

50 THINGS TO GET RID OF BEFORE HOSTING THANKSGIVING

A Room-by-Room Decluttering Checklist

Declutter the spaces your guests will see most — and make room for a smoother Thanksgiving.

Kitchen

Your kitchen is about to become mission control for the next several hours, so this is the room where decluttering matters most.

- ☐ 1. **Expired spices and pantry items** — Nothing slows down Thanksgiving cooking like reaching for cinnamon and finding a rock-hard clump from three years ago. Clear it out so you're not hunting through expired stuff mid-recipe.
- ☐ 2. **Mismatched food storage containers and lost lids** — You'll want containers ready to go for leftovers. If half your lids don't match, now's the time to purge and free up cabinet space.
- ☐ 3. **Duplicate kitchen gadgets** — Three can openers, two garlic presses? Keep the one that works and donate the rest so your drawers actually close.
- ☐ 4. **Chipped or cracked dishes** — You don't want to hand Grandma a plate with a chip in it. Get rid of anything that's not serving-ready.
- ☐ 5. **Old takeout menus and paper clutter on the fridge** — This is prime real estate for reminders, not seven-year-old pizza coupons.
- ☐ 6. **Junk drawer contents** — Every kitchen has one. Dump it out, toss the dead batteries and mystery keys, and only put back what belongs.
- ☐ 7. **Reusable grocery bags overflowing in a cabinet** — Keep a handful, donate or recycle the rest so that cabinet can hold something useful, like your extra Tupperware.
- ☐ 8. **Cluttered kitchen counters** — Small appliances you don't use weekly (waffle makers, panini presses) should go into a cabinet so you have counter space for Thanksgiving prep.
- ☐ 9. **Expired refrigerator and freezer items** — You need every inch of fridge space for the turkey, sides, and pie. Old condiments and freezer-burned mystery bags have to go.
- ☐ 10. **Stained or worn dish towels and oven mitts** — These are on full display when you're cooking in front of guests. Swap out anything embarrassing for a fresh set.
- ☐ 11. **Excess coffee mugs** — If you own 40 mugs and use 6, this is the moment to donate the rest and make room in the cabinet for serving dishes.
- ☐ 12. **Broken or dull kitchen knives** — You'll be doing a lot of chopping. Toss what doesn't cut it (literally) so prep goes faster.
- ☐ 13. **Recipe clutter (old cards, printouts, magazine clippings)** — Keep the ones you actually use and let go of the rest so your counter isn't buried in paper while you cook.

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Dining Room

This is the room everyone will be staring at for hours, so it deserves some real attention.

- ☐ 14. **China or serving dishes you never use** — If you're not using it this Thanksgiving, it doesn't need to live in your dining room hutch taking up space you need for the dishes you are using.
- ☐ 15. **Table linens with stains or tears** — Pull these before they end up on your Thanksgiving table. Nobody needs a tablecloth with a mystery stain from last Easter.
- ☐ 16. **Extra chairs that don't match or aren't needed** — If you're borrowing or renting seating, clear out the odd chairs cluttering the room so there's space to bring in what you actually need.
- ☐ 17. **Clutter on the buffet or sideboard** — This surface is prime real estate for serving food. Clear off mail, decor, and knickknacks now so it's ready to be used.
- ☐ 18. **Old candles that are burned down or the wrong scent for fall** — Swap them out or toss them so your dining room smells like Thanksgiving, not last year's clearance-rack candle.
- ☐ 19. **Unused placemats or coasters** — Keep enough for your table, donate duplicates you never touch.
- ☐ 20. **Dining room floor clutter (kids' toys, shoes, bags)** — This room needs to be a clear, walkable space for a table full of people and food.

Living Room

Guests will be parked here before, during, and after the meal, so it needs to feel open and welcoming.

