CR8V IMPRESSIONS
BY VINISHA
DESIGNING HOMES FOR REAL LIFE

FREE GUIDE · THE EMPTY NESTER

The Downsizing *Starter* Guide



A gentle, step-by-step plan for sorting a lifetime of belongings, and keeping what makes home feel like home.

8	4	12
gentle steps, in order	boxes for every decision	week plan to moving day

For empty nesters, retirees and the families helping them. · cr8vimpressions.ca

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

You're not getting rid of a life. You're choosing what comes *with* you.

Downsizing is a big change, and it's normal for it to feel emotional. Go slowly, be kind to yourself, and keep three ideas close.

One room at a time

Short sessions, finished properly, beat whole weekends that leave every room half done.

Decide for the new home

Ask "will this fit and earn its place there?" not "have I used it here?"

The story stays

A photo and a few written lines can keep a memory long after the thing has a new home.

The four-box method

Label four boxes and carry them from room to room. Everything you pick up goes into one of them. There is no fifth "maybe" box.

BOX 1

Keep

You love it or use it, and it has a place in the new home.

BOX 2

Pass on

Meant for a specific person. Tag it with their name.

BOX 3

Donate or sell

Useful, just not to you anymore. Let someone else enjoy it.

BOX 4

Let go

Broken, expired or worn out. Recycle or discard it.

HELPING A PARENT DOWNSIZE?

Let them hold each item and make the call. Your job is to carry boxes, ask good questions and keep the pace gentle. It's their story to edit, not yours.

THE PLAN · STEPS 1–4

Start with where you're going

1 Get to know the new home first

Every decision gets made against the new floor plan, not the old house. Know how many rooms, closets and wall spaces you'll have before you sort a single drawer.

- [ ] Floor plan in hand
- [ ] Rooms and closets measured
- [ ] Must-keep furniture measured

2 Name what makes it home

List the twenty or so things that make any place feel like yours: a favourite chair, the dishes you host with, a wall of family photos. These are decided. They come with you.

- [ ] "Comes with me" list written
- [ ] Shared with family

3 Start small and unsentimental

Begin with the linen closet, bathroom cabinets or garage. Quick wins build the confidence for harder rooms. Work for 30 to 60 minutes, then stop while you still have energy.

- [ ] First easy space chosen
- [ ] Sessions booked in the calendar

4 Decide once, with four boxes

Keep, pass on, donate or sell, let go. Use the same four boxes in every room and make each choice once. Moving things to a "maybe" pile just means deciding twice.

- [ ] Four boxes labelled
- [ ] Donation bags on hand
- [ ] Name tags for "pass on" items

Then the harder decisions, gently

5 Fit the furniture to the plan

Choose the pieces that fit the new rooms and earn their space. Sketch them onto the floor plan before moving day, so nothing arrives that has nowhere to go.

- [ ] Furniture placed on the plan
- [ ] Pieces that won't fit listed

6 Invite family to claim, with a date

Share photos or a list of what's moving on. Give children and relatives a clear deadline, then let anything unclaimed go with your blessing and no guilt.

- [ ] List or photos shared
- [ ] Claim-by date set
- [ ] Pick-ups arranged

7 Save sentimental things for last

By now you've practised deciding. Keep the best piece from each collection, photograph the rest, give everyone one memory box, and plan where treasures will be displayed, not stored.

- [ ] One memory box each
- [ ] Collections photographed
- [ ] Display spots chosen

8 Plan the exits early

Book donation pick-ups, consignment, junk removal and document shredding weeks ahead. Things that have nowhere to go tend to quietly follow you to the new home.

- [ ] Donation pick-up booked
- [ ] Consignment or sale arranged
- [ ] Shredding and removal booked

YOUR 12-WEEK TIMELINE

A pace that leaves room to breathe

WEEKS 12–10	Get the floor plan, measure, write your "comes with me" list. Start the easy spaces: linens, bathrooms, storage.
WEEKS 9–7	Work room by room with the four boxes. Share the "pass on" list and set a claim-by date.
WEEKS 6–4	Place furniture on the plan. Book movers, donation pick-ups and shredding. Begin sentimental items.
WEEKS 3–1	Final sort and pack. Label boxes by new room, and pack a first-night box with sheets, kettle and meds.
MOVE WEEK	Set up the bed and kitchen first. Hang one familiar picture on day one, so it feels like home.

The room order, easiest to hardest

1. Linens & bathroom
2. Garage & storage
3. Spare rooms
4. Kitchen
5. Living & dining
6. Primary bedroom
7. Photos, papers & keepsakes

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE

Let's make the new home feel like yours from day one.

I help empty nesters plan layouts for the new space, place sentimental pieces with care, and coordinate trusted organizing partners for the heavy lifting.

Book your free call

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