

MINIMALISM CHECKLIST

Adopting a minimalistic lifestyle can be exciting and rewarding. However, with so many options available, it may be difficult to tell where and how to begin incorporating it into your daily life. Here is a checklist that will help you get on the right path to lead a successful minimalist lifestyle in two major areas – your home and office spaces and in your personal life.

For Your Home-Office

- Take Inventory – this is perhaps the most important step to get started. Begin your inventory by walking through your home and office and making a mental note of what is there, what should be there, and what needs to go.
- Grab a notebook and pen. Label a page with "Unnecessary." Walk through again and list the unnecessary items on the page. Once you have a clear list of the unnecessary items, write down the reason why you keep those items around. For example, they have sentimental value or it's something you have on your to-do list but never get around to doing.
- Think about your list of unnecessary items and the reasons/excuses you still have them. Now, write down how having this item will enhance your life and the last time you actually used it. If there is no real value in keeping it, it has no sentimental value, or it has not been used in the past three months, throw it away or give it away.
- Get an accountability partner – In order to part with material possessions, you will need an accountability partner. Have your list handy and share it with your accountability partner. You can make it a fun day where dinner is the reward for a day of tossing and donating stuff. Have your accountability partner remind you just how useless that third stapler on your desk is. Donate it or give it away and have your accountability partner pry it out of your hands if necessary. Once you have taken these steps, go out, and celebrate.
- Create a storage system – Whether it's sophisticated or simple, buy or make a storage system that works for you. Have your accountability partner help you set up an organizational system. Label everything. When working in your office, do not keep more than two or three of anything including pens, pencils, and other supplies. Purchase more when you are down to the last item.
- Ask for help – Get your accountability partner to walk through this process with you. Ask them to allow you to phone them when you have difficulty resisting a "good deal" because you buy in bulk. You don't need it. Less is more.

As you practice eliminating, reducing, and organizing items, your mindset begins to change to that of a minimalist. However, this is just the beginning. You need to keep this focus and momentum going. In everything you do, thinking twice. If you need help to resist buying something or in making a decision, don't hesitate to call in reinforcements. That is why you have an accountability partner.

In Your Personal Life

- ❑ Take responsibility for everything that you do. Nobody can make you buy something if you are self-disciplined and take responsibility for your actions.
- ❑ Make a declaration. Declare out loud to anyone who will listen that you are going to adopt a minimalistic lifestyle. Do not say that you are going to “try” minimalism. Say it emphatically and with confidence – “I am living a minimalistic lifestyle,” or “I am a minimalist.”
- ❑ Ask for support. Gather your friends, family members, and co-workers. Tell them of your decision to adopt a minimalistic lifestyle. Explain how important it is for you to open your life to more time, money, and happiness.
- ❑ Find a support group. Join a minimalistic Meetup group in your area. If you cannot find one, create one. Get the word out about the group and your lifestyle change by sharing your experiences and taking action. Lead by example to enrich your own life as well as inspiring others.
- ❑ Be a role model. If you expect your children to follow suit and your peers to respect you, then be a role model for living with less. While everyone else is out buying the latest and greatest version of something new, enjoy the knowledge that things don't really make you happy.
- ❑ Focus on one thing at a time. Do one chore or task at a time and do it well. In time, you will receive recognition for a job well done rather than for half listening while multi-tasking. People appreciate and expect your undivided attention.
- ❑ Learn to be a delegator. Start with one small task per week as to not overwhelm those you are seeking help from, as this will only cause rebellion. Ease into delegating on a weekly basis.
- ❑ Learn how to say no. Saying no, in the beginning, may be difficult. Take your time and practice it weekly. Keep it simple by saying, “No.” Don’t elaborate or make excuses. Get used to awkward silence, repeated requests, and pleading. Continue to say, “I wish I could, but I simply can’t.” While it sounds simple, it does take quite a bit of practice.
- ❑ Avoid time-wasters. Take inventory and eliminate unhealthy behaviors and attitudes such as spending too much time on social media sites, constantly texting, and watching too much television. Replace those with things that bring you and others more joy. Keep a record of how much time is wasted. Start to take that time back and declare it as your own. Spend time with family and friends; take up a hobby; pursue your passions; begin to tap into your life purpose.
- ❑ Be a conscious shopper. Ask yourself pertinent questions: Do I really need this? Is this an impulse buy? Can I survive one week without it? If the answer is yes, then take the money you didn't spend on the item and begin saving for special vacations, charitable causes and your retirement.

When you get stuck, keep this checklist handy and it will act as your quick and easy guide to living a minimalistic life you love.



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