

Minimalist Mindset Strategy Guide

by: Elissa Joy Watts



Minimalism Strategy #1

Define the purpose for each room



“A noble purpose inspires sacrifice, stimulates innovation and encourages perseverance.” — Gary Hamel

GOAL: Identify precisely what you want from your home. Capture each room's purpose in writing.

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What is the purpose of home? Is it simply to provide shelter? To contain one's possessions? Or is a home a space to cultivate a centered and purpose-driven life? Is it an environment for relationships to thrive? A space designed for renewal and restoration?

Perhaps you've never paused to consider it for yourself. If so, I urge you to reflect before answering. It will strongly influence today's minimalist strategy lesson.

A minimalist home is not defined by a particular aesthetic. It is not purely utilitarian. A minimalist home is simply uncluttered, both literally and figuratively. It houses the things necessary to foster a satisfying life on the occupant's terms and nothing else. By clearing away excess, one can create physical and mental space to thrive.

"Begin with the end in mind," says famed author Stephen Covey. Adopting this mindset is key as you begin to embrace a minimalist strategy at home. Streamlining a space is easier said than done. Without a clearly defined end, getting lost in the details is a given. You'll finish sooner and dodge headaches if you sort the major things first. The million-dollar question is this: What is the purpose for each room in your home?

THE EXERCISE

The objective with this first activity is to identify where each room's baseline function meets its higher calling. It's a relatively quick exercise that will help to produce radical results along the way.

Household rooms come with generic labels—living room, dining room, bedroom—but their purpose is ultimately up to you. Sure, a kitchen is where the fridge lives. It's where dinner comes to life. But do you want more from the space? Will it be your morning reprieve? Will it be homework central or party central...or both? It's your call to make.

If the ultimate goal is to transform your home into a dwelling place that effectively meets your specific needs and wants, clarity is paramount. Articulating each room's purpose serves as a way of distilling the overall goal and making the project less daunting.

Having a clearly defined purpose for each room will also simplify the menial work ahead. In this 7-part guide, we're only going to tackle your living room and bedroom (minus the Pandora's box known as your closet.) Even so, you'll likely need to part with dozens, if not hundreds of household items. If you keep each room's purpose front and center as you go, decision fatigue will loosen its grip on you. A clear purpose will guide your choices when it comes time to sort possessions into what to keep and what to pass along, both in the rooms you accomplish with this guide and in the rooms you conquer alone.

When the place in which you dwell reflects your values, it becomes a true home. Purpose-driven rooms house satisfaction, delight, and a sense of harmony. Are you ready to articulate your home's purpose? Let's go.

PART ONE

Print off the workbook provided. Grab a pen or pencil, pour a drink, and find a comfortable spot to work. As you move through each room in your mind, consider the following questions and jot down your thoughts in the workbook.

1. What do I want this room to accomplish? What is the purpose?
2. Who uses this space?
3. Does it adequately meet their needs?

4. How do I want to feel in the space?
5. How do I *NOT* want to feel in the space?

For example, here's how one person might move through the process of defining the purpose of their entryway.

What do I want this room to accomplish? What is the purpose?

I want it to streamline the process of coming and going. It must house coats, shoes, keys, and so forth.

Who uses this space?

The family and any guests we invite over.

Does it meet their needs?

Mostly. It could probably be better organized.

How do I want to feel in the space?

I want to feel prepared for my day as I depart and welcomed when I return. I want it to make guests feel a sense of warmth as they enter our home.

How do I *NOT* want to feel in the space?

Rushed, frantic, disorganized.

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PART TWO

Now review your notes one room at a time. Considering your responses in the first section of Activity #1, can you sum up the purpose for each room in 2-3 sentences? Use the second table as your guide.

For example:

My entryway's purpose is to center me as I leave my house and to offer a warm welcome to anyone who walks through the door. It needs to function with ease so as to minimize stress and optimize delight.

Be sure to compose something that resonates. The more inspiring your articulated purpose, the easier you'll be able to part with possessions that no longer serve your vision.

On that note, let's quickly put this strategy to work. See if you can stroll through your home and immediately identify 20 objects worth removing from your space. Now that you've outlined each room's purpose, the process will likely come naturally. Congratulations! You're on your way.

Minimalism Strategy #2

See each room with fresh eyes



"A little perspective, like a little humor, goes a long way." — Allen Klein

GOAL: Experience your home through a new lens.

