



The Choosi Clutter 2.0 Report

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About the report

The Choosi Clutter 2.0 Report is a part of the Choosi Research Series. This in-depth study investigates the behaviours and attitudes of Australian households in the battle against clutter.

The report explores household motivations, concerns and tensions around decluttering as well as tips for getting on top of it all - covering both household and digital clutter. It also delves into the impact clutter can have on our mental wellbeing and our wallets, while also uncovering the myriad of benefits experienced from conquering the clutter.

The study also looks to compare trends, challenges, and expenses with The Choosi Clutter Report 2017 to identify how the struggle with clutter has evolved for Australian households.

The report is compiled based on research commissioned by Choosi and conducted by MYMAVINS between the 6th and 12th of December 2023. The research was conducted via a quantitative online survey, gathering 1,209 responses from Australians aged 18 years and over. The sample is broadly representative of the general adult population in terms of age, gender, wealth, and region.

Important things to observe about the charts and figures

- Figures were determined from self-reported estimates provided by respondents.
- Footnotes directly underneath the charts may refer to one or more of the below, depending on the data presented. If more than one note is required, this will appear as a bulleted list. Charts without a specific note represent questions that were asked to all respondents.
 - Subset of the total sample size as certain questions would only be asked to specific respondents.
 - Types of questions asked, for instance “multiple responses allowed”, appear when the question calls for more than one answer from the respondent.
 - Data has been excluded from analysis (e.g. outliers removed in analysis).
 - Some charts and figures may not be equal to 100% due to rounding differences. This is also true for summed up figures.



Key findings

Many households increasingly face an ongoing struggle to contain clutter

- 1 in 2 face household clutter at least once a month or more. Close to 1 in 5 encounter clutter at least three to four times a year.
- 1 in 4 feel that their home is more cluttered than it was 5 years ago.
- Over 2 in 5 feel their home is reasonably or extremely cluttered but don't mind it, while over 1 in 3 can't stand it.

Insufficient storage space, over accumulation and lack of time top the reasons for clutter

- The top reason for clutter is insufficient storage (37%), with accumulation outpacing culling (31%) and a lack of time to declutter (31%).

Avoiding wasting money, desire for simplified living and running out of space are the top motivators for decluttering

- Around 9 in 10 aim to avoid unnecessary purchases, while a similar proportion express a desire for a more simplified lifestyle. Over 4 in 5 are concerned about running out of living space, and just over 4 in 5 have aesthetic preferences that influence their decisions.
- The most endorsed decluttering tip is to donate or sell unused items, with over 1 in 2 supporting this approach.

Most find it challenging to find the time to declutter

- On average Australians spend 3.6 hours cleaning, organising or decluttering their home every week, or 187 hours per year!
- More than 3 in 5 find it extremely or somewhat challenging to allocate time for decluttering given their other responsibilities.

Emotional reasons can often make decluttering more difficult

- Almost 2 in 5 say that nostalgia contributes to the difficulty in parting with possessions. Procrastination (29%), indecision (24%), anxiety (22%), and depression (21%) are also significant factors.
- Close to 2 in 5 say clothing and footwear are the most difficult items to throw out during decluttering.

While a cluttered home can have several negative impacts, most feel that getting on top of the clutter brings mental health benefits

- 1 in 3 report that clutter creates stress and anxiety in their life. Mental health, happiness, and social interactions are also negatively affected for over 1 in 5.
- Asked outright if they feel any stress or anxiety when the home or living space is cluttered or disorganised, almost 3 in 5 say that clutter causes some or considerable stress or anxiety.
- 4 in 5 say that they have more mental clarity if their home is clutter free and nearly as many say that they experience mental health benefits.

Cost of living has impacted Australian households' ability to keep their home clean

- 1 in 2 have had their ability to keep their home clean impacted by the cost of living, with the most common reason being reduced budgets on cleaning supplies or equipment (21%), or reduced budget on home organisation systems (17%).

Clutter can directly impact household buying habits

- Almost 3 in 5 admit that household clutter leads to buying things unnecessarily.
- 7 in 10 claim that decluttering impacts their buying habits. Most commonly people are encouraged to make more thoughtful purchases (30%), it helps them realise what they have, and reduces the need to buy more items (28%).

The second-hand marketplace is an increasingly effective way to deal with clutter, but beware of online scammers

- 3 in 5 have used the second-hand economy to deal with clutter, with a quarter doing so regularly. 9 in 10 who use online marketplaces agree it has helped them to reduce clutter.
- However, scams are a concern in the second-hand marketplace, with over 1 in 3 using online second-hand marketplaces experiencing a scam at least once.

There is a huge variation in the experience of digital clutter

- On average, Australians have 202 unread emails, 38 unread messages and 1,463 photos or videos on their phone. However the averages don't tell the full story with large variations between the more and less digitally cluttered.
- Almost 1 in 2 clean up their digital devices at least monthly.

Digital cleansing pays off by reducing digital stress and feeling more productive

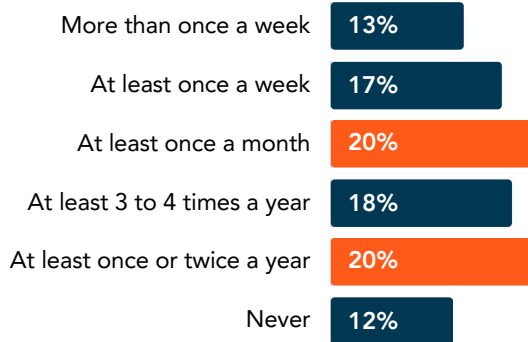
- The primary reason for digital decluttering is to free up storage space on devices (49%), followed by optimising device performance and speed (31%) and reducing 'digital stress' (23%).
- For 2 in 3 digital decluttering has a positive impact on their sense of productivity.
- The most satisfying indicators of digital decluttering include having no unread emails (43%), an empty recycle bin or trash folder (36%), and no unnecessary or unused apps installed (33%).