- ☐ 21. **Magazines and mail piles** — A stack of unread mail on the coffee table isn't the vibe you want when guests walk in. Sort it, recycle it, and start Thanksgiving fresh.
- ☐ 22. **Excess throw pillows and blankets** — Cozy is good, but a couch buried in twelve pillows means nobody has room to sit. Pare it down.
- ☐ 23. **Remote controls with no batteries or unknown purpose** — Consolidate what you actually use into one spot so the coffee table isn't cluttered with them.
- ☐ 24. **Toys that have been outgrown** — If your kids don't play with it anymore, it doesn't need to be underfoot when the house is full of people.
- ☐ 25. **Books you've already read and won't read again** — Donate them and free up shelf space. A tidy bookshelf makes the whole room feel calmer.
- ☐ 26. **Cords and cables tangled around the TV stand** — Bundle or hide what you're keeping, toss what you're not. It's a small thing that makes a big visual difference.
- ☐ 27. **Furniture you don't need for the day** — If a bulky chair is blocking traffic flow, consider temporarily moving it out so people can actually move through the room.
- ☐ 28. **Random decor that's collected dust** — If it's not adding to the space, it's just something else you have to dust before company comes. Simplify.

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Guest Bathroom

This is the room every single guest will see up close, so it's worth the extra effort.

- ☐ 29. **Empty or nearly-empty toiletry bottles** — Consolidate or toss so the counter looks intentional, not like a science experiment in half-used products.
- ☐ 30. **Expired medications in the medicine cabinet** — If a guest peeks in there (and someone always does), you want it to look clean and current.
- ☐ 31. **Old, worn-out towels** — Set these aside and put out your nicest matching set just for the holiday.
- ☐ 32. **Extra toilet paper rolls piled up visibly** — Keep a couple accessible, but store the rest out of sight in a cabinet or basket.
- ☐ 33. **Kids' bath toys cluttering the tub** — Corral them into a bin or move them out of sight for the day.
- ☐ 34. **Hair products, razors, and personal items left on the counter** — Clear the counter completely so it feels like a fresh, guest-ready space.
- ☐ 35. **Old magazines or reading material** — A stack of magazines from two years ago doesn't scream 'welcome.' Toss or refresh.

Entryway / Coat Closet

First impressions happen here, and it's also where you'll be handling a pile of coats and bags all day.

- ☐ 36. **Shoes piled by the door** — Corral your family's shoes into a basket or closet so guests have a clear path to walk in.
- ☐ 37. **Coats and jackets that don't fit the season anymore** — Clear these out of the closet now so there's actual room to hang guests' coats.
- ☐ 38. **Umbrellas, hats, and gloves overflowing a bin** — Sort through and toss what's broken or unused so the entryway storage isn't overflowing before guests even arrive.
- ☐ 39. **Mail and packages piled by the door** — This is the first thing people see. Clear it out completely.
- ☐ 40. **Kids' backpacks and school papers dumped at the entry** — Move these to a designated spot so they're not the first thing guests trip over.

Linen Closet

You'll be pulling extra sheets, towels, and blankets for overnight guests, so this closet needs to actually function.

- ☐ 41. **Mismatched or twin-only sheets you never use** — If you're hosting overnight guests, you need to know exactly what you have. Donate what doesn't match a bed you own.
- ☐ 42. **Old, thin towels past their prime** — Keep your best sets accessible for guests and donate the rest.
- ☐ 43. **Extra blankets that are never used** — If it's been sitting untouched for two winters, it's just taking up space you need for guest bedding.

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SECTION 7: Guest Bedroom (If You're Hosting Overnight Guests)

If family is staying over, this room needs to feel like an actual retreat, not a storage unit.

- ☐ 44. **Off-season clothes stored in the closet** — Temporarily relocate these so guests have somewhere to actually hang their clothes.
- ☐ 45. **Boxes or storage bins tucked in corners** — Move these elsewhere for the weekend so the room feels open and welcoming.
- ☐ 46. **Miscellaneous “catch-all” items on the dresser** — Clear the surface completely so guests have a spot to set their own things.
- ☐ 47. **Unused or broken lamps and decor** — Swap in what works so the room feels warm and functional at night.

SECTION 8: Garage / Mudroom

This is where a lot of holiday overflow tends to land — coolers, folding chairs, and decorations all pass through here.

- ☐ 48. **Empty boxes and packaging** — Break these down and get them out before you need the space for extra folding chairs or coolers.
- ☐ 49. **Sports equipment or seasonal gear blocking pathways** — Clear a path since this may double as extra storage or an overflow spot during the party.
- ☐ 50. **Broken tools or unused items taking up shelf space** — Use this as a chance to finally get rid of what's been “waiting to be fixed” for way too long, and make room for the extra folding tables and chairs the holiday requires.

A little decluttering before the big day makes hosting feel so much easier.
My Thanksgiving prep goal: _____