

EBOOK

MINIMALIST(ISH) PARENTS

*PRACTICAL & SIMPLE STEPS
TO LET GO OF STUFF*



For elder.

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The Stuff We Accumulate

Toddlers aged 1 to 3 can have anywhere from:

- 50 to 100 toys
- 10 to 50 books
- 50 to 100 pieces of clothing

These are just averages, but it might be fun (and enlightening!) to count how many items your child owns, especially those within their reach. And remember, these are just your child's things, then there are yours and other family members' belongings. Suddenly, there's a lot of stuff!

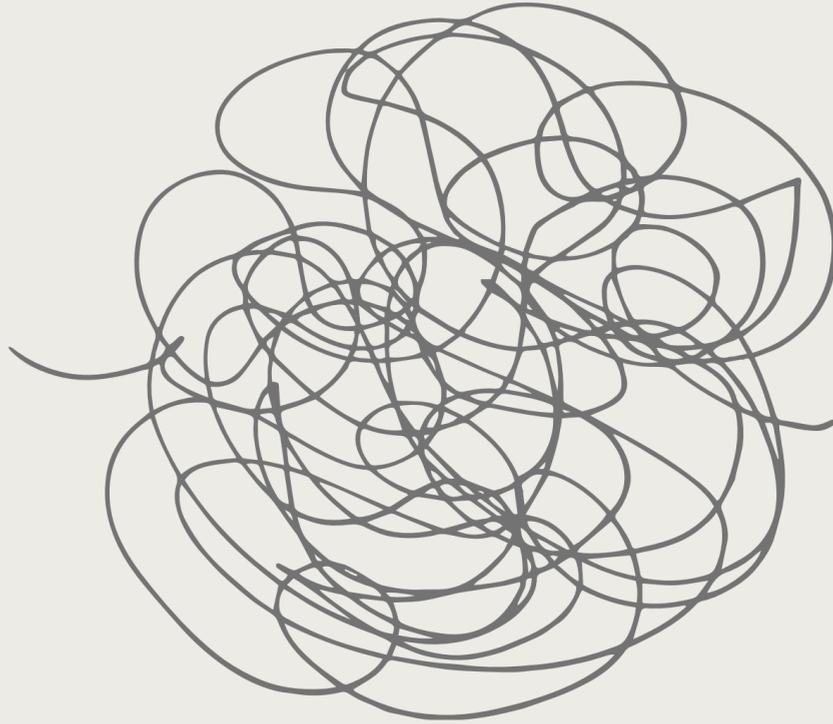
The Impact of Too Much Stuff

When there's too much clutter in the home:

- The family feels overwhelmed.
- If you like things tidy, you end up constantly cleaning.
- You think about the mess more than you'd like.
- You dread coming home to the chaos.
- Your child's favorite activity becomes making a mess.
- Focused playtime decreases and becomes more superficial.
- Social and emotional development is impacted.
- Creativity takes a hit.

When children have too many possessions, they don't develop attachments to their things and may constantly want more.





When kids have fewer items:

- Their play becomes more focused.
- They become resourceful and find creative solutions.
- Imagination and creativity flourish.
- Emotional regulation improves because they aren't overwhelmed by choices.
- They appreciate what they have and learn patience when new items aren't always available.

And yes, having fewer things is one of the best ways to teach delayed gratification.

The Benefits of Fewer Things

Where Do We Start?

Decluttering sounds simple, but if it were easy, no one would struggle with having too much stuff.

Here's how to begin:

Reflect on What Overwhelms You

Take 10 minutes today and write down everything that feels heavy or cluttered in your home.



USE PEN AND PAPER; IT HELPS YOUR BRAIN PROCESS BETTER.

Acknowledge That There Are No Quick Fixes

Tidying up isn't magic. Even if someone reorganizes your home for you, it'll likely revert to its original state in a few weeks. Lasting change requires rewiring your brain and building habits over time.

Start Small

Focus on one thing at a time. Decluttering is easier and faster with guidance, but it's okay to take it step by step on your own.

