

# Julie Morgenstern's No Brainer Toss-List ~ For the Home

from her book "Organizing From the Inside Out"

These are items commonly found in the home that are usually clutter and easy to toss. Review the list, then clear your clutter using this as a guideline.

## HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION CENTRES:

- ✂ **Junk mail.**
- ✂ **Expired coupons.**
- ✂ **Outdated schedules.**
- ✂ **Old greeting cards** — unless they contain a very special message.
- ✂ **Old grocery receipts.**
- ✂ **Invitations to past events.**
- ✂ **Expired warranties and service contracts.**
- ✂ **Instructions** for items you no longer own.
- ✂ **Expired insurance policies.**
- ✂ **Unread magazines** — if they're more than three months old.
- ✂ **Old catalogues** — keep only the current one.
- ✂ **Investment and banking brochures** you never read.
- ✂ **Cancelled cheques** — unless needed for tax purposes.
- ✂ **Chequebooks** — if they're more than six years old, or the account has been cancelled.
- ✂ **ATM slips.**
- ✂ **Business cards** from people whose names you don't recognize.
- ✂ **Duplicates of outdated resumes.**
- ✂ **Old tourist brochures** from past vacations.
- ✂ **Road maps** you haven't referred to in ten years.
- ✂ **Solicitations** from charities you don't intend to give to.
- ✂ **Recipes** you haven't tried in five years.
- ✂ **Bad quality photos** or ones you simply don't like.
- ✂ **Articles or clippings** you haven't reread in more than five years.

## BEDROOMS:

- **Belts, bags, shoes, ties, scarves** that you have not worn in two years or more.
- **Bed linens**, that are old or tattered beyond repair, or that you don't use anymore.
- **Books and magazines** that you will never read.

## KITCHEN:

- ⊗ **Chipped or broken dishes, glasses, and mugs.**
- ⊗ **Duplicate sets** of items, especially if they're missing parts or pieces.
- ⊗ **Pots, pans, utensils, and bake-ware** that are burnt or rusty.
- ⊗ **Ugly serving pieces**, even if they were wedding gifts; save the thought instead.
- ⊗ **Excess stemware** — how many have you actually used in the last 5 years? Let the rest go.
- ⊗ **Excess plastic containers, bags, and jars.** Keep 5-6 of each. Let the rest go.
- ⊗ **Ugly souvenir glasses and mugs.**
- ⊗ **Plastic tumblers**, if your kids are all grown.
- ⊗ **Broken or never used appliances and gadgets.**
- ⊗ **Pantry and food items you haven't used in one year or more.**

## LIVING ROOM:

- **Books** that are out of date or been read, with no plans to reread.
- **Pre-recorded videos** — that haven't been viewed in two years or more.

- **Orphaned video boxes** – especially if they are crushed or torn.
- **CD's & cassettes** – that you've owned more than a year, and never listen to.
- **Extraneous furniture** - stick with the key pieces, especially if the living room is small.
- **Photos** – that are blurry, boring, make the person in them look awful or are duplicates.
- **Outdated newspapers** – they are old news.
- **Magazines** that are more than one year old unless part of a collection to be referred to often.
- **Old TV Guides** – what could be more useless?
- **Games** – that you and your family haven't played in several years, or are missing pieces.

### BATHROOMS:

- 🔔 **Expired medicines**—or any excess quantities of remedies you seldom use.
- 🔔 **Half-used bottles**—of hair and body product opened and abandoned.
- 🔔 **Rusty nail clippers, tweezers, scissors** — or anything else that's outlived its usefulness.
- 🔔 **Out-of-favour nail polish** — or another colour cosmetic that no longer appeals to you.
- 🔔 **Old toothbrushes** — replace every 3-6 months to maintain their effectiveness.
- 🔔 **Clogged, twisted, bent tubes**—of toothpaste, ointments, or anything looking “scummy”.
- 🔔 **Tattered towels**—or anything else that's too worn, or stained.
- 🔔 **Worthless bandages.**
- 🔔 **Duplicate blow dryers, hot curlers, curling irons, hair accessories.**