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Picture this. You're expecting an important guest. In an effort to make an admirable first impression, you seize a few moments to straighten up your home. *Nothing major, you think. Just a little tidying here and there.*

You scan the room. Suddenly you notice the mess. It's everywhere. Stacks of books here and disheveled papers there. Last week's bouquet on a bookshelf littered with unnecessary objects. Neglected toys and empty mugs. *Where did all this stuff come from? you think.*

The truth is it's probably been there a very long time and you just stopped seeing it. Now with your important guest in mind, you're experiencing the room from a new perspective. Don't worry. Everyone's been there.

This next exercise is designed to help you see each room in your home with fresh eyes. By imagining you are about to host an important guest--your boss, that special someone, your nit-picky landlord--you're bound to gain a new perspective on your space. Clutter will step into the foreground. You'll see the state of your home for what it really is.

William Bernach, a prolific marketing executive and creative director, famously said that in terms of communications, familiarity breeds apathy. The same could be said about clutter. When we are too familiar with disarray, it saps our ambition to tidy. We get used to shuffling papers, stepping over piles of laundry, and tossing shoes in a heap by the door.

Our adaptation costs precious time. Over the course of an average lifespan, searching for lost objects in a house full of clutter adds up to 3680 hours or 153 days.¹ Phones, keys, sunglasses and paperwork are the major culprits. Because we

are so accustomed to living with clutter, stirring up motivation to remove it feels like convincing yourself to sprint five miles uphill after a stressful week but once you run the numbers, it's easy to see that apathy towards clutter is expensive.

Not only that, clutter messes with our state of mind. A study led by clinical psychologist Pamela Thacher revealed that hoarders suffer from poor sleep more than anyone.² There is a clinically tested correlation between clutter and quality sleep. No wonder people feel well rested when they wake up in a spartan hotel room.

If you want to reap the clarity that comes with living in a minimalist home, spotting undetected household clutter is key. Once you see it, you can do something about it.

The goal with this section is to ditch familiarity and get a clear picture of your space, clutter and all, by looking at it with fresh eyes. This simple perspective shift is a useful strategy for developing a minimalist home. Once you actually see the stuff in your space, you can quickly identify whether or not it's working for or against the purposes you defined earlier and then take action. Better still, once you're familiar with tidiness, practicing this strategy takes seconds. It will help you easily maintain a calm, clutter-free and purpose-driven dwelling space. Sounds good, right?

THE EXERCISE

Activity #2 is a walk-through assessment. Ideally you can tackle your entire home one go but if you're short on time, prioritize your living room and bedroom. You can assess the rest of the house later.

Here's where we recreate the scenario I described above. With pen and workbook in hand, walk into your living room and imagine company's coming.

Take stock of everything you'd want to tidy up. What's crowding the coffee table? What's under the sofa? Are piles of clothing strewn about? Jot what you see in the

appropriate columns. Once you've completed your notes, proceed to the next room and start the process again until you've walked through each room in your home.

Remember, the goal is simply to identify clutter. If doing so spurs you into action today, great! See if you can collect another 20 unnecessary items. Our plan is to have you to roll up your sleeves and get to work with Strategy #5, but no one's going to stop you from getting a headstart.

Minimalism Strategy #3

Consider the cause of clutter



“It’s only when we are able to see our own behavior that we are able to wake up and start making conscious choices.” — Allen Klein

GOAL: Get to the heart of the matter by identifying why clutter accumulates.

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If clutter is something few people are fond of, how does it quickly take over our homes? Knowing the answer to this strategic question is a linchpin to achieving and maintaining a minimalist home.

Because clutter is a systemic issue, there are several legitimate responses. Some might say clutter boils down to bad habits. We pull things out; we don't put them back. Before long, mess abounds. Others might blame convenience. Leaving things within reach feels like the right thing to do. Consumerism certainly plays a role too. We've been conditioned to accumulate in pursuit of the good life. Many people conclude that streamlining possessions means parting with happiness.

Is clutter merely a lack of organization? A lack of proper storage? A lack of space?

No. Clutter is largely due to a systemic lack of priorities and a dull sense of discernment. Without clearly defined goals for our homes, it's easy to allow excess stuff creep in and remain indefinitely.

A major step in achieving a calm, orderly purpose-driven home is understanding why and how we accumulate clutter. Awareness fuels discernment. Discernment makes it easy to part with unnecessary objects, or better yet, prevent things from entering our homes in the first place.

