The Pre-Holiday Declutter

Thirty days, one small area a day, so your home has room for the holidays before the boxes come down.

This is the order I follow at home every year and teach my clients: storage first, because that's where the holiday decor lives, then the rooms you'll gather in, then the closets and papers. The last days are for donations, cleaning and decorating. Each day takes about 20 to 30 minutes. Before Day 1, set out three bags or boxes marked keep, donate and toss.

THE 30 DAYS AT A GLANCE

- ☐ **DAYS 1 TO 10** · PAGE 2
  Storage, the holiday decor, the kitchen, laundry and linens.
- ☐ **DAYS 11 TO 20** · PAGE 3
  Closets, drawers, bathrooms, toys, books and papers.
- ☐ **DAYS 21 TO 30** · PAGE 4
  Outside, the car, donations, cleaning and decorating day.
- ☐ **HOLIDAY DECOR SORT** · PAGE 5
  Five steps for the decor boxes, on Day 2.
- ☐ **SHOPPING LIST AND DONATIONS** · PAGES 6 AND 7
  Buy only what's missing and get donations out the door.

REMEMBER

One area a day. Miss a day? Pick up where you left off.

MY DATES

Day 1 _____

Decorate _____

Drop-off _____

NOTES

FROM THE PRINTABLES VAULT
For personal use. Share the link, not the file.

Days 1 to 10

Storage first, then the kitchen. Make room where the holidays start.

- [ ] **DAY 1 · BASEMENT OR ATTIC**
  Sort what's stored there. Toss what's broken, donate what no one uses.
- [ ] **DAY 2 · HOLIDAY DECOR**
  Bring out the decor boxes and sort them. Page 5 walks you through it.
- [ ] **DAY 3 · GARAGE**
  Clear what's old or broken, and make a spot by the door for donation bags.
- [ ] **DAY 4 · ENTRY CLOSET**
  Keep the coats, shoes and bags that get worn this winter. Guests will need the space.
- [ ] **DAY 5 · KITCHEN TABLE AND CUPBOARDS**
  Clear the table, then go through the cupboards one shelf at a time.
- [ ] **DAY 6 · FRIDGE AND FREEZER**
  Toss anything expired and make room for holiday cooking.
- [ ] **DAY 7 · PANTRY AND JUNK DRAWER**
  Expired food out, then the junk drawer, bakeware and containers without lids.
- [ ] **DAY 8 · LIVING ROOM**
  Old electronics, worn throws and decor you no longer love.
- [ ] **DAY 9 · LAUNDRY ROOM**
  Toss empty bottles and old supplies, and wipe down the machines.
- [ ] **DAY 10 · LINEN CLOSET AND STORAGE**
  Worn towels and sheets, extra cleaning products. Set aside a set for guests.

NOTES

FROM THE PRINTABLES VAULT
For personal use. Share the link, not the file.

Days 11 to 20

Closets, drawers and papers. The spaces that fill up fastest in December.

- [ ] **DAY 11 · CLOSETS, PART 1**
  Start with your own closet. Bag what doesn't fit or hasn't been worn in a year.
- [ ] **DAY 12 · CLOSETS, PART 2**
  The next closet. Donation bags go straight to the car.
- [ ] **DAY 13 · CLOSETS, PART 3**
  Finish the last closet and bring winter clothes to the front.
- [ ] **DAY 14 · DRESSERS AND DRAWERS**
  One drawer at a time. Single socks and stretched-out basics go.
- [ ] **DAY 15 · BATHROOMS AND MEDICINE CABINET**
  Expired medicine and products you don't use. Ask your pharmacy about medicine drop-off.
- [ ] **DAY 16 · TOYS, GAMES AND HOBBIES**
  Broken pieces out and outgrown toys donated, before new gifts come in. No toys? Do the craft or hobby supplies.
- [ ] **DAY 17 · HOME OFFICE AND BOOKS**
  Clear the desk drawers and donate the books you won't read again.
- [ ] **DAY 18 · MAIL AND PAPERS, PART 1**
  Sort the pile. File what you need and shred the rest.
- [ ] **DAY 19 · MAIL AND PAPERS, PART 2**
  Finish filing and choose one spot for holiday cards and receipts.
- [ ] **DAY 20 · GUEST ROOM AND OTHER ROOMS**
  Any room left: trash out, donations aside, and a clear spot for guests' bags.

NOTES

FROM THE PRINTABLES VAULT
For personal use. Share the link, not the file.

Days 21 to 30

Outside, donations and cleaning, then the best day: decorating.

- [ ] **DAY 21 · BACKYARD AND PATIO**
  Dead plants, broken tools and furniture that won't make another season.
- [ ] **DAY 22 · CAR**
  Empty every pocket and compartment, vacuum and wipe it down.
- [ ] **DAY 23 · FINAL WALK-THROUGH**
  Walk room to room and catch anything you skipped.
- [ ] **DAY 24 · DONATIONS**
  Schedule pickups or drop off everything you've bagged. Page 7 keeps track.
- [ ] **DAY 25 · TRASH AND RECYCLING**
  Take out what's left to toss and book a bulky pickup if you need one.
- [ ] **DAY 26 · GIFT WRAP AND SUPPLIES**
  Check the paper, tape, tags and cards you already have before you shop.
- [ ] **DAY 27 · CLEAN, PART 1**
  Dust the surfaces, then sweep, vacuum and mop the floors.
- [ ] **DAY 28 · CLEAN, PART 2**
  Finish with the kitchen, the bathrooms and the guest spaces.
- [ ] **DAY 29 · PUT THINGS BACK**
  Walk the house and return everything to its place.
- [ ] **DAY 30 · DECORATE**
  Bring out the boxes you kept and decorate a home with room for it.

NOTES

FROM THE PRINTABLES VAULT
For personal use. Share the link, not the file.

Sort the Holiday Decor

Most of us have collected more decor than we put out. A few steps and the boxes are sorted for good.

1 **UNBOX EVERYTHING**
Lay it all out by type: tree and lights, ornaments, the table, the mantel, outdoor.

2 **MAKE THREE PILES**
Keep, donate and toss. Tangled lights that don't work and chipped pieces go.

3 **KEEP WHAT YOU USE**
If it stayed in the box last year, ask whether it still earns its space.

4 **PACK BY TYPE AND LABEL**
One category per box, labeled on two sides, heavy pieces at the bottom.

5 **LIST WHAT'S MISSING**
Write it on the shopping list on page 6 before you buy anything new.

ASK YOURSELF

Did I put it out last year? Do I still love it? Would I buy it again today?

MY DECOR BOXES

Tree _____
Ornaments _____
Table _____
Outdoor _____

NOTES

FROM THE PRINTABLES VAULT
For personal use. Share the link, not the file.

Holiday Decor Shopping List

Shop for what's missing, not for what's on display. Bring this list with you.

SHOPPING LIST

ITEM	QTY	STORE	
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐

FROM THE PRINTABLES VAULT
For personal use. Share the link, not the file.

Donations and Notes

Where each bag is going, and when it leaves the house.

DONATION TRACKER

WHAT	WHERE IT GOES	DATE	
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐

NOTES