

Your digital decluttering checklist

Over time, your digital footprint expands. Getting the electronic clutter in check takes ongoing maintenance through a few basic routines. By following this digital housekeeping checklist on a regular basis, you can organize your electronic life and reduce your digital footprint now and into the future.

Close unused accounts

- Search for your name or commonly used username(s) on the web
- Search your email inbox and archives for welcome emails or account notices
- Close down any accounts not used for a year or more
- Set strong, unique passwords for all remaining accounts

Uninstall unused apps

- Examine your full list of installed apps on all devices every few months
- Remove any apps not used for 6 months or more
- Uninstall unused software from your computer or laptop (but be sure you know what a program does before removing it)

Unsubscribe from mailing lists

- Go through your email inbox and identify any newsletters you haven't read and realistically won't read
- Click "Unsubscribe" at the bottom of the email, then follow any additional steps required to remove yourself from the sender's mailing list

Declutter your email

- Consolidate down to 2-3 email addresses, and forward them all to the same inbox
- Use labels, folders, and filters to organize emails into logical categories
- Read, respond to and sort your email daily to keep your inbox slim

Clean up your desktop and downloads

- Clear your desktop monthly by moving files into folders and deleting what you don't need
- Clean out your downloads folder regularly by sorting, saving or deleting files

Move your data and photos to the cloud

- Install a cloud-based file storage app and set it to back up your files from all devices
- Install a photo storage app and set it to back up your photos/videos, and to delete them from your device once they are securely uploaded to the cloud

Scan for viruses and malware

- Install a well-reviewed anti-virus and malware app on all your devices
- Set the app to automatically scan weekly (or set your own calendar reminder)
- If possible, use the app settings to locate and remove junk files and cookies