Bless this mess

State of clutter

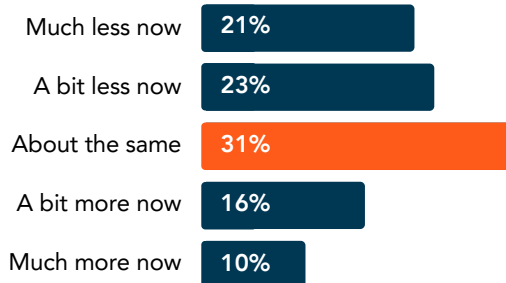
How often do you find your home to be cluttered or disorganised?



1 in 2 face household clutter at least once a month or more. Close to 1 in 5 encounter clutter at least 3 to 4 times a year. Only just over 1 in 10 never encounter clutter.

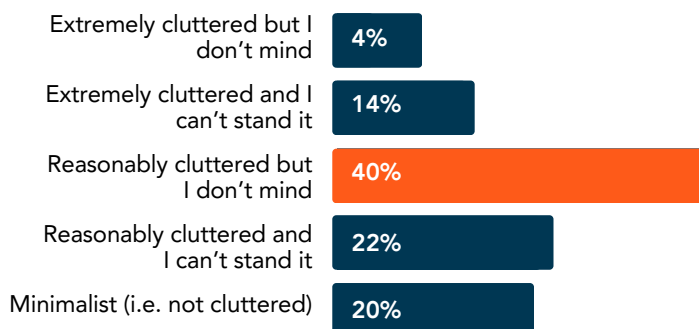
Younger people tend to find their house cluttered more often. Almost 2 in 5 Gen Z (39%) and Gen Y (35%) find their households cluttered once a week or more compared to only close to 1 in 5 Baby Boomers or older.

Is your home more or less cluttered now than 5 years ago?



More than 2 in 5 feel that their homes are less cluttered than 5 years ago. However, over 1 in 4 feel that their home is more cluttered than it was 5 years ago.

Which of the following best describes the situation in your home?

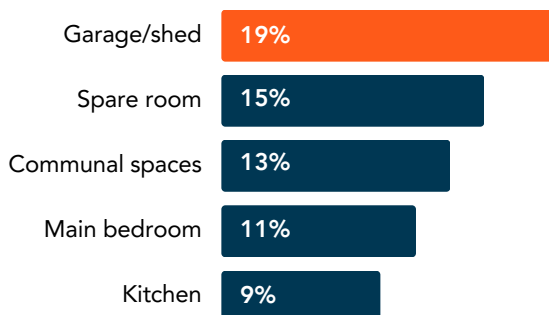


Over 2 in 5 feel their home is reasonably or extremely cluttered but don't mind it, while over 1 in 3 can't stand it. However, men are more likely to not mind (50%) compared to women (38%).

Those who feel their home is cluttered and can't stand it has increased significantly since 2017 (24% to 36%).

Sources of clutter

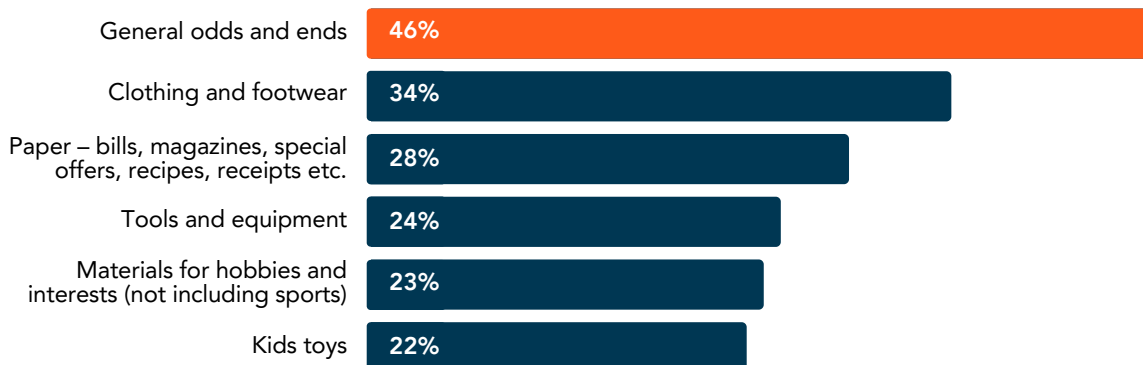
What's the most cluttered space currently in your home?



The garage or shed is the most cluttered space in Australian homes (19%), followed by spare rooms (15%). Communal spaces such as living rooms and family rooms also contend with clutter (13%), as do main bedrooms (11%) and kitchens (9%).

*Multiple responses allowed. Top 5 responses only.

What are the things that tend to cause the most clutter in your home?



