

Tips for downsizing:
get ready to move on



Furniture – make sure it fits!



Have a firm idea of the outcomes – do you want spacious and breezy or cramped and cluttered?

What things are not negotiable - eg China cabinet, grandma's desk - ensure there is enough space

Don't overcrowd your home → smaller home = smaller furniture

Use new floorplan and measure your furniture

Leave space for mobility

Check sizes of whitegoods, china cabinets, bookshelves and TV stands

Develop a plan for the furniture and discuss it with your removalists so they can place it all at the time of delivery

Clothing, shoes and accessories



Measure the length of the hanging space in the new wardrobes. When you are deciding what clothing to keep you will have an idea of the space available.

It is worth taking the time to build your future downsized wardrobe carefully. Start with skirts and pants – only your favourite and best fitting. Add tops that can be mixed and matched, plus shoes and handbags that will work with many items.

Do the same with your jewellery. It does build up over a lifetime, but if it doesn't enhance your clothing, it should go!

Discard worn items and those that have been waiting for repairs. If you haven't fixed it yet, you probably don't need it.

If the wardrobes have shelves or drawers, have an idea of what you will keep there, for example suitcases, out of season clothing or spare linen. If you have your shoes on racks, make sure they will fit in the wardrobe.

Be realistic with your choices. Does your lifestyle require as much formal, business, or sportswear now? How many cocktail frocks have you worn recently? If there is no lawn to mow, do you need more than one set of 'work clothes' Hopefully you need none!

Kitchen and Pantry



A kitchen downsize can be quite difficult. Carefully look at the number of cupboards and drawers in your new home. Measuring them and making a paper template can be helpful in ensuring you don't overfill the spaces.

Discard any cracked and chipped pieces of crockery, consider using your second/best china and move your everyday china on. Use the same idea for stemware and glasses. If you only entertain a few people at a time, there is no point storing dozens of glasses. Again, keep the very best and use it.

Small appliances and various gadgets build up over time, if you have not used them for a few years, or ever, they should make way for more important items. If you really love baking for example, just take a set of bowls and your favourite tin and spoon. Donate the rest to a budding baker in the family or a friend.

Be ruthless in the pantry. Check the use by dates of all jars and dry goods. If you have very large Tupperware and storage jars make sure they will fit in the pantry. Measurements here will help as well.

Think about the entertaining you do; an enormous stockpot and huge roasting tray might not be needed anymore.

The Paperwork



An extensive filing system used to be the standard in any household. Now with internet banking, emailed receipts and photos on your phones, unless you have a lot of business interests, a series of file boxes on a shelf should suffice.

A filing cabinet takes up a lot of floorspace in your spare room that could be used for more enjoyable pursuits. There is really no need to keep years' worth of old insurance documents, telephone bills or rates notices. Take photos of current documents and receipts and email them to yourself and they will always be at your fingertips.

As you sort through the papers, have a system already in place for important personal papers, family history and memorabilia, perhaps things your children might be interested in such as school reports or programs from sports days.

Discard warranties and user manual from long gone electricals and remember that the newer ones are all available online.

The Photos



Photos can be one of the more difficult things to deal with because of the memories involved. Also, photos today are very tidy and accessible on your computer or phone. Yesterday's photos were not.

If you were a very dedicated album creator, kudos to you. You may still need to think about the storage for these in your new home. For the rest of us, there is likely to be a variety of boxes large and small, stuffed envelopes and the bottom of drawers filled with photos and negatives.

A recent client's husband was a prolific photographer, and she had spent many hours sorting through them alone which made her feel quite melancholic. We dedicated two days (there were a lot of photos) and set up a production line.

We first discarded any photos with no people in them, unless they were quite spectacular. The next criteria was if the people could be remembered. If not, out they went.

We then made-up folders for children and friends pictured and spread the photo love around. The client found it to be a much more pleasant experience with company and we kept the ball rolling.

There are many options now to have both photos, super 8 film and VHS video digitized, and a usb stick full of family memories makes a thoughtful gift.

