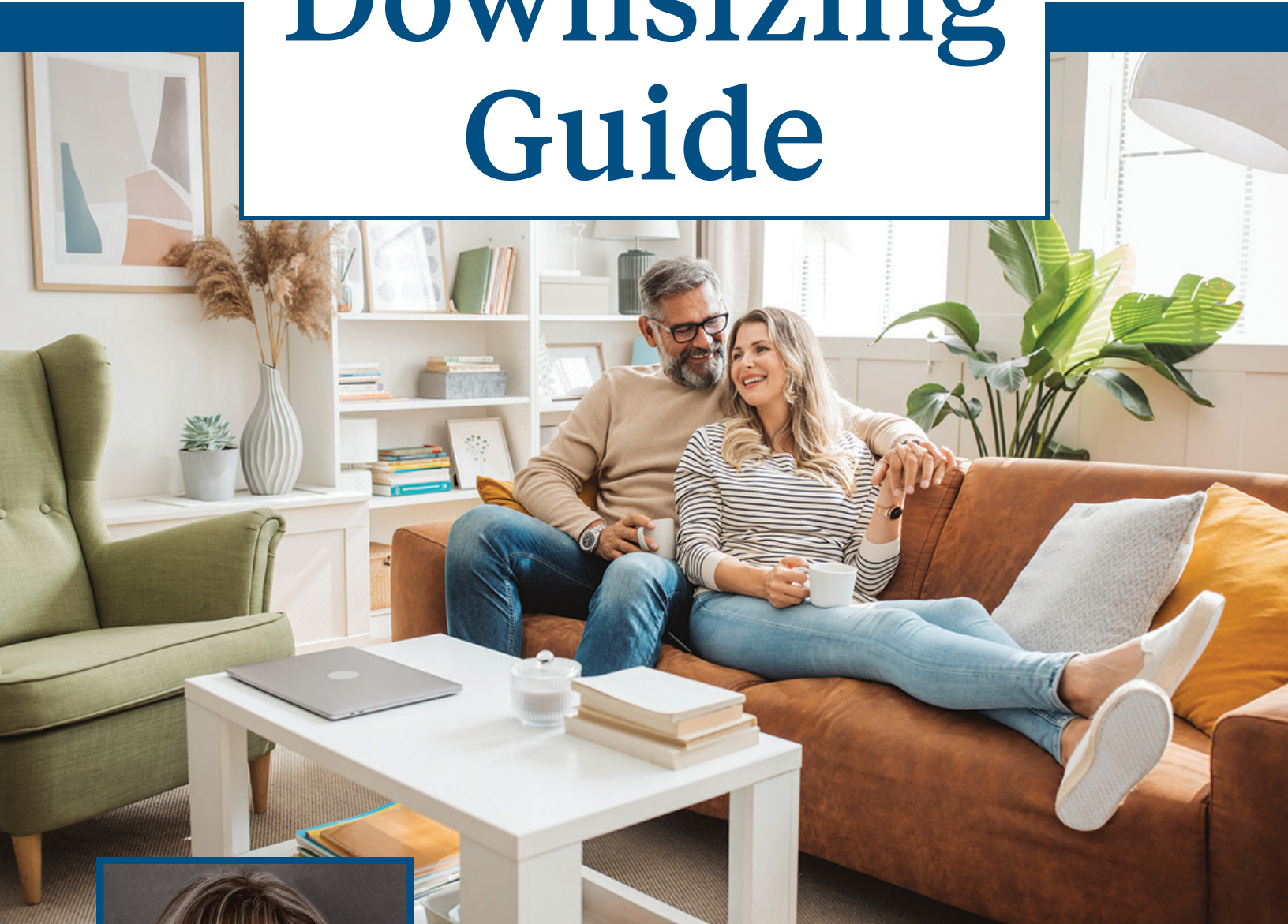


UPDATED AND ENHANCED



The What To Do - When To Do It - How To Do It

Downsizing Guide



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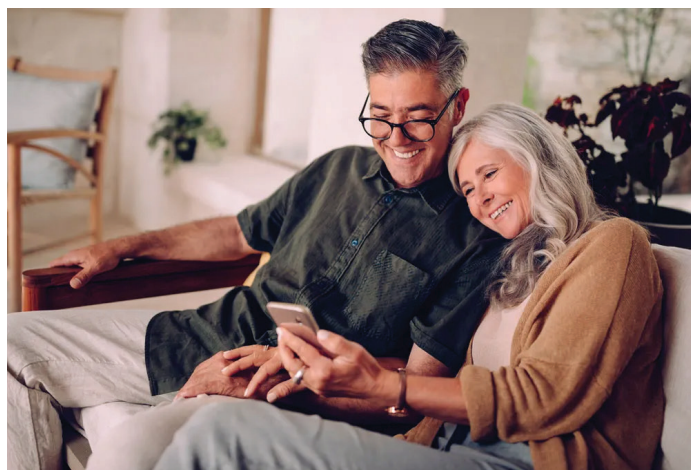
There are really just three reasons we downsize:

FINANCIAL

By its very name, downsizing suggests less space, fewer expenses, reduced financial stress, and greater control over your finances. Savings from winter heating and summer electricity bills could be redirected to retirement savings, or your ever-increasing property tax payments might fund a spontaneous Paris vacation instead. Additionally, you could avoid depleting your rainy day reserves for unanticipated major repair or replacement costs for aging air conditioners, furnaces, roofs, windows, etc.

LIFESTYLE

You love your home, but not the endless maintenance that drains your energy and takes over your weekends. You'd rather walk to an outdoor café than downstairs to the kitchen. You'd prefer exploring the Caribbean to sitting through a homeowners association meeting. Your best friends have moved on or headed south, leaving you with neighbors your kids' age and few opportunities for new friendships to flourish.



HEALTH

You or your partner may need a little or a lot more assistance with daily chores and personal care. Your ability to get around, or remember where you went the day before, is becoming challenging. You and your family want the security and safety of caring professionals who are there for you at a moment's notice.

We all downsize for reasons related to lifestyle, health, or finances—perhaps a bit of each—certainly to improve our quality of life. And that's a good thing.

So where, when and how to begin?

**You're probably
not just downsizing.
You're rightsizing.**



Whereas downsizing involves moving to a smaller home or apartment to reduce costs and maintenance, rightsizing is more a holistic approach to aligning your lifestyle desires, financial needs and/or health considerations. It's an ideal way to simplify your life while focusing on your priorities at the same time.