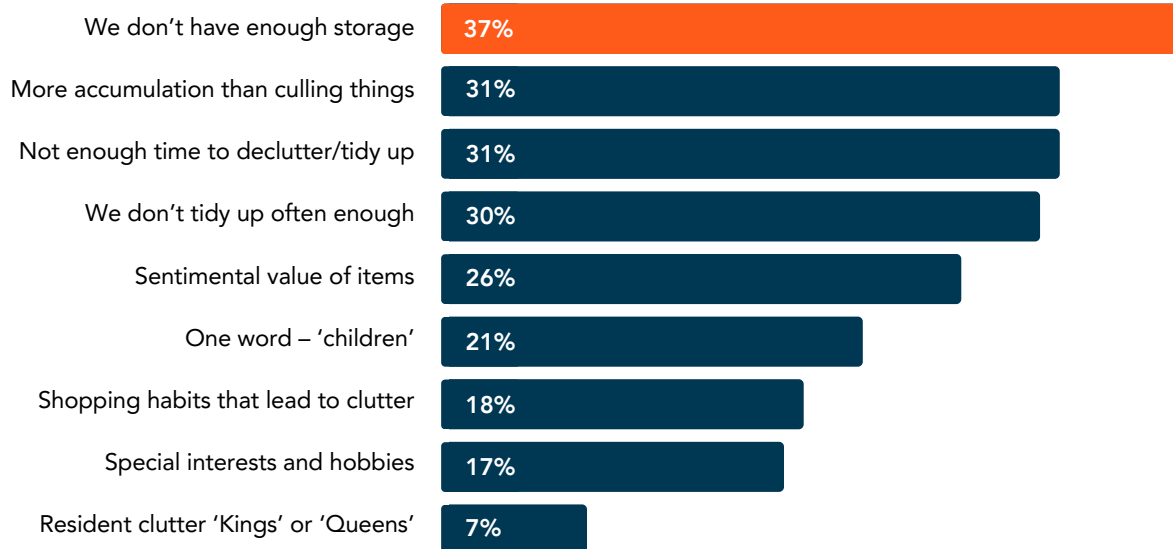
*Multiple responses allowed. Top 6 responses only.

General odds and ends are the leading cause of clutter (46%), with clothing and footwear also contributing significantly (34%). Paper items, including bills and magazines, add to the clutter (28%), as do tools and equipment (24%).

For Gen Z (40%) and Gen Y (39%), clothing and footwear are relatively more likely to be considered clutter. For Gen Y, in the prime age group for raising a family, kids toys also become relatively more likely to cause clutter.

Reasons for clutter

What do you feel are the greatest reasons for clutter in your household?



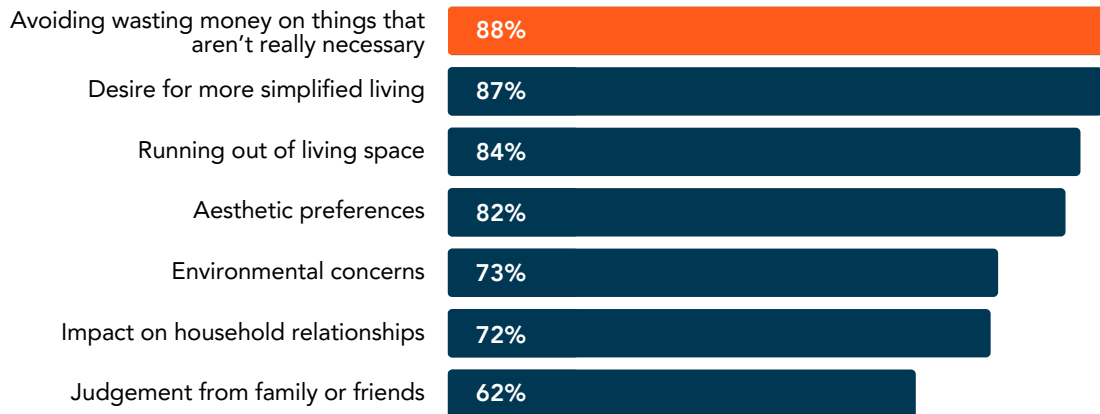
**Multiple responses allowed.*

The predominant reason for clutter is insufficient storage (37%), with accumulation outpacing culling (31%) and a lack of time to declutter (31%). Not tidying up often enough is also a factor (30%), and the sentimental value of items can also lead to clutter (26%).

Of those employed, around 3 in 4 have some experience working from home, with 2 in 5 of these believing it's easier to create clutter working from home.

Motivations and tips

How important are the following motivations for decluttering to you?



*% Very + somewhat important.

Around 9 in 10 aim to avoid unnecessary purchases, while a similar proportion expresses a desire for a more simplified lifestyle. Over 4 in 5 are concerned about running out of living space, and just over 4 in 5 have aesthetic preferences that influence their decisions.

What are top tips/advice you believe in about decluttering?

The most endorsed decluttering tip is to donate or sell unused items, cited by just over half. Other top tips include starting small by decluttering one room at a time (45%) and avoiding impulse buying (43%).

When asked about the most important way to help declutter, giving things to charity is the best approach for more than 1 in 3.

More than 1 in 2 are committed to donating or recycling items when decluttering their homes, ensuring that as much as possible avoids ending up in landfills. Almost 9 in 10 would be willing to donate or recycle some of their clutter if they could see the impact it would have on society at large.



Time and
commitment

Taking the time

On average, how many hours per week does your household dedicate to cleaning, organising and decluttering your home?



Overall



Women



Men

On average, Australians spend 3.6 hours cleaning, organising or decluttering their home every week, or 187 hours per year!

Women on average spend more time each week than men (4 hours compared to 3.2 hours), while those with children tend to spend even more time (4.1 hours).

Do you find it challenging to allocate time for decluttering and cleaning amidst other responsibilities?



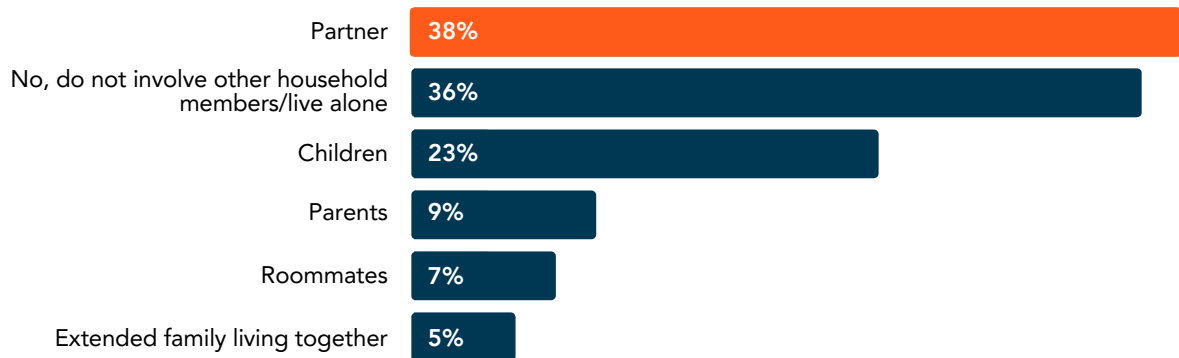
Yes, extremely challenging	21%
Yes, somewhat challenging	40%
Minimally challenging	21%
Not challenging at all	17%

More than 3 in 5 find it extremely or somewhat challenging to allocate time for decluttering given their other responsibilities.