You've articulated your home's purpose and identified the clutter. Now we'll walk through an exercise designed to increase self-awareness. Here's how we'll do it.

THE EXERCISE

Open your workbook to Activity 3. Working through one room at a time, take a moment to ponder the questions in each of the three columns. Use the space

provided to jot down your thoughts. No need for lengthy soul-searching meditations; quick, honest answers are the best way to go.

This might seem a bit involved, repeating the process in each room, but it will likely generate epiphanies. You'll start to notice patterns. The self-awareness you gain will reshape your mindset and help you change the script.

For example, if things in your home are simply in the wrong spot, perhaps you could allocate different homes for wandering objects or adopt a nightly reset. If stray papers loom large, take it as a cue to implement a new system for managing documents. Practice immediate recycling or opt for digital alternatives. If you notice toys in multiple rooms, maybe it's time to reconsider what you allow to enter your home.

Understanding the cause of clutter is key. It's like Allen Klein says: a little perspective goes a long way. By observing rooms from a new angle and reflecting on the clutter you see, you'll gain a new level of self-awareness. This is the beginning of a fundamental and radical mindset shift.

Your new mindset will guide you as you eliminate messes and optimize each room in your home. Solutions will emerge. You'll see the clutter as an opportunity to tighten the operations of your home and begin to overcome your own inertia by creating better systems and strategies. With consistent effort, your space will become a purpose-driven home with plenty of breathing room.

Before we wrap up, here's your chance to snap some "before" pictures, maybe even box up clutter you filed under "Items to part with." Bonus points if you're able to straighten your home like company's coming. Taking action while you're motivated is a surefire way to dodge future apathy. Strike while the iron's hot, right?

Minimalism Strategy #4

Locate “big quick wins” and move them out



“Momentum begets momentum, and the best way to start is to start.”

— Gil Penchina

GOAL: Kickstart results and increase motivation by removing large items that immediately create breathing room.

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Congratulations! The foundational work is behind you and your minimalist mindset is being strengthened. You've defined each room's purpose. You can see the clutter in your home for what it is. Now it's time to get to work. Taking action from here becomes thoughtful and methodical.

Before we dive deep into the two specific rooms, we're going to sweep through your home and identify any big items that can go immediately. Why? It will give you a swift motivational boost. This is pretty much the only instant gratification I applaud.

Think of the immediate benefits you can enjoy when you let go of big possessions:

- More square-footage
- Less to dust
- More storage space
- Less shuffling around crowded rooms
- More financial opportunities
- Less stress
- More clarity
- Less apathy

Experiencing “quick big wins” as you minimize is potent positive reinforcement. The instant gratification will drum up momentum and sustain motivation when tasks become menial. Remembering your satisfaction and sense of accomplishment will keep you on track to finish what you start.

The more you empty your home, the more decisive you’ll become. Getting a few big things out first will free space in your home but more importantly, it will free space in your heart and mind. You’ll need that space to make bigger decisions along the way.

Moving logistics

It is true that removing bigger items may require a little more muscle and planning, but the space you can free up quickly makes it worth the effort.

Some people choose to drop things off at a thrift store. Others choose to turn their big items into cash using Facebook Marketplace, Craigslist, or a neighborhood forum (waiting around for a buyer can stall the process and undermine the spirit of the “big quick wins” exercise—but if you don’t have a way to transport large items such as furniture, it might be worth the effort). Another option is to call an able-bodied friend with a pick-up truck to help you move things out in one go or put things out on your driveway with a “Free” sign taped to it.

What to look for

So what falls into the “quick big wins” category? Any possession that is simply taking up space and can be moved out with little drama. There’s a big difference between possessions and belongings. Possessions are merely objects that live under our roof. Belongings are things that earn their keep. They contribute. They are useful. They belong.

Some examples of “big quick wins”

- Duplicate furniture
- Unnecessary appliances
- Fixer-upper projects that have been on standby for months (or years)
- Out-dated holiday decor
- Obsolete electronics
- Unnecessary maternity clothing
- Large out-of-commission toys (Think play kitchens, tool benches, miniature tables and chairs, and the like)

Once the large pieces are out, pay attention to how you feel. Is the room more comfortable? More hospitable? How does the extra space impact traffic flow? How does it impact your sense of peace and calm?