Gifts and Guilt



Guilt is an emotion that can make your downsizing process an unpleasant experience. It is important to remember that this is about you, your future and lifestyle.

Many of you may have had an aunt or friend who travelled and bought you a trinket wherever they landed. Then into the cupboard it went. Although the gift is a precious memory, having that item in your cupboard 20 years later is another matter.

It is ok to let it go. You should not feel obliged to take those gifts to the grave. You will feel uncomfortable letting those things go, but that is a natural feeling. Would your friend really want you to hold onto that egg cup/teaspoon/tea towel at the expense of your comfort. No, they wouldn't. So, treasure the memory, but let the gift go.

We often find that people are wanting reassurance that letting something go is not an insult to the gift giver. Give yourself permission to put yourself and your future life first.

Where will it go?



If you are in the home where you raised your children, chances are there is a large quantity of furniture, homewares and collectibles that you will not be able to take with you. Your options are to give it to family and friends, sell it, donate it or send it to waste.

It is worth having a look online at fine china you might have. There are some patterns that are very desirable, and a trio might be worth several hundred dollars. If you are looking at Ebay, be sure to search for sold and completed items, as this gives a much better idea of the market value.

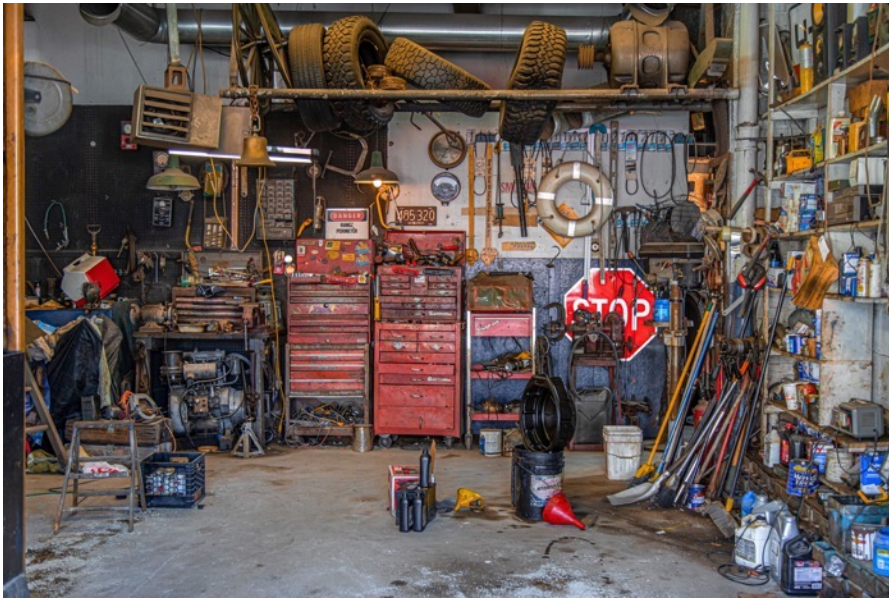
Like clothing, furniture has fashion fads. Unless you are blessed with a houseful of mid century modern Danish delights, it is very hard to sell, no matter how valuable it may have been at the time of purchase. The beautiful silky oak or cedar dining suite lovingly cherished is not desirable for the contemporary buyer, it is too heavy, too dark and too formal for today's lifestyles.

You can investigate sending it to an auction house, but it is important to weigh up the costs of transport. China, old cameras, stamps and coins can be sent to auction. They often give feedback and will take a 20 per cent commission.

If you have the time and motivation, Gumtree or Facebook marketplace are suitable for furniture and whitegoods sales.



Where will it go?



For starters...NOT the toilet, the bin, or the sink.

50 children are admitted to hospital every week as a result of poisoning. In many cases this involves the consumption of medicines that are not intended for them.

You can take your out-of-date and unwanted medicines and prescription tablets and creams to any pharmacy in Australia. All pharmacies are equipped to accept all medicines.

Paints can be left at council waste facilities.