Downsizing is actually part of a rightsizing strategy. And rightsizing is what this guide is about.

NOTE:

Look for my **K-Tips** throughout this guide for time and energy saving ideas!

1. What are your goals?

Whatever your reason(s) for Rightsizing, put them on paper to help you visualize what's really most important to you. Here's a simple way get started:

Number the following reasons to Rightsize from 1 to 8:
(1 being the most important and 8 being the least important)

- _____ I want fewer expenses and more financial freedom.
- _____ I'm tired of never-ending, costly home maintenance.
- _____ I can't wait to declutter my home and simplify my life.
- _____ I want a location better suited to my interests, closer to family or more immediate access to shops, services and dining.
- _____ This is the right time to start living my bucket list, exploring, learning, and discovering.
- _____ I love imagining life in a fresh new community, with more amenities and new friendship opportunities.
- _____ I want the peace-of-mind of having personal assistance and accessible healthcare whenever needed.
- _____ (Other)

Now, based on your goals, picture yourself in your future rightsized home and lifestyle. That vision will be an instrumental guide in determining what you want to keep and what you want to let go.

2. Develop a rightsizing timeline:

Start 3-6 months in advance and include major milestones:

- Room-by-room and/or floor-by-floor decluttering, deadlines
- Interviewing/engaging Realtor Rightsizing Specialist
- Researching home styles, prices and neighborhoods you're considering
- Sale and settlement of your existing home
- Purchasing or renting your rightsizing home
- Selecting a mover
- Packing and labelling boxes
- Moving Day to your new home.
- Sit back, unwind, and enjoy!