Be mindful and savor those endorphins. Once we drill down to smaller, specific tasks, remembering today’s sweet rewards will motivate you to keep going, to keep experiencing that same satisfaction. It’s all part of honing your minimalist mindset.

Minimalism Strategy #5

Living Room



“All the art of living lies in a fine mingling of letting go and holding on.”

— Henry Ellis

GOAL: Flex your new mindset and use the Becker Method to minimize your living room

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Healthy relationships are the fabric of a life well lived. Human beings cannot thrive apart from one another. We are wired for relationship.

Out of all the rooms in a home, the living room boasts the most potential for connection. Well designed living rooms gather people, foster conversation, and entice people to linger.

For this reason, it's important to get our living rooms right. People find it difficult to linger in a space that is laden with clutter and void of comfort. If we want to be more intentional about fostering relationships in our home, designing a high-functioning streamlined living room should top the list.

We're focusing on the living room first for other reasons too.

- **It's a relatively quick job.** Compared to a kitchen or garage, a living room is pretty straightforward. Because the purpose of the room is clear, decisions require little deliberation. There are often few places to get stuck in the weeds.
- **Several people benefit from a minimized living room.** Everyone living under the roof gets to enjoy the peace and comfort of a streamlined space. Guests also benefit from a room that houses opportunities to connect, not just a bunch of stuff.
- **Completing this room first builds stamina for future projects.** Because a living room is a central hub for interaction, one is likely to spend a great deal of time there. When it is orderly, attractive, and comfortable, it is an immersive experience that positively reinforces the work of minimizing. The immediate satisfaction is hard to beat.

You won't need much to get the job done but there are a few important things to gather before you begin.

- Your workbook
- Some boxes and/or large garbage bags. One for donations, one for sellable goods, one for things to recycle or dispose of.

We'll work through the space in five stages. As you work through each part of your living room, physically touch each item. Pick it up in your hands and ask yourself, "Does this item align with the defined purpose of this room? Does it provide service, beauty, and meaning? And if so, is it absolutely essential?" If not, select its fate and place it in the appropriate bin.

1. Relocate things that don't belong in the living room.

Okay, technically this is not minimizing; it's rearranging. Still, this is a necessary first step. If you stumble upon an object that typically lives elsewhere but ought to go anyway, you can toss it directly into its appropriate "no" bin. No need to send it home first.

2. Clear flat surfaces.

Coffee tables, bookshelves and other surfaces are clutter magnets. The usual suspects are books, table clocks, vases, photo frames, figurines and other various decorations. These objects are not inherently bad; often they add personality to a space. The sum of all the parts, however, often results in sensory overload. Plus, the more objects you collect on a tabletop or shelf, the more time it takes to dust and tidy the surface.

If you're a goal-oriented person, try reducing decorative items and accessories by 50% or more. Keep only that which is deeply precious and particularly useful, things lend comfort, facilitate hospitality, and tell stories. Do you really need an entire

library at arm's length? Do all the lamps in the space serve a purpose? Could the photos be consolidated into a single album instead of living on bookshelves and tables? There are many creative ways to streamline this space.

If you're turning an object over in your hands and struggling to decide its fate, here is something worth considering: Can you think of someone who would benefit more from owning the object in question? It's easier to joyfully part with possessions when you recognize that while something might delight you to a small degree, it would likely mean *significantly* more to someone else. Minimizing is fast and easy when the desire to be charitable takes over.

3. Declutter the entertainment center.

For better or worse, entertainment centers are often the focal point in a living room. They can also be major visual distractions. Minimizing this space works wonders.

Are you holding onto obsolete electronics? What about DVDs and CDs? Any redundant cords, manuals, or remote controls? These are all worthy candidates for the donation bin.

Remember to physically touch every item as if you were moving. Does it truly align with your purpose for the room? Might someone else benefit more from having it? Fight the urge to simply store it in a drawer. When in doubt, donate.

Once you've eliminate that which you no longer need, it's time to store everything out of sight. The clear space will promote peace of mind. Not only that, it will be easier to clean.

Worth noting: Please take care to dispose of electronics and batteries with care.

4. Dig into storage areas.

It's easy to overlook these areas, especially when their contents don't necessarily hinder the purpose of the room. Who cares if there are seven photo albums and three boxes of toys out of sight, right?

