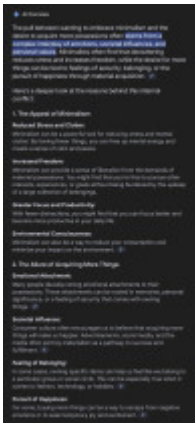


# Minimalism to remove stress caused by too much stuff

Post by “Kalosyni” of May 23, 2025 at 9:05 AM

I often feel like I have collected too much stuff, and a lot of my time goes into organizing it. Plus when things get messy (meaning that I haven't put everything away properly) then I feel a slight sense of stress because it is yet another thing on my to do list.

I put this question into Google: "Why am I torn between wanting to become a minimalist and acquiring more stuff?" ...and got this result, which was very helpful. (Read these two snapshot images if you are interested).



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Post by “Godfrey” of May 23, 2025 at 12:52 PM

A few years ago, my wife and I read the Marie Kondo book before we did some purging. Our key takeaway was to ask the question "does this bring me joy?" of each item being considered. Which reminds me of [VS71](#): *Ask this question of every desire: what will happen to me if the object of desire is achieved, and what if not?*

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### **Post by “Kalosyni” of May 23, 2025 at 2:21 PM**

#### [Quote from Godfrey](#)

Our key takeaway was to ask the question "does this bring me joy?" of each item being considered.

For some reason that particular decluttering prompt doesn't really work for me (likely multiple reasons why).

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### **Post by “Kalosyni” of May 23, 2025 at 2:39 PM**

I used Grok to help create a decluttering system:

My prompt:

Create a decluttering method that is based on the following values: 1) household item, 2) beautiful item, 3) status item, 4) entertainment, hobby or sport. Also include the following categories: use everyday, use once a month, somewhat likely to use sometime this year, highly unlikely to ever use again.

Grok's reply (everything that follows it Grok's reply):

Below is a decluttering method tailored to your specified values and categories. This method, called the Value-Based Decluttering System, helps you evaluate household items based on their purpose and usage frequency to make informed decisions about keeping, donating, or discarding them.

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## Value-Based Decluttering System

### Step 1: Define the Values

Each item in your home will be evaluated based on one of these four values:

1. Household Item: Items essential for daily living (e.g., kitchen tools, bedding, cleaning supplies).
2. Beautiful Item: Items that bring aesthetic joy or enhance your space (e.g., artwork, decorative vases).
3. Status Item: Items that signal prestige, achievement, or social standing (e.g., designer clothing, luxury goods).
4. Entertainment, Hobby, or Sport: Items used for leisure, recreation, or personal passions (e.g., books, sports equipment, crafting supplies).

### Step 2: Categorize by Usage Frequency

For each item, determine how often you use it or are likely to use it:

1. Use Everyday: Items you rely on daily or almost daily (e.g., toothbrush, coffee maker).
2. Use Once a Month: Items used regularly but not daily (e.g., vacuum cleaner, specialty cookware).
3. Somewhat Likely to Use Sometime This Year: Items you might use within the next 12 months (e.g., seasonal decorations, camping gear).
4. Highly Unlikely to Ever Use Again: Items you haven't used in years and don't foresee using (e.g., outdated electronics, old textbooks).

### Step 3: Decluttering Process

1. Gather Items: Start with one area of your home (e.g., a room, closet, or drawer). Pull out all items to evaluate them.
2. Sort by Value: Assign each item to one of the four value categories (Household, Beautiful, Status, Entertainment/Hobby/Sport). If an item fits multiple values, choose the primary one based on why you keep it.
3. Assign Usage Frequency: For each item, determine its usage category (Everyday, Monthly, Yearly, Unlikely).
4. Apply the Decision Matrix: Use the following guidelines to decide whether to keep, store, donate, sell, or discard each item:
  - o Household Items:
    - Everyday: Keep in an easily accessible location.
    - Monthly: Store in a convenient but less immediate spot (e.g., a pantry or closet).
    - Yearly: Store in a labeled, less accessible area (e.g., attic, garage).
    - Unlikely: Donate or discard unless it's irreplaceable (e.g., emergency tools).

