



Photo: wallbeds.com

BEFORE



AFTER



Photos: savvyspacesolutions.com

Conquer Your Clutter

BYE, BYE, BRIC-A-BRAC

BY TRACEY RAYSON

On any given day, if you have ever misplaced your glasses, hunted for your keys, mislaid your gloves, lost the TV remote (again), or thought you needed a GPS just to find the cordless phone — you're not alone. The National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO) in partnership with Professional Organizers in Canada (POC) claims the average person wastes 150 hours per year searching for misplaced items.

These “wanderers” as they are coined in professional organizing circles prove the most problematic. Read on to learn why, and on the way, discover sleek storage solutions by organizing experts who weigh-in with tips and practical advice on de-cluttering your spaces.

“Many people simply don't know where to begin,” says Susan Borax, co-founder of Good Riddance Professional Organizing Solutions. “They think that all they need to do is go out and buy more storage containers for their stuff. This is ‘the chicken before the egg’ problem. The first thing you have to do is sort and purge,” says Borax.

Good Riddance eliminates the high costs of clinging to unwanted, unorganized, and often forgotten clutter. Borax along with co-founder Heather Knittel will assist you with creating simple, effective organizing solutions that harmonize with your style and budget.

Derived from the expression, “good riddance to bad rubbish,” the company doesn't advocate disposing of things

that are useful and meaningful, but rather they encourage clients to part with excess belongings they no longer like or need through sale, recycling, and donation in order to make room to live well. “Our principle value is in designing a roadmap, teaching a process, and coaching as we work room by room to keep people on course,” says Borax. “The objective is to create systems that will allow them to maintain their space on their own.”

The ability to stay organized lets you focus on accomplishing important life goals. Good Riddance shares some of their top tips to demystify the clutter conundrum.

- Don't tackle too many rooms at once: Completing one room at a time is the best practice.
- Don't underestimate the time it will take: Clutter did not happen overnight, more stuff means more decisions.
- Don't think you can de-clutter alone: Many people harbour strong emotional attachments to “stuff”; we can be the unbiased third party who can coach with difficult decisions.
- Don't make excuses for keeping stuff: We teach our clients to separate their feelings from the item and approach decisions with logic.

• Don't de-clutter and assume it will stay that way: Maintain your space and put aside some time daily, weekly, bi-weekly or monthly to keep your space clutter-free.

• Don't overlook the wanderers: These items are problematical because they don't necessarily have fixed locations and tend to move throughout the house; there is no substitute for establishing permanent homes as the means for easy retrieval.

“Obligations such as gifts and inherited items can be a big hurdle to overcome,” says Marnie Kurylo of Savvy Space Solutions. “I will often hear ‘my...mother/friend/in-laws/someone gave it/left it to me, so I can't get rid of it’ speech.”

Savvy Space Solutions works with clients to create storage and organizing systems personalized to their family's lifestyle or work environment. They teach clients basic organizing techniques they can implement into their lives to help keep them organized in the future.

Kurylo lays down her no-nonsense tips: “If you truly want to get organized you must answer hard questions. For every item that you own, ask yourself these questions: ‘Do you use it, wear it, or in some way gain from it? Is it broken? Stained? Missing pieces? Do you love it? Does it make you feel good about yourself or someone close to you? Are you keeping it for sentimental purposes? Or as an obligation? Do you have more than you need?’ Purge. Say goodbye to whatever you don't need, want or use.”

“Many people make the mistake of buying bins and other supplies before they have sorted, purged, and assigned their stuff,” says Borax. “Often they find that their purchases don't work for the purpose they had intended.” Sterilite ClearView Storage Drawers tops Kurylo's list and Borax recommends clear plastic storage boxes too, so you can see the contents.

Think outside the box (spring) and look to Wallbeds from Instant Bedrooms Manufacturing to free up vital floor space. Case in point: Their brand new design (unveiled exclusively at the BC Home & Garden Show) is the Kirei Board table bed, a small home office solution that is perfect for small spaces.

“With space at such a premium, people are now moving towards multipurpose rooms, rather than moving to a new place,” says Simon Litherland, corporate design consultant with Instant Bedrooms Manufacturing. “This means that the

room and the furniture must be used in two completely different ways, such as a home office and guest room.”

Instant Bedrooms are expanding into new product lines, adding custom made closets to their current line of Wallbeds, home offices and fitted bedrooms; they now offer a complete small space solution. Litherland believes that to de-clutter, “I would strongly recommend keeping as much hidden as possible. Keeping almost everything behind closed doors will bring a sense of order and calm to the environment.”

A sense of order indeed. And by the way, if you put this down intent on reading it later, but had to search for it — you've got yourself another “wanderer.” Put this on your list. Buy a magazine rack or suitable storage box, select a fixed location and voila — our pages will always be at your fingertips.

Resourceful Sources

- **Good Riddance Professional Organizing Solutions:** 604-421-5952 or visit www.goodriddance.ca
- **Savvy Space Solutions Professional Organizing Services:** 778-881-5261 or visit www.savvyspacesolutions.com
- **Instant Bedrooms Manufacturing:** 604-270-4121 or visit www.wallbeds.com