K-Tip

Time your small room decluttering session.

Whatever amount of time it takes to go through and organize a small room can serve as a gauge for how much time you need to allocate for larger and/or more cluttered rooms.



K-Tip

Allocate 10-15 percent contingency \$\$\$ for unexpected expenses



3. Create a downsizing budget

- Estimated moving costs (moving insurance?)
- Temporary storage (if needed)
- Repairs to existing home
- New furniture purchases
- Estimated updated expenses in your new home

Got a downsizing question?

Call me at 301-806-8240 or email kris@galantigroup.com.

4. De-clutter

The most challenging part of any Rightsizing approach that includes moving to a smaller home is the first task - the emotional tugs in deciding what to keep, what will fit into your new home, what to throw away, what to donate. So give yourself plenty of time with plenty of built-in pauses. Don't try to cram it into a few weeks, or even just a few months.

Use my De-cluttering Checklist with these four categories:

- Keep
- Donate/Sell
- Trash/Recycle
- Unsure

(See our printable Checklist Template)

K-Tip

Only list a bare minimum of “can’t decides” in each room that you’ll have to deal with later. Believe me, you’ll be very happy you did.

If you’d prefer to have a professional organizing and decluttering specialist handle all or art of this task, I’m happy to provide references.



Helpful Tips for De-cluttering

Choose a small room to begin

Begin in a garage, laundry room or closet – places where you normally don't have items of sentimental value.

Instead of picking out what you want to get rid of, start by itemizing what you want to keep. Try the Konmarie method by asking “does it really bring you joy”? If the answer is “yes” then keep it.

Scan, digitize and organize as many files and documents as you can (bills, receipts, tax documents, medical records, etc) to eliminate piles of papers and files storage boxes that eat up precious space in a smaller home.

Don't keep what you don't need

Ruthlessly go through your closets, garage, medicine and kitchen cabinets for expired medications, broken/missing items, clothes you don't wear, duplicate kitchenware and furniture that won't fit in your new, smaller home.

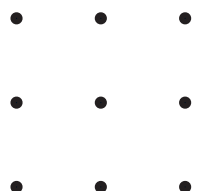
K-Tip

If you haven't used something in a year, or some say in two seasons, will you really need it next year?)

Take everything out of your closet and lay it out so you can see it all. You'll be surprised at what you no longer like, what doesn't fit, what you just don't need.

Take photos of anything you want to remember but don't have space for in your new home

If you absolutely “can't decide” on keeping furniture sentimental items, etc. consider renting a temporary storage unit.



What to Do with What You're Not Keeping

You've picked out what you want to keep. You've asked family, friends and neighbors if they want anything you don't want. And you're still left with furniture, appliances, electronics and smaller items.

Here are some stores and sites to help:

Sell

You'd be amazed what you can sell at a garage sale, or on Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace and Ebay. Checkout sites like Poshmark and Tradesy for selling designer/high end items. Consider free apps for selling: Letgo, Nextdoor and Offerup.

Donate

Lots of non-profit organizations have outdoor bins or stores to drop off items and/or they will come to you and pick up your (potentially tax-deductible) clothing and furniture:

- ***A Wider Circle*** – drop off or they will pick up professional attire, furniture (beds, dresses, kitchen/dining tables, etc.), and toys for kids
- ***AMVETS*** – for donation to veterans. Donate at stores or call to check on pick-up availability for clothing, housewares, electronics yard equipment
- ***The Salvation Army*** offers pick-up services and drop-off locations for furniture, clothing, electronics and appliances
- ***Habitat for Humanity's ReStore*** will come to you for larger appliances building materials and used furniture
- ***Goodwill*** generally accepts donations at their stores of clothing, accessories household goods and electronics.

Auction

While most auction sites charge a listing fee and a percentage of the final sale price some are free. Popular sites are: Ebay, Hibid, Auction zip (for historical, unique and high-end inventory) Deal IDash (for modern and high-end inventory) and Invaluable (for art and fine art inventory).