The most common reasons for those finding it challenging (n= 744) include a lack of motivation (46%), limited free time (40%), and insufficient storage space (39%). Procrastination (38%), physical exhaustion from other tasks (34%), difficulty in decision-making regarding item retention (32%) and sentimental attachments (32%) are also considerable factors.

Commitment to cleanliness

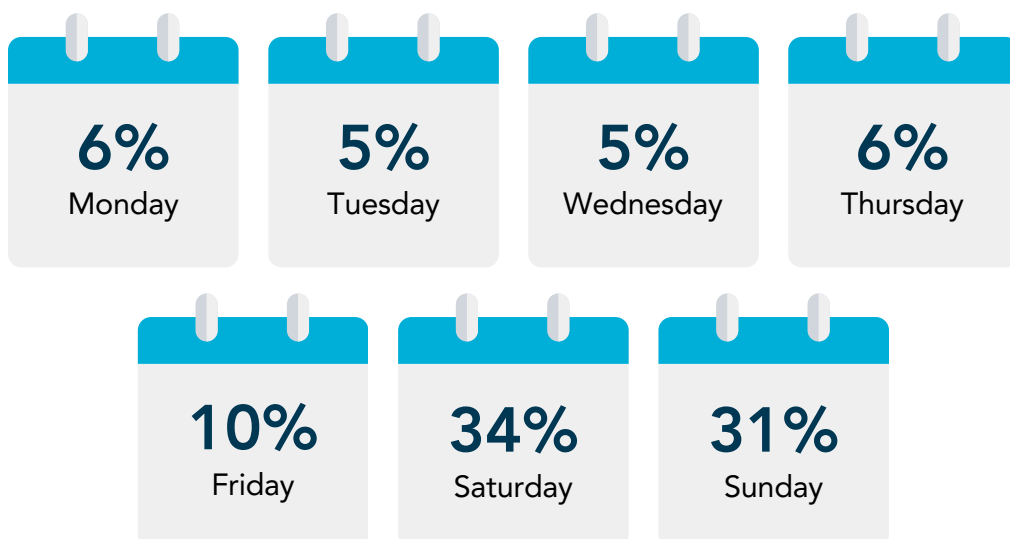
Do you involve other household members in the decluttering and organisation process?



*Multiple responses allowed.

Almost 2 in 5 say their partner gets involved in the cleaning process while more than 1 in 5 say their children get involved. More than 1 in 3 either live alone or do not involve other household members.

Are there specific days of the week where you find it more convenient to declutter and clean?



*Multiple responses allowed.

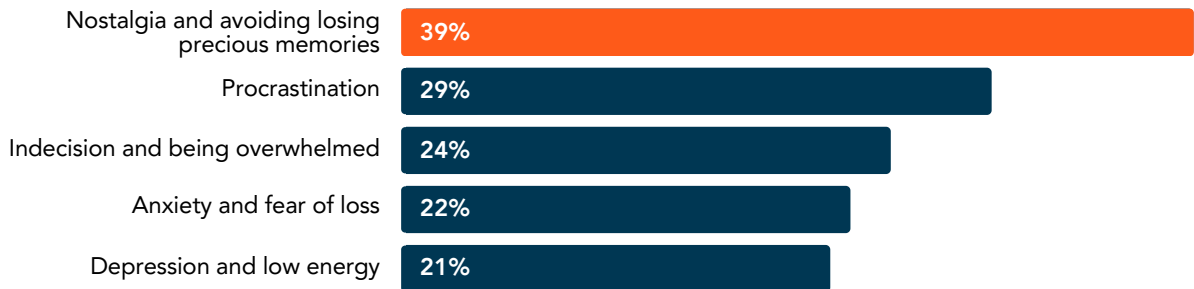
The weekends are by far the most common days of the week to declutter and clean. Around 1 in 3 cite Saturday and a similar proportion Sunday. However, more than 2 in 5 do not have any specific day preferences.



Health and wellbeing

Letting go

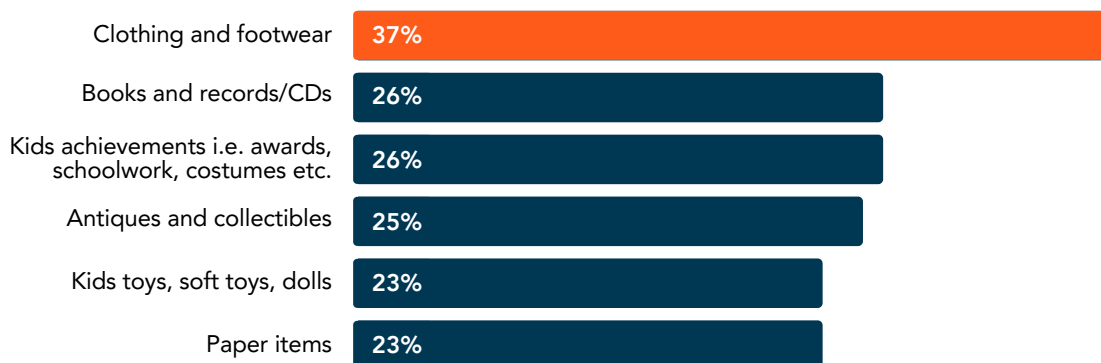
What are some emotional reasons you may find certain items harder to throw away?



