

Productive to the Max

Productivity

Performance

Profitability

Packrat?

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Do you have a compulsion to save? Are there papers, books from grade school, mementos, piles of calendars and newspapers propagating like tiny bunnies all over your office or house. Do you constantly say "I can't get rid of that because it might come in handy some day; I don't want to waste anything; Aunt Sally might visit and want to see her horrible gift"

Welcome to the world of packrats. Those who collect everything and anything and all in between. It's time to learn how to retain what gives you pleasure and dispose of what has outlived its value. How do you free yourself from all this clutter and resulting stress?

1. Determine why you are a packrat. Is it hereditary? (Most packrats have parents who saved everything also). Do your possessions represent all that you have worked and strived for. Has the clutter become so overwhelming that you are just embarrassed and don't know where to start? Are you wasting precious time looking for things?
2. If you haven't worn it, watered it, sat on it, talked to it or read it for more than a year then get rid of it. If something has outlived its value-dump it. If it does not fit into your lifestyle-give it to someone else.
3. Decide what gives you the most pleasure and reserve room for those items.
4. Make a game of decluttering. Bring in pizza, music, obtain all your supplies beforehand and promise yourself a reward at the end.
5. If you can't decide what to do with something or can't bear to part with it, put it in a box and label with the date and year. Place in the basement or garage and in six months if you have not accessed the box, trash it.
6. Create a one-in, one-out rule. Limit the number of each item you will allow in your house. Then if you decide to purchase another one of these items, another one has to go.
7. Rotate your items. Don't display everything at once. Put away a portion for a few months then put those away and replace with a few more items.
8. Reduce the size of your storage by taking pictures, putting photos on CD's or reproducing parts of items into a collage. In that way you still have the memory but not all the clutter.
9. Learn how to declutter by following a regular system that you plan out on your calendar. Don't just put things aside because you don't know what to do with them.
10. Stop living in the past. Reserve space for new items and new memories.