5. Let a Rightsizing Realtor Specialist be your guide to both public and private new home opportunities.

By the way, nobody can alert you to more current Potomac and Bethesda opportunities than me. I've lived and worked in both communities for 30+ years.

I've been consistently ranked a top Realtor since the early 2000's and I'm proud to have represented both buyers and sellers in area home sales totaling hundreds of millions of dollars.

Depending on your priorities try narrowing your options by aligning your real estate wants and needs with your priorities.

Would a smaller, resale home or townhome - maybe renovated, and more energy efficient in a neighborhood you know be worth considering? A new luxury condominium steps away from Bethesda Row's popular shops and dining? Or a contemporary, amenity-rich rental highrise? These options, along with the fresh new generation of luxury independent communities offer a wide array of choices and styles in all sizes and price ranges.

Interview and choose a Realtor: who's experienced and knowledgeable with home values in your existing neighborhood; who's a rightsizing specialist and is qualified to help you through the entire process, not just selling your home; who's a source and a resource for all your rightsizing questions.

Ask your Realtor to help with a price/product comparison of properties you would consider, and get a free, no-obligation market analysis to see what your home could sell for. You might be surprised at how much you could list your home for in this low-inventory Bethesda/Potomac market.

6. Choose (and visually organize) your new home. Sell your existing home.



If you can you might want to buy first and then sell so that you can explore locations, amenities, nearby services and home styles available without having a closing and/or moving deadline limiting your search time.

In choosing a new home identify your priorities – more open space, fewer bedrooms, easier accessibility, etc? See how it fits with any budget considerations. And is proximity to family or healthcare a priority?

Plus, by purchasing your new home or condominium first, you can measure the rooms to see exactly how your furniture will fit.

K-Tip

Online design apps, like thespruce.com or houzz.com can place you furniture in your new home so you can visualize exactly how/if it fits)

In any event, obtain a floorplan of the new space or just take photos if you can. Then measure and photograph all the furniture pieces and storage cabinets you want to take with you.



7. Make the Move.

Whether Moving into a smaller home, apartment, condominium or independent living community, it's a logistical challenge best served by professional movers. But you'll have to play a major role, whether you DIY or have your movers handle it. Packing, cleaning, labelling and taking deep breaths are all part of what of what you should expect. Use our "Moving Checklist" to make it a smoother process.

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8. Start enjoying your new life

Once you've unpacked and started to feel at home, it's also time to remind yourself of all the positives you've just enhanced your life with: the financial benefits; the maintenance-free lifestyle; improved accessibility; and the opportunities for a fresh start in a new community.

Look forward to your life. Choose to Rightsize.



Moving Checklist

■ 2 Months Before Move

- ☐ Research moving companies (Get written estimates from licensed movers)
- ☐ Inventory what needs to be moved

■ 1 Month Before Move

- ☐ Toss, sell (Garage sale/ Facebook Marketplace) or donate unwanted items
- ☐ Submit change of address to post office
- ☐ Confirm moving company and date (and insurance coverage)
- ☐ Arrange for storage unit, if needed
- ☐ Notify family and friends of date and new address
- ☐ Cancel any regularly scheduled deliveries

■ 2 Weeks Before Move

- ☐ Start packing items rarely used
- ☐ Prepare list of companies to be notified of move
- ☐ Transfer insurance policies
- ☐ Minor home repairs

■ 1 Week Before Move

- ☐ Actively pack room by room
- ☐ Tape and label all boxes
- ☐ Arrange utility cut-offs one day after you move out, and turned on in new home at settlement
- ☐ Take photos of electronic cords before unplugging
- ☐ Take photos of high-value furniture pieces, make note of any scratches
- ☐ Back up computers, if packing
- ☐ Pack lockbox with jewelry, cash and other valuables to keep with you

■ Moving Day

- ☐ Ensure loose items are packed in boxes
- ☐ Check appliances for contents
- ☐ Check all rooms, closets, cabinets
- ☐ Be there to direct movers at new home



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Room-by-Room Declutter Checklist

Date: _____

Page: _____ of _____

Room: _____

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