



TIDY TOGETHER

Declutter, Organize, and Enjoy Your Space

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CREATING A CALM AND ORGANIZED SPACE *with Your Child*

Decluttering with your child is more than just tidying up—it's an opportunity to build essential life skills and create a space that truly supports their needs. When children are involved in organizing their belongings, they develop decision-making, prioritization, and problem-solving skills that will benefit them well into adulthood.

A cluttered environment can feel overwhelming, distracting, and even stressful for children, making it harder for them to focus and enjoy their space. Disorganization can lead to frustration, guilt, and a lack of creativity, while an organized space promotes a sense of calm, focus, and self-expression.

This printable will guide you through a simple decluttering process that you and your child can do together. By assessing what to keep, donate, or let go of, you'll create a functional, peaceful space that reflects your child's needs. Working together strengthens your bond and empowers your child with habits they'll carry into the future. Let's get started!

Benefits of Involving Children in the Process

- Builds essential life skills like decision-making, prioritization, and problem-solving.
- Prepares them with habits they'll carry into adolescence and adulthood.

How Clutter Impacts Children

- Clutter causes feelings of overwhelm, distraction, and frustration.
- Creates stress and anxiety, making children feel out of control.
- Disorganization can stifle creativity and lead to frustration or guilt.
- An organized space promotes calmness, focus, and creative expression.

Overview of the Decluttering Process & Parent-Child Collaboration

- Decluttering is about creating a functional space that reflects the child's needs.
- The process involves assessing, keeping, donating, or discarding items together.
- Parent-child collaboration strengthens bonds and empowers children.
- Working together teaches children lasting skills and creates an organized, peaceful home.



Child-Friendly DECLUTTERING CHECKLIST

Before You Start

- ☐ Pick a time when both you and your child are rested and fed.
- ☐ Gather storage bins, bags or baskets for sorting (Keep, Donate, Trash, Maybe Box).
- ☐ Explain the goal: "We're making space so your toys are easy to find and play with!"
- ☐ Set a timer (15-30 minutes) to keep it short and fun.

Sort Together

- ☐ Pick one small area to start (a bin, a shelf, or one category of toys).
- ☐ Ask: "Do you love playing with this?" or another question from the list.
- ☐ If YES Keep pile
- ☐ If NO Donate pile ("This will make another child happy!")
- ☐ If UNSURE Maybe Box ("We'll check back in a few weeks.")
- ☐ If broken or missing pieces Trash pile

Make It Fun

- ☐ Play a game (e.g., Find five toys you don't play with anymore).
- ☐ Set a challenge (e.g., Can we fill one whole box for kids who need toys?).
- ☐ Take breaks and celebrate progress (high-fives, dance breaks, or a small treat).



THE PREPARED ENVIRONMENT

Child-Friendly DECLUTTERING CHECKLIST

Acknowledge Feelings

If they're hesitant:

"I can see this toy is special to you. How about we take a picture of it before we pass it on?"

If they feel sad about donating:

"I understand—it's hard to say goodbye to toys we've had for a long time. But imagine another child getting to play with it and love it just like you did!"

Wrap Up and Celebrate

"Wow! Look at your play space now—so much easier to find your favorite things! You have made great choices. Let's do something fun to celebrate!" (Offer a reward like extra playtime or a fun activity.)



Organize and Reset

- ☐ Group similar toys together (e.g., cars with cars, dolls with dolls).
- ☐ See if there are any duplicates or items that can be donated.
- ☐ Use bins or baskets for easy storage.
- ☐ Label with pictures or words.
- ☐ Set up a rotation system (store some toys and swap them in later).

After Decluttering

- ☐ Take a picture of any special toys before donating.
- ☐ Deliver donated toys together, so your child sees the impact, if that is helpful.
- ☐ Celebrate with a small reward (extra playtime, a favorite snack, or a fun activity).
- ☐ Keep up the habit with regular check-ins (e.g., before birthdays, holidays, or new purchases).



Decluttering Script TO USE WITH YOUR CHILD

Introduce the Idea

"Hey [your child's name], today we're going to make your play space even better! When we have too many toys, it's hard to find our favorites. So we're going to go through them together and make sure you have the ones you love the most."

Explain the Process

"We're going to make three piles:

1. Keep - These are the toys you love and play with.
2. Donate - These are the ones you don't play with much anymore, but another kid would love.
3. Maybe - If you're not sure, we'll put it in a special box and check later."

Make It Fun and Empowering

"Let's start with just one shelf/bin. Can you pick a toy you love the most? Now, are there any toys you don't use much anymore? You get to decide!"

(Encourage them to make choices, and give them control over small decisions.)

I have found that focusing on what a child can keep, rather than what they need to let go of, is most effective. You can set a clear limit using a container or a specific number. For example, you might say, "Which five stuffed animals are your favorites?" or "Let's fill this basket with your favorite cars first, and we'll pass along the rest."

Questions to help YOUR CHILD DECLUTTER

- Which of these items do you use the most?
- Is this something you still enjoy playing with?
- If we had to pick only [X] to keep, which ones would you choose?
- Does this still fit you / work for you?
- Would you rather keep this or make space for something new?
- Where do you think this item belongs?
- How would you like to organize your toys/clothes/books?
- What would make it easier for you to find and put away your things?
- Would labeling or using bins help you keep things tidy?
- How do you want your space to feel when we're done?
- Do you think another child might enjoy this more than you do now?
- When was the last time you used this? Do you think you'll use it again?
- Would you like to donate this so someone else can have fun with it?
- Do you have something similar that you like more?
- What would you rather have space for instead of this?
- How does it feel to have a clean and organized space?
- What's one thing you can do to keep your space tidy every day?
- Do you like having fewer things to clean up?
- How can we make this a space you love spending time in?
- What's your favorite part of your newly organized space?



THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to use this! I hope it will help you create a more organized and peaceful space with your child. I'd love to hear how it goes - feel free to share your experience and tag me on social media!

Follow me @the_prepared_environment for more tips on organizing with kids, creating a Montessori-inspired home, and making decluttering a positive experience.

TAKE CARE,
Sarah