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Print this article back-to-back with The Occupied Staging Clutter Flow Chart for a fun, inexpensive, unique, educational handout. Now 15 chart/article combos to choose from!

Is it *Occupied Staging* Clutter?

What is *Occupied Staging* clutter? Clutter comes in many forms. When your house is up for sale while you are still living in it, clutter is anything that you can do without until you move. Examples include out-of season clothing, excess toys, holiday decorations and memorabilia. It is important that your house be *de-cluttered* so that it looks more spacious to potential buyers. It needs to be *de-personalized* so that they can envision themselves living there and not be distracted by your things (as nice as they may be). For all items in your house, ask yourself these questions: “Do I use it? Do I love it? Do I need to keep it? Will I need it between now and the time I expect to move?” **If the answer is yes -- you use, love, or need to keep it – and you will need it between now and the time you expect to move, that’s fine! Continue using it, and store it in an organized manner. However, if you won’t need it, pack it up and store it elsewhere. You’ll need to pack it up to move anyway, won’t you?** But wait...for occupied staging there is one more important question to ask yourself: “Is it a personal collection of family photos or other items I like a lot?” If the answer is yes, you should pack up your collection and store it away. If you don’t, potential buyers may feel as if they are simply visiting *your* home and not want to buy it.

Why can’t I part with my *Occupied Staging* clutter? Here are some reasons why this is difficult: **It was a gift – or -- I inherited it.** Great, so it’s yours to do with what you want, right? Is it a priceless family heirloom? Or is it an everyday object that just happened to belong to a loved one? How many other things do you have to remember them by? **I paid good money for it.** So what? Don’t clutter your present with past mistakes! **It reminds me of something good.** Great! Why not use it or display it? Or take a photo to remember it by, and then donate it? **It reminds me of something bad.** All the more reason to get rid of it now. **I know someone who might want it.** Great! Ask them. Give it to them now. **I might be able to sell it.** If you are already an avid eBay- or yard- or re-seller, great! However, if you aren’t, save yourself the hassle and just donate it. Preparing to move and selling a home can take a lot of energy. Don’t undertake a sales project now unless you really have the time and energy before you start showing your home. **The bottom line: If you don’t use it, love it, or need to keep it, it’s clutter.**

What should I do with my *Occupied Staging* clutter? Toss, recycle, gift or donate it. Don’t try to sell it unless there’s plenty of time between now and the time you will be showing your home.

What if, despite my best intentions, I am still living with *Occupied Staging* clutter? If you absolutely cannot part with your clutter at this time, you must pack it up so that your home looks uncluttered and spacious. If storing boxes in your garage makes it look crowded, and leaves no room for cars, you must store the boxes in a rental unit. If you need help, call a professional organizer, a home stager, or a friend.

Congratulations, you are now *Ready to Show Your Home!*