The reality is, however, whether or not you see possessions, they are still under your care. When you need to locate something in a storage space, excess stuff impedes your ability to find what you need quickly. Offloading extra possessions will lighten your subconscious load and save you time.

Once you pull things out of drawers and cupboards, sort through the contents and ask yourself that familiar refrain. *Does this serve the room's purpose?* Be ruthless. Consider how long these items have sat untouched. Consider the possibilities for other people. Consider what you could do with the free space. Consider how much easier it will be to move when the time comes. Make a decision now. When it comes to clutter, "later" typically means "never." Do it today.

5. Remove furniture and other large items.

With all the smaller pieces sorted, you might discover some of your larger pieces are now redundant. Terrific! If they're empty, consider the possibilities. Turn it into cash and use the money to host party in your new streamlined space.

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Once you've finished in the living room, reflect one more time on the desires you outlined for the space. Chances are your streamlined room hits the mark. Consider this your invitation to put your feet up and enjoy your hard work. Rest up, you're going to need it! Next up: the bedroom.

Minimalism Strategy #6

Bedroom (sans closet)



“Be thoughtful. Be methodical. Be confident.”

— Joshua Becker

GOAL: Use the Becker Method to minimize your bedroom.

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The average adult clocks almost a third of each day within the same four walls: their bedroom. For this reason, it's imperative the space is conducive to rest and refuge. We are better friends, better parents, better colleagues, better partners, and better citizens when we are well rested.

Bedroom clutter does more than distract the eye. It interferes with quality rest. If we routinely operate on poor sleep due to excess clutter, our very lives are at stake. We put ourselves at risk of battling diabetes, depression, obesity, dementia, anxiety... the list goes on. We must take responsibility to rest well and do away with bedroom clutter.

The strategy behind minimizing one's bedroom is largely the same as minimizing one's living room. The main difference is that the stakes are higher. Thankfully, the benefits are huge and the task is achievable.

We're not opening the bedroom closet for this exercise. That job requires its own guide. One must employ a different sort of strategy. For the sake of today, we're just going to focus on the big picture: the room itself.

Again, before you get started, make sure you get your purpose front and center and keep those boxes and/or bags close at hand. Roll up your sleeves and get ready to pick up each and every item in your bedroom. Here we go.

1. Relocate things to their proper room.

Serve an eviction notice to anything that clearly doesn't belong. Business papers, children's toys, and yesterday morning's mug needn't participate in this exercise. Get displaced objects to their rightful home before cracking down on your bedroom in earnest.

2. Clear the floors.

We're talking more than dirty laundry here. Anything that is not furniture needs to come off the floor and earn its keep. Be ruthless. Remember, quality rest is on the line. Do you really need all that stuff hovering ten feet from your pillow?

3. Clear the surfaces.

In a space where you're frequently coming and going, it's easy for clutter to accumulate on dressers and night-stands. Clear everything off and put back only that which supports you getting a good night's sleep.

4. Pare down decorations.

This is an extension of what we covered in the living room section. Leaving things around simply because they "match" isn't a strong argument for keeping excess decorations. Prioritize functional, meaningful beauty and get rid of the visible noise vying for attention. If you've got lots of little decorations, consider grouping them together to make one prominent focal point instead of several smaller ones. This will make things easier on the eyes.

5. Get rid of furniture, if possible.

In the book, *The Minimalist Home*, Joshua Becker mentions how he and his wife were able to downsize their master suite enough to make their large armoire redundant. They booted it from the bedroom. Doing so freed up significant visual space *and* square footage and it transformed their room. This kind of move may not be possible until you have adequately addressed your closets but for some people, eliminating furniture is the viable next step.

6. Simplify your bed linens.

You probably don't store linens in your bedroom but we'll make a quick detour to pare down in this category too. If you're someone with a packed linen closet, lend an ear. Laundering a single set of sheets in an afternoon easily makes that second (and possibly third) set of sheets redundant. You're sitting on an opportunity to clear your closet.

As for summer- and winter-weight duvets, consider if a heated mattress pad might be a better solution. You'll be able to leave it on your mattress year round and only turn it on when necessary. It's more economical than heating your entire room, plus, it eliminates the need to store a bulky duvet or comforter during the summer months.

7. Make the best use of under-bed storage.

The space under your bed is premium real estate. It keeps a world of possessions under wraps but still allows for easy access. This can work for you or against you. It's all about your mindset.