The Time-Saving Potential of Decluttering



IMAGINE IF TIDYING ONLY TOOK 5
TO 10 MINUTES A DAY—EVEN WITH
KIDS!

Studies show

people spend an average of 2 to 3 hours per day on household tasks like cleaning, tidying, cooking, and other chores. That's a lot of time! By minimizing your home, you can significantly reduce this workload. Imagine if tidying only took 5 to 10 minutes a day—even with kids!

WHAT IF YOU COULD SAVE JUST
ONE HOUR A DAY? THAT'S AT
LEAST 7 EXTRA HOURS A WEEK.
WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH THAT
TIME?

Actionable Tips:

When you're ready to declutter, here's how to get started:

Create a Decluttering Box

- Use a box or colored bag (not transparent) labeled with "I am minimizing." As you go about your day, add items to it.
- Use a trash bag for everything that needs to be thrown away.

Focus on These 5 Categories:

- Broken items you keep telling yourself you'll fix.
- Kitchen gadgets you thought were useful but never use.
- Extra pens and stationery.
- Decorations you don't even like.
- Items that have already expired.



Ask Yourself These Questions:

- DOES IT SPARK JOY? (INSPIRED BY MARIE KONDO)
- WOULD I BUY THIS AGAIN?
- DOES IT FIT THE TYPE OF HOME I WANT TO CREATE?
- IS THERE SOMETHING ELSE I CAN USE FOR THE SAME PURPOSE?
- WHY AM I KEEPING THIS?



By reflecting on these questions, you can make more intentional decisions about what to keep and what to let go.

Progress, Not Perfection

Decluttering can be emotional. If it were purely logical, everyone would do it easily. Celebrate the small wins: each item you let go of is a step toward a simpler, more organized home. Place the first item in your decluttering box, take a moment to appreciate the newly created empty space, and congratulate yourself for starting.

NOW, LET GO, AND GO DONATE OR
THROW AWAY WHAT YOU COLLECTED.
GET THESE THINGS OUT OF THE
HOUSE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE,
OTHERWISE YOU MIGHT RECONSIDER.

Look Ahead

Second stage - Focus on letting go of:

- Duplicates.
- Clothes that no longer fit.
- Books and magazines you don't plan to read again.
- Often, we keep things "just in case." But decluttering isn't just practical—it's emotional. Acknowledge where you are in the process, and know it's okay to take it in your own rhythm. If you can't let go, then ask for help.

The Bigger Picture

By having fewer things, you'll spend less time managing your home and more time focusing on what truly matters.

Decluttering with Healthy Acceptance

Healthy acceptance feels peaceful. It makes you feel there is a solution and helps you regain control. This is the type of acceptance we are aiming for on this journey.

The goal is to build a habit of intentional thinking each time you touch an item. Keep a box ready for things you no longer need and trust the process. This is how new habits are formed.

Benefits of Decluttering

- REDUCES UP TO 40% OF HOUSEWORK TIME.
- INCREASES FEELINGS OF HAPPINESS AND CONTROL.
- A TIDY HOME IMPROVES HEALTH, COGNITIVE FUNCTION, AND PRODUCTIVITY WHILE LOWERING STRESS LEVELS.
- AS PARENTS, DECLUTTERING FREES UP VALUABLE RESOURCES—TIME, ENERGY, AND PEACE OF MIND—THAT WE DESPERATELY NEED. LET'S KEEP MOVING FORWARD!

Decluttering Kids' Stuff

Lead by Example

Before decluttering your kids' things, start with your own. Children learn by example. When they see you letting go of items, it becomes easier for them to follow your lead. If you only declutter their belongings, it may feel unfair and cause resistance.

To make this easier, we've broken it down into two age groups:

1 Kids Under TWO

At this age, decluttering can often be done without your child noticing.

Here's how to approach it:

- Remove broken toys.
- Store toys they don't play with out of sight.

Do you have storage space?

