



# How Much Is Too Much?

By Dr. Linda Hancock

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

## Published

October 23rd, 2020

Frequently, individuals tell me that they are overwhelmed with life and after a few questions they reveal the fact that they are surrounded by “stuff” that steals their time and energy.

Laundry piles up when teens try on several outfits in the morning, throwing the ones they don't want on the floor. When it is time to prepare for a wash, they just gather up everything despite the fact that most of it is already clean. A lot of clothes mean a lot of laundry.

Toys all over the place can be very annoying. Paperwork can feel like a burden. Garages can become storage sheds and bedrooms lose their ability to offer rest when they are cluttered.

When I was in high school my Home Ec teacher would frequently say “Have a place for everything and keep everything in its place”. Great concept but organizing your environment can be a daunting task.

The good news is that there some foolproof strategies that will help you to get things in order. The internet offers videos on everything from cleaning your fridge to organizing your closet. Here are some of the tips that can help you begin:

1. Completely empty the space. It doesn't work if you think you can just move things around.
2. Do a thorough cleaning. Wipe shelves and walls so you can start fresh. You might decide that this is a good time to even do a little painting!
3. Put like things together. Grouping items will give you an idea about how much you have in that category.
4. Get ruthless. Put your emotions to the side and throw away anything that is old, damaged, or unsuitable. You will likely never need this in the future – especially if you haven't used it in the past year!
5. Give items away to people who will enjoy them! There is joy in knowing that you can put a smile on the face of another person.
6. Use containers to group things together. It is best to place them in a manner that you can see what you have but if you decide to do otherwise, make sure everything is clearly labeled,
7. Show off your work to those who share your environment and encourage them to maintain the system.
8. Resist the urge to purchase more items when you can use the things that you already own.

When you are feeling overwhelmed look around and decide if your “stuff” is the cause. It may even feel overwhelming to consider cleaning it up but investing some time and effort will pay big rewards in the long run.