

# Spark joy: Use Marie Kondo-inspired method to declutter your smartphone, tablet and laptop

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Whether you're an app collector, picture hoarder or any other obsessive keeper of digital things, sometimes it feels good just to let go.

No, we aren't suggesting a 30-day social media detox—though, it's not a terrible idea if you've never tried it. We're talking about purging all those unused apps, hidden junk files and dozens (or thousands) of selfies that you're never going to post anywhere.

If you don't know where to start, Japanese guru of decluttering Marie Kondo has a roadmap you can follow. The 34-year-old lifestyle consultant developed a method for organizing that has earned her a cult-like following, top-selling books and a widely popular series on Netflix, aptly titled "Tidying Up."

In each episode, she walks into people's cluttered homes and says some variation of, "I'm so excited because I love mess!"

The KonMari Method to cleanliness sees adherents piling up all their belongings, selecting one item at a time from the mountain of stuff and determining whether it adds true value to their lives or "sparks joy." The method embraces the minimalist mindset and emphasizes gratitude for the things you have.

In a world where smartphone owners are using 30 apps a month on

average, you can apply that same methodology to spring clean your digital life.

Why not take out all your devices (smartphones, laptops and tablets) and go through them one-by-one to remove software that's just taking up space and slowing down the performance of your gadgets.

Here are some tips for organizing your devices using some of Kondo's principles:

Only keep the apps that spark joy.

"Keep only those things that speak to the heart, and discard items that no longer spark joy. Thank them for their service—then let them go."—Marie Kondo

When's the last time you used that photo collage app or played that bubble wrap popping game? If you can't remember, long press the app until it gets the wiggles and promptly tap the little X icon that appears. Voila, the first step is complete.

Apple makes it relatively easy to pare down the applications based on how much you actually use them. Go to Settings -> General -> iPhone/iPad storage, and you'll see a full list of your apps organized by when you last opened them.

Get rid of all the ones that are listed as "Never Used," aka "apps that don't spark joy."

On Android, you can see how much time you spend using each app by going to Settings -> Apps & notifications -> Time spent in apps. Lose what you don't love, after all, the [app store](#) is always there if you need to redownload it.

Clear out the junk.

"Letting go of things can make you feel guilty or sentimental. You may be feeling too attached to the past. It's time to move on."—Marie Kondo

Deleting junk files and clearing the cache are great ways to give all of your devices a new life. Clearing the cache on your computer is (usually) a quick and easy way to help speed it up. It's also a useful way to clear up space on your smartphone.

The cache is an area where data gets stored temporarily so it can be retrieved more quickly later.

For iOS devices: Open the Settings app, and scroll down to the fifth group of options with Passwords & Accounts at the top. Tap Safari at the bottom of this group.

Scroll down again and tap 'Clear History and Website Data'.

For Android, go to Settings, then Storage and you will see a breakdown of how the storage on your device is being used. You can then Clear storage and Clear cache of the apps saved on your phone.

For your computer, the steps vary depending on which type you have. But you can generally find info on clearing junk data in the Tools menu of your browser. You can also clear out your downloads folder, which can be home to programs you may not have downloaded properly.

Deleting unwanted music, videos or photos can be tedious, but not too painful. Services like iCloud or Google+ may already have all of your pics backed up online, so no need to keep them stored on your devices.

Organize the folders.

*"Tidy your space, transform your life."—Marie Kondo*

It's easy for your smartphone and computer to become cluttered as you download apps and documents over time.

To organize applications on your smartphone, create folders for the categories you use most—maybe one titled Social Media, another one for Finances, and one for Shopping, Photography, or Games.

To create a folder on iOS, tap and hold on one app for a few seconds until it starts jiggling. Drag that app on top of an app of a similar category. Your iPhone or iPad will create a folder and generate an automatic name that you can change.

The process is similar on Android phones but without the jiggling. The phone will vibrate slightly to let you know that the app is ready to be moved. Just slide it on top of another app and the device will create a folder. Tap on the folder then tap Unnamed Folder to change the name of the category.

For your computer, when you right click on a blank space on the desktop screen, you can create a folder to organize your loose files by type.

Both Windows and Mac computers have folders assigned for specific types of files (documents, photos, videos).

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