*Multiple responses allowed. Top 5 responses only.

Almost 2 in 5 say that nostalgia contributes to the difficulty in parting with possessions. Procrastination (29%), indecision (24%), anxiety (22%), and depression (21%) are also significant factors. Men generally feel fewer emotional drivers than women.

What do you tend to have the most trouble throwing out when you are decluttering?

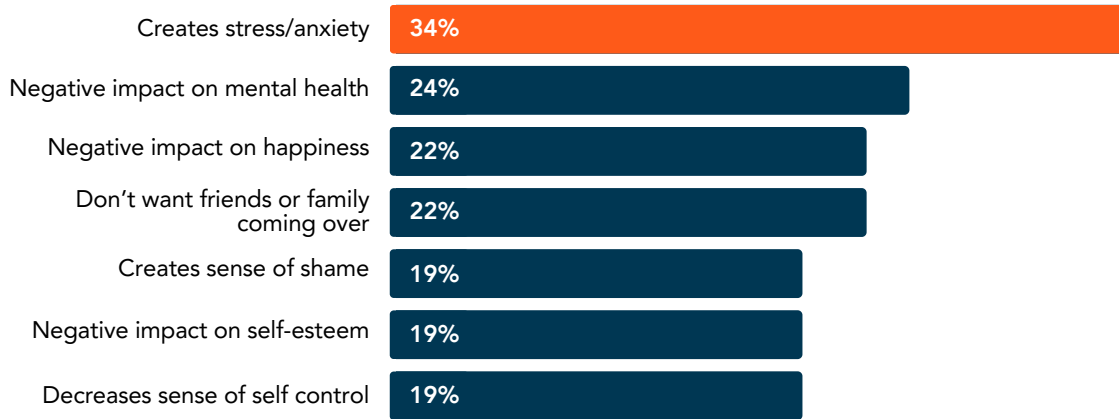


*Multiple responses allowed. Top 6 responses only.

Close to 2 in 5 say clothing and footwear are the most difficult items for people to throw out during decluttering. Books, records, and CDs (26%), children's achievements (26%) and antiques (25%) are the next most common items people have trouble parting ways with.

The impact of clutter

What impact does clutter have on your life?



* Multiple responses allowed. Top 7 responses only.

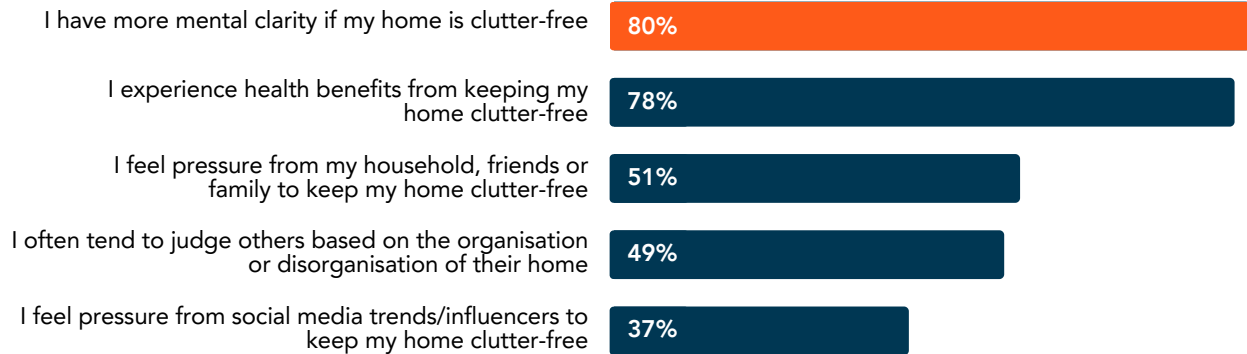
Clutter has a notable impact on individuals' lives, with around 1 in 3 reporting it creates stress and anxiety. Mental health, happiness, and social interactions are also negatively affected for over 1 in 5.

Asked outright if they feel any stress or anxiety when the home or living space is cluttered or disorganised, almost 3 in 5 say that clutter causes some or considerable stress or anxiety.

More than 2 in 5 have even put off moving or selling their home due to the thought of decluttering.

The joy of decluttering

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about clutter?



*% Agree.

4 in 5 say that they have more mental clarity if their home is clutter free and nearly as many say that they experience health benefits.

While 1 in 2 feel pressure from household, friends or family, only around 1 in 3 agree that social media or social media influencers add to the pressure of keeping their home clutter-free.

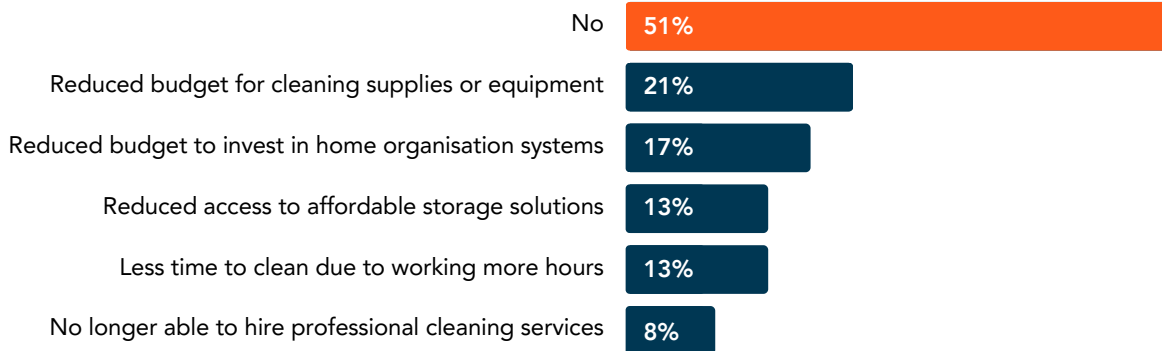
Around 3 in 4 say that their mood somewhat improves, or improves a lot after decluttering or organising.