### CLOSETS:

- **Clothing that doesn't fit anymore.** Store only current size clothing in your closet; box the rest for storage elsewhere.
- **Stained clothing, towels, and things ripped beyond repair.**
- **Shoes that hurt your feet.**
- **Stockings and socks with runs or holes in them.**
- **Any item whose elastic has been stretched.**
- **Anything broken** that's gone unrepaired or unmended for more than two years.
- **Mangled wrapping paper, ribbon, and gift boxes.**
- **Outdated, non-working appliances.**
- **Duplicates and triplicates** of anything non-consumable.
- **Cleaning supplies** that you haven't used in a year.
- **Rusty tools, nails, hooks bolts.**

### ATTICS, BASEMENTS, AND GARAGES:

- 🔔 **Obsolete baby equipment.**
- 🔔 **Rusty nails, tools and equipment.**
- 🔔 **Mildewed or moth-eaten clothing, curtains, rugs, bedding, and upholstered furniture.**
- 🔔 **Old, broken small appliances and electronics equipment.**
- 🔔 **Old birthday cards, used holiday wrapping paper, gift boxes.**
- 🔔 **Old newspapers and magazines.**
- 🔔 **Broken furniture** with no antique value.
- 🔔 **Broken garden hoses, pots, and tools.**
- 🔔 **Old dried-out paint.**
- 🔔 **College notebooks and textbooks.** Try to be realistic: do you think you will ever refer to them again? Isn't the material outdated? If you simply can't part with all the vestiges of your school days, keep a box of your best papers and reports, and let the rest go.

# Julie Morgenstern's No Brainer Toss-List ~ For the Office

## TRADITIONAL OFFICES AND FILING SYSTEMS:

- ✂ **Product solicitations.** Ads, brochures, catalogue items...
- ✂ **Old magazines, books, and articles** you haven't referred to in the last twelve months.
- ✂ **Old research materials and literature.** These items are bulky and take up space. To save space: "Keep the source, toss the paper." Maintain a list of sources (actual and potential) by topic. If you ever need the material look to your source for latest version.
- ✂ **Duplicates of documents.** Generally speaking, there is seldom a reason to keep more than two copies of any given document. Keep the original, and, if you must, one copy.
- ✂ **Previous drafts of letters and proposals.** Retain only your final version. Out with the others; after all, they mostly contain material you decided not to use!
- ✂ **Supplies.** Get rid of excessive and bulky, space-taking supplies you don't use.

## ON THE COMPUTER:

- 📁 **Working drafts** – of documents that have already been completed.
- 📁 **Empty files** you created but never filled.
- 📁 **Identical documents** with different names.
- 📁 **Files too old to be reused.**

## HOME-BASED BUSINESSES:

- 📁 **Information you already know.** Articles confirming knowledge are reassuring to read, but altogether unnecessary to keep. Save only new information that you can learn from.
- 📁 **Outdated vendor brochures.**
- 📁 **Stationery you no longer use.** Keep only one or two sheets of each in an archive file.
- 📁 **Old receipts, bank statements, auto records**—unless needed for tax purposes.
- 📁 **Early drafts of creative writing.** Some writers have a habit of referring to earlier drafts of a project they're working on until it's done—sometimes even afterward. Be honest with yourself. Save your earlier drafts only if you've ever gone back to them.

## CUBICLE WORKSTATIONS:

- ➔ **Dated reports** — especially if they are never referred to.
- ➔ **Newspapers.** If more than a week old, they're history.
- ➔ **Magazines.** Toss if more than a year old, unless it's part of a collection you refer to often.

## MOBILE OFFICES:

- 📁 **Literature or sales books** — if they're dated, mangled, torn, or stained.
- 📁 **Supplies, samples, and presentation materials** — if they're never used.
- 📁 **Old reading material** — if it's gone unread for at least six months.
- 📁 **Files from previous meetings** — if you never unpacked or used them after the meetings.
- 📁 **Toiletries** — if they've been around for a while unused, you probably won't use them.

Julie Morgenstern is a New York Times best selling author, organizing and time management expert, speaker and corporate productivity consultant. One of her most popular books is Organizing From The Inside Out.