If items on your nightstand create visual clutter and you don't have a drawer to store them in, consider stashing them on a tray beneath your bed. They'll be out of sight yet close at hand. The same goes for larger items that might be tricky to store in a closet: purses, boots, bulky sweaters, and so on. If you purchase under-bed storage containers with wheels, you can easily roll them out and keep dust bunnies at bay.

You might also choose to keep other household items beneath your bed. Just remember to stay vigilant. It can quickly revert to being a dumping zone.

Minimalism Strategy #7

Maintaining the Minimalism Mindset



“Becoming minimalist is one thing. Staying minimalist is another.”

— Joshua Becker

GOAL: Consider how you'll maintain your streamlined space.

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Maintaining a minimalist mindset boils down to keeping priorities front and center. Getting clear on your home's purpose and doing the deep dive is the hardest work. Keeping things lean takes effort but it's far less taxing and just as rewarding. Maintenance is not meant to be a burden. Daily routines are the key. *(If you're reading ahead and "daily routines" has your pulse sky-rocketing, take heart. Tidying a minimized space is exponentially easier than tidying a cluttered one and the daily maintenance is not as tedious as you might imagine... so quit peeking ahead :) I saved this for the end for a reason).*

Think of it like brushing your teeth. It's a simple routine. You aim to do it twice every single day and most of the time, you do. The benefits are appealing enough to keep you on track. That said, if for some reason you miss a routine brush, you don't resign yourself to defeat and never brush again. You just pick up where you left off and carry on, no guilt necessary. The same is true with maintaining a minimalist home on a daily basis.

To be clear, maintaining minimalism isn't about household maintenance and repairs; this is about maintaining peace and order, keeping rooms set to serve their purpose.

If you notice you are tidying the same space frequently, perhaps there is a better solution to a systemic bottleneck. For example, if you're regularly clearing receipts from your dresser, maybe there's an opportunity to designate a specific home for them and kick start a new habit. Doing so will automatically solve the situation.

Here's how we suggest you fine-tune your home each day before heading to bed.

Maintaining the Living Room

Reset the furniture. If a major component of the room's purpose is to gather people, be sure to reset the space so it is ready to welcome friends and family.

Clear the surfaces. Books, dishes...gone. If you have toys in the space, enroll the kids in tidying up. Store media out of sight.

By doing this daily, it makes dusting and vacuuming way easier, maybe even enjoyable.

Maintaining the Bed Room

Make your bed daily. Seeing as it is a major focal point, when it is straightened, the bulk of the room is instantly tidier. Not only that, according to Charles Duhigg, author of *The Power of Habit*, once making the bed daily becomes a keystone habit, the ritual boosts productivity and sets off a chain reaction of other can-do decisions. The sense of accomplishment sets a pleasant tone for the day.

Gretchen Rubin, author of *The Happiness Project* also discovered among research participants that making the bed reduced their stress and boosted feelings of well-being. It only takes a moment and the return on the investment is handsome.

Put your clothes away before you call it a night. This falls under the "touch it once" rule. It takes less time to march clothing immediately over to the laundry hamper or closet than it does to drop it on the floor and retrieve it later. Nevermind the fact that heaps of clothes attract more clutter.

Straighten your nightstand. If you're lucky enough to have a drawer next to your bed, practice stashing everything utilitarian out of sight. Plan B is to use a tray under your bed. It's a tiny detail that makes a big difference.

Tuck all media-related items out of sight. There is a strong argument for keeping phones, e-readers, tablets, and televisions out of the bedroom altogether. Blue light

emitted from phones and e-readers suppresses melatonin production and interferes with circadian rhythms.³ Excessive night time use may also lead to poor vision.⁴ This is to say nothing of foregoing the opportunity to enrich your mind with a good book, enjoy intimacy with your partner, or spend time practicing gratitude by reflecting on your day.

But if you're set on keeping your phone and/or television in your room, take a moment to tuck things out of sight and minimize the visual clutter that comes with wandering remote controls and unruly cords.

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Enjoying a peaceful environment at home is within reach. I hope this guide has served you well along your journey to acquiring a minimalist mindset. My goal was to provide you with transferrable strategies that could be used in any room in your home. So don't stop with just your living room and bedroom. Once this work is complete, choose the next easiest room in your home and apply the strategies there—until you work through your entire home.