If **yes**, select about 10 toys they love and put the rest in storage. Try this for a few weeks and observe if they miss anything. Fewer toys often lead to better, more focused play.

Tip: Storage doesn't need to be in a distant attic or basement. Use a closet, drawer, or spot out of sight to quickly remove excess clutter.

To make this easier:

Group toys by categories (e.g., stuffed animals, building blocks) and keep a few favorites from each.



2 Kids TWO & Older

By now, you've set an example for your child by decluttering your own items. Older kids might protest, so approach thoughtfully.

Have a place for everything:

While there's no strict limit on the number of toys, everything should have a home. Overflowing toys are a sign it's time to declutter.

TWO Decluttering Techniques We Love:

1. Bulk Decluttering

For younger kids with lots of toys, make decluttering fun by creating an "exciting new playground" with more space for their favorite toys.

Rearrange their room and give each toy a special place. Engage their imagination to make the process enjoyable.

Let them choose their favorite toys while explaining that the rest will be placed in a "safe space."

If needed, discreetly remove unused toys. Make sure to have an explanation ready in case they ask where the toys went (e.g., "They're broken" or "We donated them to kids who needed them").

2. Communicate & Make It a Game

Teach your child how to let go of items in a meaningful way by:

- Explaining how donating unused toys helps kids who have less.
- Turning decluttering into a fun game. For example:
 - Create rules (e.g., How many toys can stay? Where should toys be stored?)
 - Use stickers to mark areas for toys.
- Work together to donate, sell, or store items. This doubles as quality bonding time



**ACKNOWLEDGE
YOUR CHILD'S FEELINGS
THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS.**



Benefits of Fewer Toys for Kids

- **ENCOURAGES FOCUS AND CREATIVITY:** FEWER TOYS ALLOW FOR DEEPER ENGAGEMENT AND IMAGINATIVE PLAY.
- **PROMOTES INDEPENDENCE AND PROBLEM-SOLVING:** WITH FEWER DISTRACTIONS, KIDS EXPLORE AND PROBLEM-SOLVE MORE EFFECTIVELY.
- **IMPROVES ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS:** A SIMPLER TOY COLLECTION MAKES IT EASIER FOR CHILDREN TO MANAGE THEIR BELONGINGS.
- **REDUCES OVERSTIMULATION:** A CALMER ENVIRONMENT FOSTERS BETTER BEHAVIOR AND EMOTIONAL REGULATION.
- **FOSTERS GRATITUDE AND CARE:** KIDS APPRECIATE AND TAKE BETTER CARE OF THEIR BELONGINGS.
- **ENCOURAGES SHARING AND SOCIAL INTERACTION:** SIMPLER SPACES PROMOTE COOPERATIVE PLAY.

Note for Parents

Many parents feel that providing lots of toys is essential for their child's development. But what kids truly need is your presence and engagement.

TOYS DON'T DEVELOP SKILLS ON THEIR OWN—IT'S THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE CHILD, THE TOY, AND THE ADULT THAT REALLY MATTERS.

Fewer toys lead to:

More meaningful play.

More time spent with you.

Greater appreciation for what they have.

Remember, decluttering isn't just a practical task—it's emotional too. Take your time, and accept where you are right now. As parents, simplifying your child's space is a gift that brings more focus, creativity, and joy into their lives. Let's embrace the process of simplifying.

Maintaining a Tidy and Decluttered Home

Decluttering is a huge step, but maintaining a simplified home requires building intentional habits and systems. Let's focus on how to sustain the peaceful environment you've created.

The "10-Minute Reset"

Life gets messy—especially with kids. To stay on top of clutter, try the 10-minute reset, a quick daily habit that keeps your home feeling calm and organized.

Here's how:

Set a timer: Spend 10 minutes tidying one area.

Involve the family: Turn it into a game with kids or a shared moment with your partner. Focus on high-impact areas: Clear surfaces like kitchen counters, coffee tables, or entryways

A SMALL, CONSISTENT EFFORT
GOES A LONG WAY.





