily living.