



**De-Clutter
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De-Clutter

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De-Clutter Success Secrets

What effect is clutter having on you?

Is it causing you to feel depressed, stressed, hopeless and slightly out of control? The effects of clutter can be both physical or mental and never positive.

So why do we sometimes let clutter take over our lives?

We seem to collect and hold on to so much 'stuff' these days; it certainly doesn't seem to be making us any happier. Why do we feel the need to have so many possessions?

It has arrived at the point where there is a boom in **storage space** you can hire.

- Kids have more toys than they could ever play with.
- Women have more clothes than could be worn in a year.
- Men have more computer games than they have time to use.

There is nothing wrong with a few possessions.

There is a problem when clutter is affecting your health, taking over your space and causing you unnecessary stress. There is a problem when your world revolves around buying more but never allowing yourself the space (both physical and mental) to enjoy what you have.

There is nothing wrong with possessions

Until they have a negative effect on you and get in the way of your happy, fulfilled life.

A good de-cluttering session is truly an exhilarating experience. Especially when you throw out junk you have been keeping for no real reason (which you now realise) and start to enjoy the space that is left behind.

Have a look at the following success secrets which will help you on your way to gaining control over your clutter.

Start today

There is no better time than right now to de-clutter. If you wait till tomorrow or half term or till the kids leave school (OK that is a bit extreme). Then the situation will require even more effort as chances are a bit more (or a lot more) clutter will have entered your home by then.

Keep it simple by starting with 15 minutes a day.

Look at it one drawer, cupboard or file at a time and slowly work through to an organised home. After all everyone has a spare 15 minutes once in a while that can be spent on achieving the results you want.

It is better to look at the process in little steps rather than thinking that you need to de-clutter the whole house in one go.

If we look at spending 15 minutes on a small area, start by:

- Playing music you like
- Dumping contents to be sorted on the floor
- Sort into 4 piles 'I like' 'donate' 'get rid of' 'find a proper home'
- Put back what you like
- Put **donated items** by the door, **get rid of** in the bin (or recycle box) and the items left over into their new **proper homes**.

Be realistic on how long it will take to sort you clutter. It is important to remember that the clutter did not appear instantly so it will take time to eradicate. But now that you have **started today**, you are on your way.

Choose a small area

Leading on from the previous section, begin by de-cluttering in small bits.

Look at starting with an area like a sock drawer, your DVD collection or the bathroom cabinet. It is a very good idea to start with an area that is **light on emotion**, an area that will be easy to decide what needs to go and what to keep.

So don't start with your photo album or the kids toys.

Seeing quick results will help to give you the confidence to move onto larger areas and reduces the chance of getting frustrated or discouraged.

Have a home

Live by the saying 'a place for everything and everything in its place'. That way when it is time to clear up you will be able to do so in record time.

Make sure everyone who lives in the house is aware of where items belong and encourage them to return what they use to its correct place (I know this is an optimistic idea but it is worth a try). Wouldn't it be great to save time because you know where something is and no longer have to run around the house looking for it? Have no fear there are times when I still need to search for items, after all **we are all human- so don't be too hard on your self.**

A side effect of this secret is that once everything has a home you will be saving money.

This is because:

- You will know what you have and where it is and therefore reduce any impulse or panic purchases.
- Once your home is organised and you enjoy the benefits you will be keen to keep it that way and not fill it with unneeded clutter.

I once had a client who, while sorting her home found several nutcrackers. They were found in different cupboards, under piles of clutter and even one in the kitchen (of all places). Every Christmas the hunt for a nutcracker would begin, having no success she would rush out and buy another one. This is no longer the case because now her possessions have proper homes.

Get rid of immediately

It is important to get rid of the items you don't want immediately. This will prevent you from having the sudden urge to go through the bag for the charity shop and change your mind.

In the section start today I mentioned that you need to put the donated clothes in a bag by the door. This point will take it that bit further and encourage you to take the donated items straight to the charity shop.

With the bags of clutter gone you will be able to enjoy the space you have just created and generate motivation to continue on de-cluttering the rest of your house.

When you have decided what clutter you no longer want, make sure you throw it out in a responsible way. Have a look at www.purelypeppermint.com the 'going green' page is full of great ways to donate, sell or recycle what you don't want or need.

Stop buying

The best way to get and stay on top of your clutter is to stop bringing more items into your home.

Now that you are committed to de-cluttering and are going to spend your valuable time doing so, make sure you don't waste that time by filling your house back up again with new clutter.

This isn't to say that you can't ever buy anything ever again.

Allow yourself the right to make slightly better choices and remember the 'one in one out' rule. If you buy trousers then a pair you already own should go off to charity, the same for CDs, DVDs, trinkets or anything else you buy.

If you are in the habit of buying little treats to lift your mood, it would be a good idea to investigate other ways of boosting how you feel.