The cost of clutter

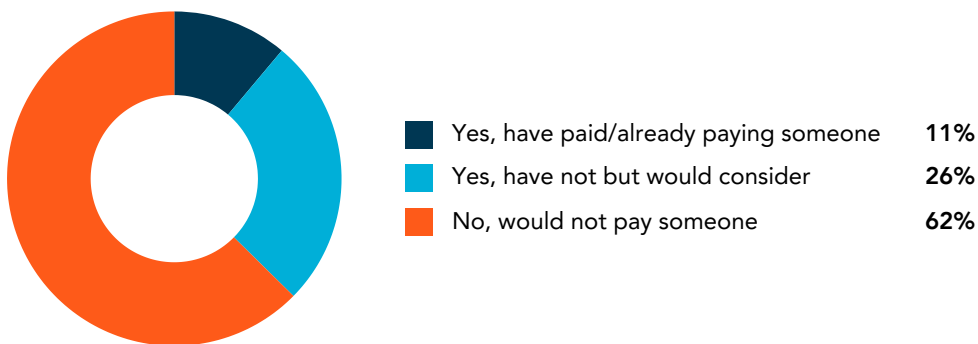
Cost of living pressures

Has the cost of living impacted your ability to keep your home clean?



1 in 2 have had their ability to keep their home clean impacted by the cost of living, with the most common reason being reduced budgets on cleaning supplies or equipment (21%), or reduced budget on home organisation systems (17%).

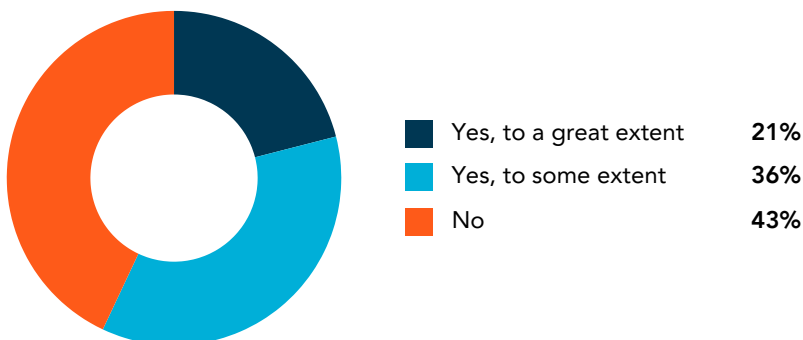
Would you pay someone to organise your home? (e.g. regular cleaner, professional organising service)



Despite struggling with clutter, more than 3 in 5 Australians would not pay someone for home organisation.

Unnecessary purchases

Do you ever buy things unnecessarily due to clutter and disorganisation?



Almost 3 in 5 admit that household clutter leads to buying things unnecessarily e.g., they are unable to see everything they own or are misplacing things due to clutter.

What kind of items are you likely to buy unnecessarily due to clutter?



**Of those buying things unnecessarily due to clutter (n=689) . Multiple responses allowed. Top 5 responses only.*

Among those who buy items unnecessarily, clothing and accessories (37%) top the list, followed by food and groceries (31%), and cleaning supplies and home decor (both at 25%).

Buying habits

Does the process of decluttering change your buying habits?

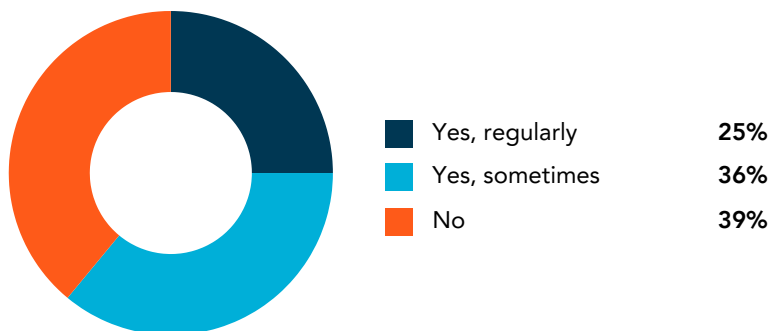


**Multiple responses allowed. Top 5 responses only.*

7 in 10 claim that decluttering impacts their buying habits. Most commonly, people are encouraged to make more thoughtful purchases (30%), it helps them realise what they have, reduces the need to buy items (28%) and helps prevent impulse buying (26%).

Second-hand marketplace

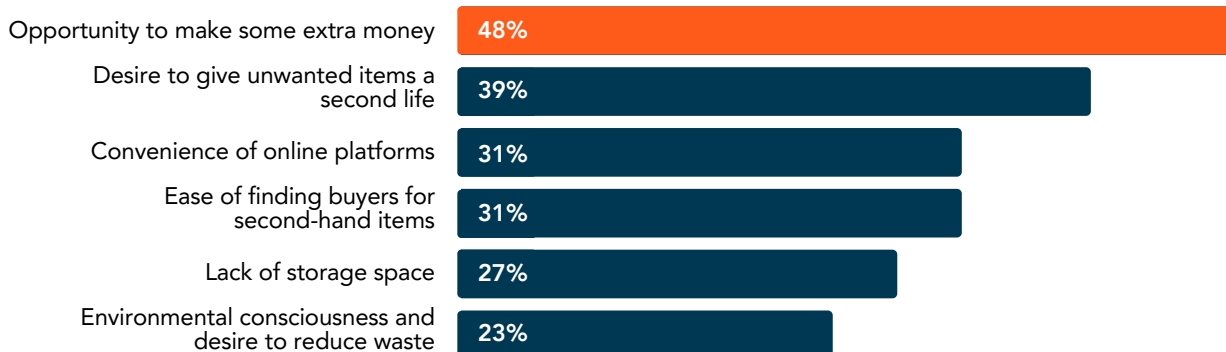
Have you ever used the second-hand economy online to sell or trade items you have come to consider as clutter?



