

Fresh Ideas To Start Your Spring Cleaning

*Spring makes its own statement,
so loud and clear that the gardener
seems to be only one of the instruments,
not the composer.*

- Geoffrey B. Charlesworth

There is nothing quite like spring for motivation to start fresh, clean house and embrace change. For seniors transitioning to retirement communities, spring is the perfect time to begin the de-cluttering and organizing process in preparation for the upcoming move. The resulting freedom from unwanted "stuff" allows many seniors more time and energy to pursue personal hobbies, passions and interests in their new retirement community.

But where to start? The accumulation of a lifetime can be a bit overwhelming. Sometimes a simple rule of thumb can make the process easier. For most items, the 12 month rule applies:

Any clothing item which has not been worn in 12 months, and is not a special occasion piece, may be donated, given to friends or discarded.

Any spice more than 12 months old should be discarded.

Any kitchen item not used in 12 months may be donated or discarded.

Any hazardous materials (chemicals, pesticides, paints) not used in the last 12 months should be dropped off at the local hazardous waste disposal site.

Remember, most movers will not transport these items!

Regular monthly paperwork (utilities, receipts, etc) may be sorted into a 12 month accordion file and purged on a rotation basis. Remember to shred all paperwork before discarding!

Linens not used in 12 months may be donated to your favorite local charity.

Photographs and memorabilia not viewed in the last 12 months should be sorted and stored in acid free photo boxes or other safe storage to preserve for future viewing.

And the best rule when sorting and de-cluttering? Handle each item only once! Decide to keep, donate or discard and then follow through on your decision.

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