- Beautiful Items:
    - Everyday: Display prominently if it brings daily joy.
    - Monthly: Rotate seasonally or store for occasional display.
    - Yearly: Store carefully for special occasions or reconsider keeping if it's rarely enjoyed.
    - Unlikely: Donate, sell, or gift to someone who will appreciate it.
  - Status Items:
    - Everyday: Keep only if actively used and aligned with your current lifestyle.
    - Monthly: Store carefully (e.g., designer bags in dust covers) and reassess annually.
    - Yearly: Consider selling or donating if the item no longer reflects your values.
    - Unlikely: Sell or donate; status items lose value if unused.
  - Entertainment, Hobby, or Sport:
    - Everyday: Keep accessible in dedicated hobby spaces.
    - Monthly: Store in an organized, labeled area for easy access.
    - Yearly: Store in a labeled container and set a deadline (e.g., use within 12 months or donate).
    - Unlikely: Donate or sell, especially if the hobby or sport is no longer active.
5. Organize and Act:
- Keep: Organize kept items by value and frequency, ensuring everyday items are most accessible.
  - Store: Use labeled bins or containers for monthly and yearly items, noting their value category.
  - Donate/Sell: Box up items for donation or list them for sale within a week to avoid procrastination.
  - Discard: Recycle or trash items that are broken or unusable.
6. Review Periodically: Revisit your system every 6–12 months to reassess yearly and unlikely items, ensuring your space reflects your current needs and values.

#### Step 4: Tips for Success

- Start Small: Begin with one drawer or shelf to build momentum.
- Ask Key Questions: For each item, ask, “Does this align with my current values?” and “When did I last use this?”
- Limit Sentimental Items: For items that don't fit the four values but hold emotional weight, limit to one small, labeled “memory box.”
- Track Progress: Keep a log of donated or sold items to feel accomplished and motivated.
- Involve Others: If decluttering a shared space, discuss values and usage with household members to align decisions.

## Example Application

Item: A designer handbag

- Value: Status Item
- Usage: Somewhat Likely to Use This Year (used for special events)
- Decision: Store carefully in a dust bag and reassess next year. If unused by then, consider selling.

Item: A set of watercolor paints

- Value: Entertainment/Hobby
- Usage: Highly Unlikely to Ever Use Again (haven't painted in years)
- Decision: Donate to a local art program or school.

Item: A coffee maker

- Value: Household Item
- Usage: Use Everyday
- Decision: Keep on the kitchen counter for easy access.

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This method ensures your decluttering decisions align with your values and practical needs, creating a space that's functional, beautiful, and meaningful. Let me know if you'd like a checklist, worksheet, or further customization!

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\*Edit: My own personal definition of "status item" is any jewelry or fancy clothing (I don't own designer items).

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## Post by “Joshua” of May 23, 2025 at 3:23 PM

I've lived in 7 different places in the last 15 years, not counting the cab of a freightliner that I lived out of for two of them.

Looking back, there are things I wish I hadn't given away, things I wish I hadn't acquired, and things I would like to have but couldn't make practical use of in my current place.

It's unlikely that I'll ever own a house, but my experience has given me a good idea of what I'll want in it if I ever do.

Everything in it will be useful, practical, and optimized for utility.

For example; I once had a paper shredder with an irritatingly small bin that was a hassle to empty. So I took a wire rack shelving unit and cut out several wires from the surface of one shelf. I set the head of the paper shredder into the hole that this created, used a bent paper clip attached to the shelf to trigger the safety sensor, and put a large trash can with a can liner under the shelf. The paper shredder dropped the shredding directly into the can, and when I wanted to empty it I could just slide the can out and change the bag.

On the shelf there were two trays for sorting the mail. Once a week or so I could shred everything. The old system was troublesome, irritating, and messy. The new system was neat, tidy, efficient, and effortless.

Then I put a box of wine on the next shelf up with the spout hanging over the end, and a drip pan filled with corks hanging off the lower shelf to catch spills.

I put kitchen knives on a magnetic strip above the sink, with all my frying pans and small sauce pans hanging from hooks on the opposite wall. I don't want to pull everything out from the cabinet to get to the one sauce pan at the back.

So this is my advice; use a systems-based approach and optimize for an experience free of headache and hassle. I'm sure if I lived in that apartment any longer I would have had a mini-fridge next to my living room hammock. I still miss that hammock!