Look at what you could do instead like:

Take in a movie

Go for a walk

Or

Call a friend you haven't heard from in a while.

That way you are not bringing clutter and mess into your home which will only lead to unhappiness, frustration and stress.

When you are out and temptation is knocking at your door ask.

- What will this top, jewellery, vase, CD give me?
- Do I really need it?
- Will It just end up as clutter and guilt?

My own personal mantra to help me resist temptation is:

Don't buy it 'cause it's cheap'.

Now when I am standing at a sale rack in any high street shop and my resistance is a bit low I just repeat my mantra. This gives me a chance to realistically think about what I am about to buy and make a sensible choice not an emotional one.

Sort often

There is no easy way around this. To get and stay organised you need to sort, de-clutter and throw 'stuff' out on a regular basis.

It is time again to remind you that the clutter did not appear instantly. You need to be realistic on how much time it will take to sort the situation and that you will need to sort the situation regularly.

Sometimes people think there is a magic cure to a problem like clutter. That once you have gone through the process of clearing and getting the situation under control things will mysteriously stay that way (I wish).

It just doesn't happen; you will need to use all the secrets in this article to get the results you want.

So far you have:

- Started to de-clutter today.
- Started small to reduce the chance of getting frustrated.
- Started to find homes for your possessions which will allow you to make a better use of your time.
- Started to throw out immediately to prevent the urge of bringing the stuff back into the house.

And

- Stopped buying.

Now all of these points will benefit from happening often.

Once you have formed the habit (more on that later) of sorting often you will be on the way to a more organised home. Then it will be quick and easy to keep the clutter away (remember not magic cure just commitment).

Sort often is especially important for paperwork which is looked at in more detail next.

Keep filing simple

Paperwork is one of the first places that the clutter can quickly grow and get out of control. Even with computers and other modern technologies, the concept of being paperless seems to be as futuristic as people living on the moon.

Keep your filing system simple and one that you are willing to use. If the system requires too many steps you'll end up saying 'I'll put this here for now' and there it will live forever.

There are many different files, boxes, folders, and binders that you can buy to help organise your office and paperwork. But don't rush out and spend plenty of money on a filing cabinet, then think it will sort all your problems. There is a saying that filing cabinets are a great way to archive your paperwork.

Have a look at what system you currently use.

- What do you like about it?
- What works best (boxes, folders, in trays)?
- What isn't working (everything everywhere, piles, chaos)?
- What main change would make the biggest difference?

While deciding on a system that works have a serious clearout of all the paperwork you no longer need (make sure to shred anything with personal details).

After investigating the system you currently use, you will now have a better idea of what filing and organising system works best. The paperwork clearout will help you to realistically understand what space you have and what sort of storage is needed.

If at this point you need to go and buy organising supplies you will be buying from a point of knowledge and not on impulse.

The side effect of saving money appears again.

Remember to use the secrets 'sort often' and 'get in a habit' along with a simple filing system. They all work together as one. One great way to be able to find any piece of paperwork you need in no time at all.

Get in a habit

It only takes 3 times for a bad habit to be created and 21 days to form good habits (yes it takes commitment). Don't let that put you off getting in the habit of being a bit more organised and having less clutter.

Some good habits could be:

- Putting items away after you have finished with them.
- Putting your clothes in a hamper or hanging them up at the end of the day.
- Closing what you have opened and throwing out what is no longer needed.

Do whatever **habit** it is that will help you to de-clutter. Get in the *habit* of doing it regularly and enjoy the *habit* of reaping the benefits.

Don't give up

Ask yourself 'What is the worst thing that could happen if I get rid of this?' If you can live with the answer then throw it out.

Remember (again) your clutter did not arrive in your home in one day so be patient with how long it may take to sort it out. When you are using all of the secrets and especially starting small, sorting often and have stopped buying, it will be unlikely that you will get frustrated or discouraged and give up.

Enjoy working through these secrets and the results you will achieve.

Celebrate

Choose something you have always wanted to do. You have been working hard implementing all these success secrets and **deserve to let your hair down** by spoiling yourself. It could be anything that you have been thinking about doing but would say 'oh maybe one day' well make that one day today. You could learn to ride a horse, have singing lessons or take a sky dive.

Whatever you choose to do remember what you are celebrating. You are celebrating how much progress you have made in de-cluttering your house, space and mind. So don't fill it back up by purchasing anything that will end up being known as your 'celebration clutter'.

In Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to read through my **Purely Peppermint's** Success Secrets. I hope you found them, enjoyable, entertaining, educational and enlightening.

The benefits of de-cluttering are there for everyone to experience. It has been described as having a weight lifted from your shoulders.

Like all things in life which are worthwhile you need to put the effort in at the beginning, but it will be it worth in the end.

Take the time to de-clutter.

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