3 in 5 have used the second-hand economy to deal with clutter, with a quarter doing so regularly. This has increased significantly since 2017, with less than 1 in 2 having used second-hand online marketplaces then.

Around 9 in 10 (90%) who use online marketplaces agree it has helped them to reduce clutter. Facebook Marketplace leads with a majority (67%) followed by Gumtree (43%) and eBay (38%).

What are the reasons for using second-hand marketplaces to reduce clutter?

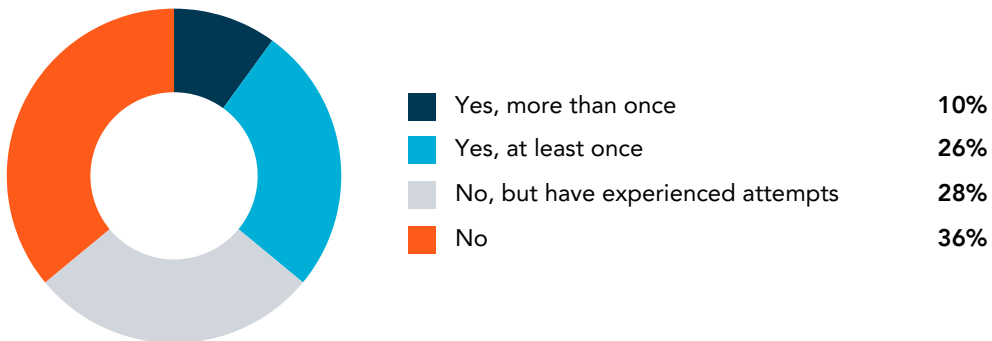


**Of those using second-hand economy (n=736). Multiple responses allowed. Top 6 responses only.*

The primary driver for using second-hand marketplaces is the opportunity to make extra money, cited by nearly 1 in 2. The desire to give items a second life is also a strong motivator (39%), along with the convenience (31%) and ease of finding buyers (31%) offered by online platforms.

Marketplace scams

Have you ever been scammed when using these second-hand marketplaces?



**Of those using second hand economy (n=736).*

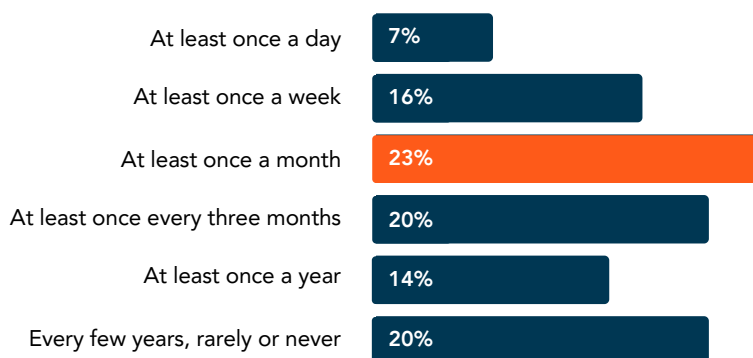
However, scams are a concern in the second-hand marketplace, with over 1 in 3 using online second-hand marketplaces experiencing them at least once. A further 3 in 10 say they have experienced attempts at a scam.



Digital declutter

Clean screens

How often do you clean-up your digital devices or files for better organisation?



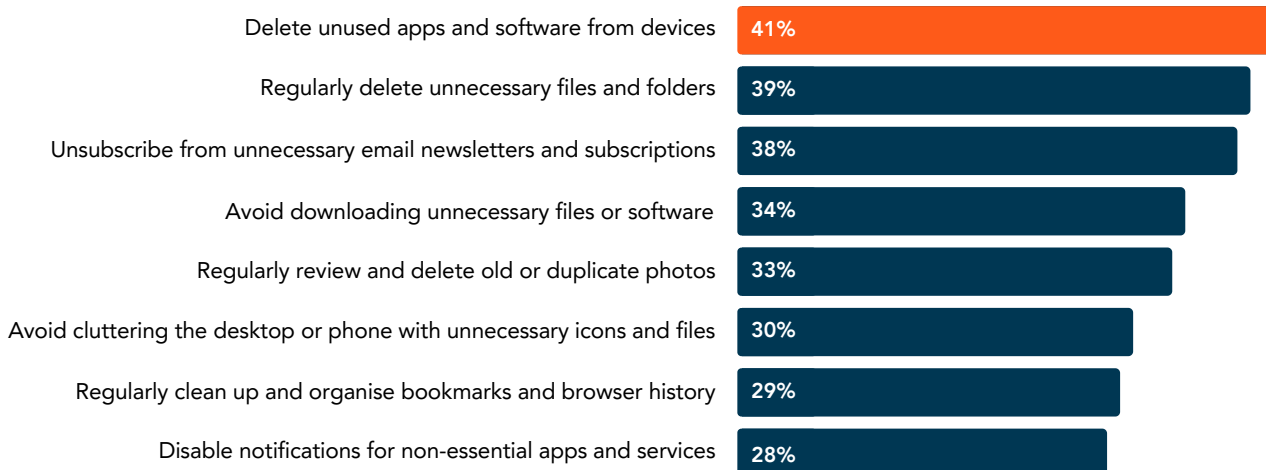
On average, Australians have 202 unread emails, 38 unread messages and 1,463 or videos on their phone.

However, the averages don't tell the full story with large variations between the more and less digitally cluttered. 1 in 3 have 0 unread emails and 1 in 2 have 0 unread messages, while 1 in 20 have more than 1,000 unread emails and 1 in 25 have more than 250 unread messages.

