

Six Steps to Reduce Paper Clutter in Your Home

Step 1: Decide What's Important

Sort your documents into three stacks:

1. Most Important
2. Important
3. Shred It

Step 2: Shred

Shred the "Shred It" stack using a professional document destruction service or a high-powered home scanner.

Step 3: Scan and file Your "Most Important" Documents

Scan your "Most Important" documents on a small home scanner, and file the originals in a fire-safe.

Step 4: Scan and Shred Your "Important" Documents

Scan your "Important" documents using a small home scanner, an automatic document feeder scanner, or a scanning service bureau (depending on the volume). After scanning, shred the original documents like you did in Step 2.

Step 5: What's Born Digital, Stays Digital

1. Sign up for e-billing statements online.
2. Process your daily physical mail immediately! It either gets shredded immediately or scanned and then shredded.
3. Avoid printing pages whenever possible. Try to "print" your files to the electronic PDF file format instead.
4. Buy e-books when possible.

Step 6: Backup Your Data!

Find and use some method of backup, whether it is an attached USB drive, an online service, or a combination of methods.

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