MAKING SPACE WITH CHLOE JANE

Making Space

A Gentle Guide to Getting Started When You Feel Overwhelmed

You do not need to tackle the whole room at once.

You just need to make the next decision easier.

A practical, low-pressure guide to making progress without creating more chaos.

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When getting started feels hard

When a room feels overwhelming, it can be hard to know where to begin.

You might look around and see too many decisions, too much stuff, or several jobs tangled together. Sometimes the usual advice to “take everything out and sort it” can make things feel even worse.

This guide is about making the process smaller, gentler and more practical.

1. Start smaller than you think

Instead of choosing an entire room, choose one small, contained area.

- one drawer
- one shelf
- one basket
- one corner
- one type of item

Try this now	Pick the smallest area you can finish in about 10-15 minutes. If that feels too much, make it smaller again.

2. Don’t create more chaos than you can manage

Sometimes gathering everything together is useful because it helps you see what you have. But sometimes it creates too much visual clutter and too many decisions at once.

If emptying a cupboard, wardrobe or room would leave you feeling overwhelmed, work through it gradually instead.

One item at a time is still progress. One small area at a time is still progress.

The best method is the one you can actually continue with.

Try this now	Before you empty anything, ask: “If I stop halfway, can I still use this room?” If not, work in a smaller area.

3. Give yourself simple choices

As you work through things, it can help to use a few simple categories:

Keep - things you use, need or genuinely want.
Donate - things in good condition that could be useful to someone else.
Sell - things realistically worth the time and effort involved.
Recycle or dispose - things broken, worn out or no longer useful.
Unsure - things you are not ready to decide about yet.

You do not have to make every difficult decision immediately.

Try this now	Use bags, boxes or even pieces of paper to label the categories before you begin. It saves repeated decisions later.

4. Have an exit plan

Before you start decluttering, decide what will happen to the things that are leaving.

- which charity shop or donation point you'll use
- whether someone is collecting anything
- where recycling or rubbish needs to go
- what is genuinely worth selling
- when sold items need to be listed by
- what happens if they haven't sold by a certain date

Try this now	Choose one realistic destination for donations before you start. If you can, put the donation bags straight into the car or by the door ready to leave.

Try not to create lots of bags that simply move from one part of the house to another. If possible, make getting things **out of the house** part of the decluttering session itself.

A decision only really feels finished when the item has somewhere to go next.

5. Be realistic about selling

It is very easy to create a large “sell” pile.

Before adding something to it, ask yourself:

- Is it likely to sell?
- Is it worth enough to justify the time involved?
- Am I willing to photograph it, list it, answer messages and arrange collection or postage?
- Is there a date by which I’ll donate it if it hasn’t sold?

Try this now	Choose a minimum value that makes selling worthwhile for you. Anything below that can go straight to donation.

Sometimes donating something creates more value for you than waiting months for a small amount of money.

6. Notice what happens naturally

Once you’ve made some space, think about where things actually end up.

Where do keys get dropped? Where does unopened post land? Where do shoes come off? Where do clothes pile up?

These little habits are useful clues.

A practical organising system should work with the way you naturally live, rather than relying on you remembering to use a complicated system every day.

The easiest place to store something is often close to the place where you already use it or put it down.

Try this now	Look at one recurring pile in your home. Instead of asking “Why do I keep doing this?”, ask “What would make this easier to put away here?”

7. Make putting things away easy

Finding something is only half the job.

A good system also needs to make putting it away easy.

If something takes several steps to put away, it may be less likely to happen.

Sometimes the simplest solution is best:

- an open basket
- a labelled box
- a tray
- a hook
- a drawer divider
- a container that is easy to reach

Try this now	Pick one everyday item that is awkward to put away. Remove one step from the process if you can.

There is no prize for creating the most elaborate system. **The aim is to make everyday life easier.**

8. Stop before you're exhausted

You don't have to keep going until the job is finished.

Stopping while you still have enough energy to tidy up what you've been working on can make it much easier to come back to later.

Progress does not have to mean finishing everything in one day.

Making a little more space is still progress.

Try this now	Set a finishing point before you begin: a timer, one drawer, one bag, or a time you need to stop. Leave enough energy to clear up.

A final thought

Organising isn’t about creating a perfect home.

It’s about making your home easier to live in.

If something isn’t working, that doesn’t mean you’ve failed. It may simply mean the system needs to change.

Need some hands-on support?

Making Space with Chloe Jane offers professional home organising and decluttering support in Benfleet, Essex and surrounding areas.

I can help you make space, create practical systems and work out what will make everyday life feel easier.

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