The "One-In, One-Out" Rule

EVERY ITEM IN YOUR HOME SHOULD EARN ITS PLACE. TO PREVENT CLUTTER FROM SNEAKING BACK, FOLLOW THIS SIMPLE RULE:

WHEN SOMETHING NEW COMES IN, SOMETHING OLD GOES OUT.

THIS APPLIES TO TOYS, CLOTHES, DECOR, AND EVEN KITCHEN GADGETS.

PRO TIP: GET YOUR KIDS INVOLVED! LET THEM CHOOSE WHAT TO PART WITH WHEN A NEW TOY ARRIVES.

Systems for Simplified Living

A clutter-free home thrives on systems.

Here are a few ideas to make tidiness almost automatic:

1. Create Drop Zones

Clutter often starts with items that don't have a home.

Solve this by designating drop zones for frequently used items:

- A small basket for keys, wallets, and sunglasses by the door.
- A tray for mail or paperwork to sort later.
- Hooks or bins for backpacks, jackets, and shoes.

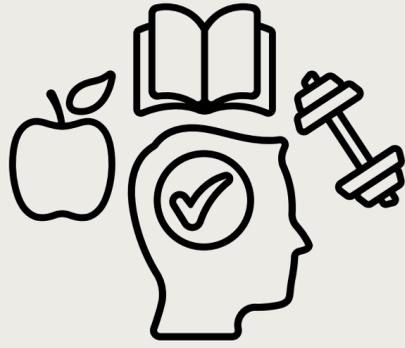
2. Give Everything a Home

Assign each item in your home a specific place. Label storage bins and drawers if needed. This way, everyone knows where to find things—and where to put them back.

3. Tidy as You Go

- Instead of waiting for a big clean-up, make tidying a natural part of your routine:
- Put away items after use.
- Clean up one area before moving to the next.
- Encourage kids to put toys back before taking out new ones.





Weekly Maintenance Habits

JUST A FEW INTENTIONAL HABITS EACH WEEK CAN HELP YOU MAINTAIN YOUR PROGRESS:

SUNDAY PREP: SPEND 20 MINUTES ON SUNDAY PREPARING FOR THE WEEK. FOCUS ON HIGH-TRAFFIC AREAS LIKE THE KITCHEN OR ENTRYWAY.

DECLUTTER A DRAWER: PICK ONE DRAWER OR SMALL SPACE TO DECLUTTER EACH WEEK.

ROTATE TOYS: IF YOU'VE STORED TOYS, SWAP THEM OUT PERIODICALLY TO KEEP PLAYTIME FRESH AND ENGAGING.

Teaching Kids Responsibility

MAINTAINING A TIDY HOME
IS EASIER
WHEN EVERYONE PITCHES IN.

Here's how to involve your kids:

- **Make It Fun:** Turn cleaning into a game with timers, challenges, or music.
- **Set Clear Expectations:** Use visual checklists or charts to show what needs to be done.

Offer Age-Appropriate Tasks:

- **Toddlers:** Putting toys in a bin.
- **Preschoolers:** Setting the table or wiping surfaces.
- **Older kids:** Sorting laundry or organizing their belongings.





The Emotional Side of Maintenance

Even with systems in place, maintaining a tidy home can feel overwhelming at times.

Give yourself grace and remember- **Progress Over Perfection-**

A tidy home isn't about being spotless but about creating a space where your family feels calm and supported.

Celebrate Wins: Acknowledge your efforts and progress, no matter how small.

Let Go of Guilt: It's okay if things get messy sometimes. Life happens!

Ask for help: When you feel overwhelmed, reach out to someone.

Maintaining progress is all about consistent, intentional habits. Remember, the goal isn't perfection, it's creating a home that supports the life you want for your family.



Clear Surfaces



Surfaces

—the unofficial dumping grounds of our homes-

Whether it's bottles in the baby phase or an explosion of kids' art as they grow, cluttered surfaces seem inevitable. But what if we told you this chaos affects more than just your space? It impacts your mind too. Surprised?