Paintback is a cost-effective solution for households and trade painters to remove unwanted paint and packaging, providing 70 disposal locations nationally. This program is the first such national program in the world to be developed and voluntary run by the paint industry. More than a million litres of unwanted paint has been diverted from landfill in the first year



Where will it go?



For paper and secure documents, there are a variety of secure shredding options.

A bin or bins can be delivered to your house and taken away when full.

There are companies who will shred your paper on site

There is no need to take papers out of folders or sleeves or remove paper or bulldog clips.

They will also destroy other media such as CDs, hard drives and laptops.

Giving to Charity



Charities can be quite choosy about furniture they accept. If shelves are bowed or the back is loose, it is wobbly, or has damage, stickers or missing parts they don't want it.

Office furniture such as large desks and chairs are a bit hit and miss as well. Filing cabinets will only be taken in good condition with the key.

Electrical items differ – some charities will take whitegoods that are less than five years old, some will accept most or no electricals. As they must have them tested and tagged for sale, it becomes a cost issue to the charity.

Clothing and shoes should be in good condition and other clothing can be donated to be made into rags.

Old towels and blankets are appreciated by the Animal Welfare League and the RSPCA. Your local vet is also an option.

Giving to Charity



Smaller charity shops will often take magazines if they have room, but usually they are better recycled. Yes, sadly even National Geographic's.

Your local childcare or kindy may accept magazines, or unused stationary or craft materials. The major charities take books that are in good condition, depending on their storage

UQ Alumni has a pickup facility, preferring academic, but will usually take anything. They may even have boxes they can deliver.

If you are a sewer and you have fabrics and haberdashery, your local seniors centre may have a quilting circle, or collect jars to sell jam at cake stalls.

Unless in pristine condition, charities will not accept mattresses, or beds with wire bases.

DOWNSIZING COLOUR CODE

A graphic of a brown corkboard with rounded corners. On the left side, the word "Dots" is written in white. Four colored circles (red, yellow, blue, green) are arranged vertically on the right side of the corkboard, each corresponding to a line of text.

Dots

-  Important and keep
-  Donate to charity
-  Give to family member
-  Store or prepack

Preparing for Sale – 12 to 9 months ahead



Start your downsize and declutter as early as possible.

Break the job into very small manageable parts, just one drawer, or a shelf of the linen cupboard.

Then, by the time your home goes on the market, there should be little left that you won't be taking with you.

The less furniture and clutter the better for the sale photos. Its also an idea to pack away personal photos and perhaps some book and collectibles.

It may be worth investigating having a staging company come in to dress your home. Some upgraded furniture and soft furnishings can make all the difference.



Preparing to Move

- Removalists and insurance
- Arrange packing materials
- Change of address
- Redirect mail
- Update license
- House clean
- Pest treatment
- Transfer utilities and internet
- Waste removal
- Charity collection



Get Packing!

- Label your boxes with room/contents
- Keep like with like
- Keep to a reasonable weight – 20 kg
- Stack wrapped plates on their rim
- Mark knives to avoid injury
- Use snap lock bags for small items
- Pack cutlery in Tupperware or paper
- Do not pack aerosol sprays
- Tighten and check lids
- Put oils and sauces in plastic bags before boxing
- Check locking screws for front loader
- Keep bolts and screws safe
- Check with removalist for excluded items
- Keep your priority boxes in sight
- Remember your overnight bag



Your priorities on move day



- Purse
- Wallet
- Chequebook
- Address Book
- Medications
- Mobile phone
- Mobile phone charger
- Toiletries needed during the day, for over night
- Hearing Aid
- Glasses or Contacts
- Cane or walker
- Clothing for the next day – pants, shirt shoes, socks, underwear
- Food & drinks for move day
- Valuable items that you want to carry with you e.g., jewelry
- Important documents that you want to keep with you e.g., passport
- Paperwork for the community to which you are moving



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How can a Move Manager can help?

- 📍 Declutter and downsize
- 📍 Organise waste and donations
- 📍 Find storage and movers
- 📍 Arrange cleaning and maintenance
- 📍 Coordinate styling and real estate
- 📍 Pack your house and supervise removalists
- 📍 Help with settling in and unpacking