



Homes & Gardens

Town Tribune Weekly Guide To Spring Living

Decluttering Tips to Make Your Home Instantly Feel Bigger



If your home is feeling small these days, you may need to re-evaluate what you have in your space. Having a home feel all comes down to a few things you may need to get rid of, not knocking down walls for extra space.

Here are seven decluttering tips from experts that can your space feel instantly larger and more open that's easy to do this weekend.

Cut Down on Visual Clutter:

Take photos of your home, then evaluate what it might look like to an outsider. Those papers on the kitchen counter, the packages you've been meaning to unpack—they probably need a different home.

"Honestly, the quickest way to make a home feel bigger is to cut down on visual clutter," says home expert Caroline Winkler. "A space can be a decent size, but if there's stuff everywhere, it's immediately going to feel smaller

and more overwhelming."

Piles of stuff instantly catch the eye; when it's gone, your home will feel more clean, tidy, and less busy.

Remove Furniture:

If visual clutter isn't your problem, then you may need to turn to the furniture. Homes of all sizes can feel crowded and suffocating when there's more pieces in a room than there should be.

To solve this problem, decluttering expert Cathy Orr recommends going through each room of your home and getting rid of one unnecessary piece.

"Pieces that have legs or are raised are a good choice to keep since it shows space underneath," she says. "Then, leave space between the pieces that you keep. Fewer, larger-sized pieces are best."

Create Clear Pathways:

Your rooms aren't the only place that should be decluttered.

The hallways could be contributing to your home feeling small as well.

If you have any bulky decor, like benches or tables in a hallway, you may need to remove them, according to Orr. The goal is remove items that obstruct the flow of the room so you can keep your entryways open.

Start a "Drop Zone" At The Front Door:

Having too many little items scattered around your home, something Orr calls "micro-clutter," won't help when your space starts feeling cramped. But creating a "drop zone" at the front door of your home can change everything.

"If your kitchen counter is your "drop" zone, make a drop zone where you enter the home," decluttering pro Martha Carol Stewart says. "Place a tray on a table near where you enter your home to hold keys, wallet, sunglasses, mail and other items that would normally land on the kitchen counter."

Choose Concealed Storage:

While open shelving can be practical for both decor and storage, this can create visual clutter if your items aren't carefully organized. This is why Winkler suggests you go for concealed storage instead.

"Open shelving looks great in theory, but it can start to feel busy really fast. Tucking things away in drawers, cabinets, baskets, or bins makes a room feel calmer and a lot more spacious visually," she says.

Not to mention, decorative baskets are an excellent way to bring in more texture for balance as you create a more open, airy room.

Keep Countertops Clear:

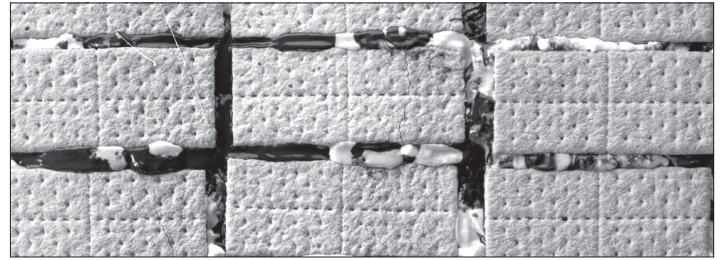
Countertops (especially in the kitchen) are notorious for being magnets for all kinds of clutter. This can easily jam up any room, which why one of our experts' top decluttering tips is to make sure you always keep your countertops clutter-free.

"Keep only 1-3 intentional items per surface, which opens up the space," Orr says. "This applies to the kitchen, where you can place one appliance, a tray with several things on it, and a decor object. The same applies to coffee tables, where you can place a stack of books, and a piece of decor."



TOWN TRIBUNE'S KITCHEN CORNER

Memorial Day Recipe Grilled Sheet Pan S'mores



Ingredients:

- 30 whole graham crackers
- One 13-ounce jar chocolate spread
- 16 ounces marshmallow cream
- 8 ounces mini marshmallows
- One 10-ounce bag caramel chips
- 12 ounces bittersweet chocolate chips
- 8 ounces toffee bits

Directions

1. Preheat a gas or charcoal grill to medium heat and line a sheet pan with aluminum foil.
2. Spread 15 graham crackers with chocolate spread and line them up on the prepared sheet pan. These will be the sandwich

bases.

3. Using 2 spoons, dollop the marshmallow cream evenly on the chocolate-spread graham crackers. Sprinkle the mini marshmallows evenly across the graham crackers. Do the same with the caramel chips, chocolate chips and toffee bits. Top each bottom cracker with a top cracker to create a sandwich.

4. Place the sheet pan on the grill. If your grill has a lid, close it. If your grill does not have a lid, flip a second sheet pan over and rest on top of the pan of s'mores to create a lid. Cook until everything is deliciously melted, about 25 minutes. Serve warm.

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