Why a Messy Surface Overwhelms Your Brain.

Our brains crave order. Seeing clutter triggers a mental alert: Unfinished business ahead! This constant visual noise can increase stress and make focusing harder.

However, **clear surfaces send a calming signal, helping you feel in control.**

For parents balancing endless tasks, minimizing surface clutter is a small change with a big impact.

5 Steps to Declutter & Keep Surfaces Minimal

1

Observe & Group

Pay attention to what gathers on your surfaces. Is it kids' artwork? Mail? Keys? Glasses? Group items by type and ask yourself: Do these have a home or a temporary home? (Temporary home ≠ any surface in your home.)

2

Establish Drop Zones

Every family needs designated spaces for frequently dropped items. These drop zones need to be created where you naturally drop your things.

- **Keys & Wallets:** A small basket or tray by the door works wonders.
- **Mail:** Use a wall-mounted sorter or tray to prevent it from scattering. Sort your mail the moment you bring it into your home.
- **Kids' Creations:** A basket for collecting them and then a frame that fits many drawings will ensure their art is honored but contained.

3

Declutter First, Then Organize

Resist the urge to buy storage solutions immediately. Begin by removing what you don't need or can live without, then create homes for the things you truly need and like to use.

4

Create Clear Systems

Once your drop zones are set, make using them part of the routine. Teach kids to place their artwork in the basket or folder and encourage everyone to put items in their proper homes. Education takes time, so be patient and insistent. Make these 'homes' accessible, pretty, and even label them if you can. Everyone should know where things go. Just like where you put your jacket, you should know where you place your mail.

5

Reassess Regularly

Minimalism(ish) isn't about perfection. Plan a quick surface check weekly to keep things in order.

The Joy of Clear Surfaces and Drop Zones

When surfaces are clear and drop zones are in place, life gets easier:

Visual Calm: Walking into a room feels less overwhelming.

Time Saved: No more searching for lost keys or digging through piles of paper.

Mental Space: Fewer distractions mean more energy for what truly matters.

Do this today

Pick one frequently cluttered surface and focus on clearing it. Add a drop zone where needed—a small basket for keys, a folder for mail, or a tray for phones & headphones. Start small, stay consistent, and enjoy the peace of mind that comes with intentional living.





Conscious Consumption: The "24-Hour Rule"

A CLUTTER-FREE HOME BEGINS WITH MINDFUL PURCHASING.

THE 24-HOUR RULE HELPS CURB IMPULSE BUYING:

- **WAIT 24 HOURS** BEFORE PURCHASING ANYTHING THAT ISN'T ESSENTIAL.
- USE THIS TIME TO ASK: "DO I NEED THIS?" "WILL I USE IT?" "DO I HAVE SPACE FOR IT?"
- **CREATE A WISHLIST** FOR NON-URGENT ITEMS AND REVISIT IT LATER.
- **TEACH YOUR KIDS** THIS PRACTICE BY INVOLVING THEM IN DECISIONS ABOUT NEW TOYS OR ITEMS FOR THEIR ROOM.

LAST NOTE

Gratitude & Intentional Living

Simplifying life is a mindful process. One of the reasons we declutter and let go of things is to create space—not just in our homes but in our minds and hearts. And in that space, we can start noticing what truly matters.

✨ **Gratitude is a powerful mindfulness practice.** ✨

As parents, we're often so busy that we don't see the progress we're making. The changes are gradual, the habits build slowly, and before we know it, we've transformed without even realizing it. But every small step counts. Every choice to be intentional, to create order, to ask for help, to pause and appreciate—these moments add up to a life that feels lighter, more aligned, and more fulfilling.

So take a moment. Recognize how far you've come. Celebrate the little wins. Give yourself a high five for everything you've accomplished—because it all matters. And if you ever need support along the way, remember: you don't have to do it alone.

You're doing an amazing job. Keep going. Keep simplifying. Keep making space for what truly matters.

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For elder.