

"Life is about community, hobbies and friends. Take time to enjoy them."

- Howard Richardson, Vice-President
Right Management Consultants, Toronto

HOW TO BE CLUTTER FREE

QUIZ:

Are you a Clutterbug? Grab a pencil (if you can find one) and take the following quiz.

1. Do you hang onto clothes that don't fit or are out of date?
YES NO
2. Do you keep stacks of old newspapers and magazines?
YES NO
3. Has your electricity or telephone EVER been turned off simply because you lost the bill?
YES NO
4. Do you own appliances or gadgets that you NEVER use?
YES NO
5. Do you have tons of your kids' school papers (or yours) from kindergarten through college?
YES NO
6. Do you have hundreds of photographs that you keep meaning to put in albums?
YES NO
7. Do you have more than ONE junk drawer for gewgaws, doohickeys and parts to unidentified appliances?
YES NO
8. Are you storing heirlooms — furniture, china — that you haven't used for years?
YES NO

9. Do you have things that have been waiting for months to be repaired or cleaned?
YES NO

10. Is the clutter in your life so unmanageable that you don't know where to begin?
YES NO

TOTALS: YES'S _____ NO'S _____

SCORING:

Give yourself one point for each "YES" answer.

- 1-2 Good, you are not overwhelmed with clutter, but chances are you've got a few hot spots.
- 3-5 Uh-oh. Clutter is probably starting to put a permanent crease in your brow.
- 6-plus RED ALERT. You've got clutter crisis on your hands. Take control or get help.

CLUTTERBUSTERS TO LIVE BY

Here is a three-step process.

1. Figure it out. Develop an overall strategy and define your priorities.

Stop making excuses, stop procrastinating, think about how much time and money it takes to keep clutter.
2. Dig out. Getting rid of things will be easier if you turn off the phone (let the machine get it), don't accept interruptions or distractions.
3. Keep it out. Remember the 'In-and-Out' rule. Something new in, something old OUT. Have a place for EVERYTHING and EVERYTHING in its place.

Remember: **Do it, read it, pay it, file it and throw the rest out.**