I found inspiration for this guide in several effective and proven resources. I can't recommend them highly enough. If you are looking for additional resources to help you continue paring down your home, I suggest the following:

[**The Minimalist Home: A Room-by-Room Guide to a Decluttered, Refocused Life,**](#)
by Joshua Becker

The Minimalist Home is an easy-to-follow guide to help you declutter and simplify each and every room in your home using The Becker Method. This best-selling book includes thoughtful reflections and personal stories of people whose lives have been radically changed through adopting a minimalist approach to life.

[Uncluttered Course](#) by **Becoming Minimalist**

Hosted by Joshua Becker, *Uncluttered* is a 12-week online course with videos, interviews, webinars, articles, weekly challenges, accountability, and community. It is strategically packaged for one purpose: to help you declutter your home, own less stuff, and find space to live the life you want.

[Simplify Magazine](#)

Simplify Magazine is a quarterly, digital publication that pulls together experts in various fields to address some of the most pressing needs of the modern family. Lifetime subscriptions include access to back issues that showcase topics like happiness, relationships, clutter, technology, money and more.

[Clutterfree with Kids](#) by **Joshua Becker**

Through practical application and inspirational stories, *Clutterfree with Kids* invites us to change our thinking, discover new habits, and free our homes. It invites us to reevaluate our lives. And it just may inspire you to live the life you've been searching for all along.

[30 Days to a Simpler Life](#) by **No Sidebar**

This self-led 30-day email course will inspire and encourage you to design a simpler life. It covers six dimensions of daily living: home, work, finances, digital, mind, and time.

About the Author:

Elissa Joy Watts is the managing editor for Simplify Magazine. After five years of raising kids in a tiny Scottish apartment and subsequently living out of suitcases for 13 months straight, she is a firm believer that less is more. She and her family of six now live in a (relatively) clutter-free home in Hamilton, Ontario. She believes in sincere community, radical kindness, and piping hot coffee.

Notes:

- <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2117987/Lost-today-misplaced-items-cost-minutes-day.html>
- <https://health.usnews.com/health-news/health-wellness/articles/2015-12-30/to-sleep-better-stay-cool-and-cut-clutter>
- <https://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/112/4/1232.full.pdf>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1857207/>

Activity #1 (1 of 2)

| | What do I want this room need to accomplish? | Who uses this space? | Does it adequately meet their needs? | How do I want to feel in this space? | How do I NOT want to feel in this space? |
|-------------|--|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Living Room | | | | | |
| Bedroom | | | | | |
| Kitchen | | | | | |
| Dining Room | | | | | |
| Bathroom #1 | | | | | |

| | What do I want this room need to accomplish? | Who uses this space? | Does it adequately meet their needs? | How do I want to feel in this space? | How do I NOT want to feel in this space? |
|--------------|--|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Entryway | | | | | |
| Garage | | | | | |
| Office | | | | | |
| Family Room | | | | | |
| Laundry Room | | | | | |

Activity #1 (2 of 2)

| What is the purpose of this room? | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Living Room | |
| Bedroom | |
| Kitchen | |
| Dining Room | |
| Bathroom #1 | |

What is the purpose of this room?

Entryway

Garage

Office

Family Room

Laundry Room

Activity #2

| | Items that belong in the room | Items that belong elsewhere | Items to part with |
|-------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Living Room | | | |
| Bedroom | | | |
| Kitchen | | | |
| Dining Room | | | |
| Bathroom #1 | | | |

| | Items that belong in the room | Items that belong elsewhere | Items to part with |
|--------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Entryway | | | |
| Garage | | | |
| Office | | | |
| Family Room | | | |
| Laundry Room | | | |

Activity #3

| | Items that belong in the room | Items that belong elsewhere | Items to part with |
|-------------|---|---|---|
| | <p>Why were these items not in their homes? Is this room actually the best home for the clutter in this list? Why or why not?</p> | <p>Why were these items not in their homes? Is it worth relocating any of these items to the room where it was found? Why or why not?</p> | <p>How did these items take up residence here in the first place? Could I have prevented these from entering my space? How?</p> |
| Living Room | | | |
| Bedroom | | | |
| Kitchen | | | |
| Dining Room | | | |

| | Items that belong in the room | Items that belong elsewhere | Items to part with |
|--------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Bathroom #1 | | | |
| Entryway | | | |
| Garage | | | |
| Office | | | |
| Family Room | | | |
| Laundry Room | | | |