

Fact sheet 1

What to expect from a decluttering session

Overview

A declutter session usually lasts between 3 or 4 hours. It can be quite physically and emotionally tiring so it's a good idea to book a time when you usually feel quite energetic – perhaps first thing in the morning. You may also find you want to carry on organising your things after I've left, so allow yourself an hour or so before you move onto your next activity.

My role is to help you get started, identify your goals and encourage you to make decisions about your things - whether you want to keep an item and where it should live, or whether you're ready to let it go and where to dispose of it. I also want to help you learn to maintain your tidy spaces so I'll be teaching you techniques as we go.

Decluttering isn't just about throwing things out - I'll guide you through each area you want to tackle and help you sort and organise your things so you only keep what you need or love. I'll help you find a place for everything so it's easier to put away in the future and find it again when you need it. I'll encourage you if you feel tired or overwhelmed. We might decide on challenges for you to tackle in between our appointments. I will keep a to do list throughout our session of any tasks we come upon but which we don't have time to tackle during our session. That way we won't lose track of anything.

If you would like me to, I can take your cast offs to the charity shop so it's not sitting in your hallway or car boot waiting to be dropped off (or tempting you to take it back again).

Where will we start?

This will depend on your situation and what you want to achieve. If clutter is causing you difficulty in getting around your home, then we will begin by tackling access areas first – such as the stairs, hallway or landing.

Sometimes, we begin in the room or space that's causing you the most anxiety or frustration. This can help you see that change is possible and motivate you to keep going.

Sometimes we begin with storage areas, such as the under stairs cupboard. This helps free up space to find homes for things that might be creating clutter elsewhere.

We may begin in the rooms you use the most. Getting the main living areas sorted can really help you feel like you are starting to get your house back.

Lastly, we may start with your bedroom. Creating a sanctuary where you can close the door on the rest of the house and regain your strength for the next day can be the best approach.



How does the session work?

Wherever we start, we will spend the first 15 minutes or so planning the purpose of the space and how you will use it. This really helps us clarify what should be kept in the room and highlights what shouldn't be there. We will think about what storage we will need and consider your furniture requirements. We might even discuss decoration, accessories and fabrics.

We will identify a sorting area and then handle each item we come across, sorting it into a pile. We will start with things cluttering the floor first and then move onto surfaces. Then we'll tackle the insides of cupboards and other furniture.



We will group similar things together so you can see how much you have of each item. Then we will begin making decisions about each item - do you need it, love it, or have to keep it for a particular reason (i.e legal or financial)? This is when we will start putting things into bags for recycling/charity/tip.

We will continue in this way around the whole room. As a general rule, an average room takes 1-2 days to organise which is about 2 or 3 sessions. We will have plenty of opportunity to discuss techniques to help keep your things organised in the future.

Eventually the things you want to keep and the things you want to let go of will become clearer. We will make a pile of things that don't belong in the room but that you want to keep elsewhere and we will put them in their new home at the end of our session. There may not be enough space for them in their newly assigned home, so be prepared for other rooms to become a bit untidy before they get the decluttering treatment.

We will leave the last half an hour or so for tidying up, hoovering or polishing, putting things away and loading the car if required.



Storage

Quite often storage becomes available as we declutter and we'll make a pile of empty containers which we can re-use as we need them. I can also research storage products for you should you need to buy other containers or systems later. Please don't buy storage before we start as this can end up becoming surplus to requirements and part of the clutter problem!

After I've left, you may want to carry on with the sorting process or finish off a few remaining tasks, so leave yourself an hour spare. Make sure you always take a moment to step back and appreciate how hard you have worked and what you have achieved. You might even like to reward yourself with a special treat!