When it comes to a digital cleanse, almost 1 in 2 clean up their digital devices at least on a monthly basis.

Maintaining digital declutter

Which of the following do you believe help in maintaining a decluttered digital life?

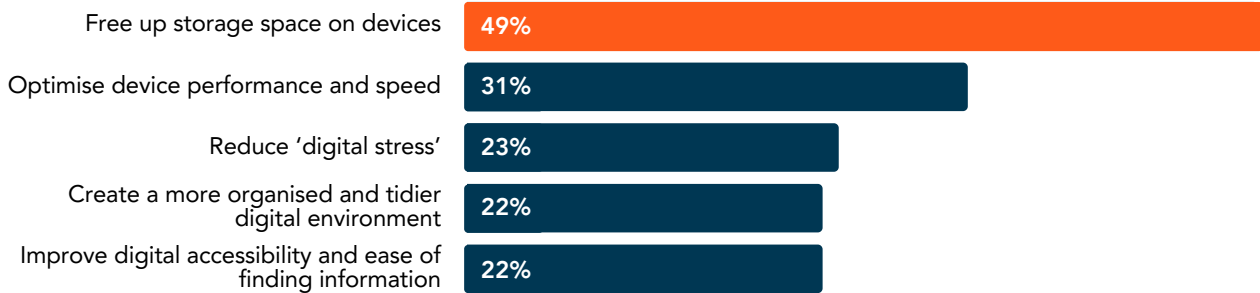


**Multiple responses allowed. Top 8 responses only.*

To maintain a decluttered digital life, 2 in 5 delete unused apps and software, regularly delete unnecessary files and unsubscribe from unnecessary email newsletters or subscriptions. 1 in 3 avoid unnecessary downloads and as many regularly review and delete old photos.

Digital cleanse

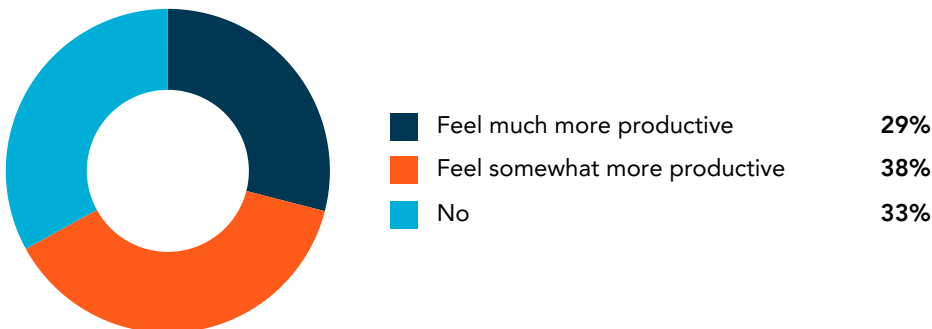
What are the key motivations for you to embark on digital decluttering?



*Multiple responses allowed. Top 5 responses only.

The primary reason for digital decluttering is to free up storage space on devices (49%), followed by optimising device performance and speed (31%) and reducing 'digital stress' (23%).

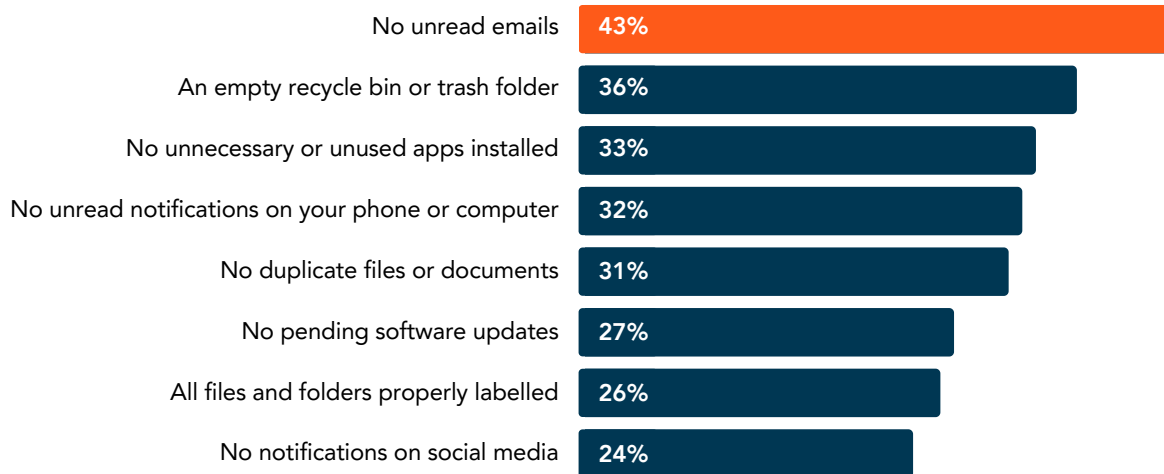
Does digital decluttering impact your sense of productivity?



For 2 in 3 digital decluttering has a positive impact on their sense of productivity. However, that's mostly accounted for by younger generations with Gen Z (85%) and Gen Y (76%) more likely to report this compared to Gen X (63%) and Baby Boomers or older (43%).

Digital zen

Which of the following digital decluttering indicators give you the most satisfaction?



**Multiple responses allowed. Top 8 responses only.*

The most satisfying indicators of digital decluttering include having no unread emails (43%), an empty recycle bin or trash folder (36%) and no unnecessary or unused apps installed (33%).

More research from Choosi coming soon...

About Choosi

Choosi provides information to help customers compare, choose and apply for a range of insurance products online and over the phone. Choosi's free comparison service lets you compare the benefits and prices of a range of popular insurance products, so you can confidently choose cover that suits your needs, budget and lifestyle.

Any advice or information provided in this document is general only and doesn't take into account your personal objectives, financial situation or needs.

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