

A photograph of a cluttered room, likely a closet or a storage area. In the center is a dark wood glass display cabinet filled with various items, including a pair of white gloves and a red glove. On top of the cabinet is a large, ornate hat with a wide brim and a red band. To the right, a window with a white frame and a white valance allows bright light into the room. In the foreground, there are several wooden chairs with curved backs, some of which are covered with fabric. The overall atmosphere is warm and somewhat chaotic, suggesting a space in the process of being downsized or organized.

Downsizing & Donating Guide Rhode Island

Courtenay Clifford
Senior Real Estate Specialist

Introduction:



As homeowners of a certain age, we often find ourselves with a lifetime's worth of treasured possessions. But what happens when you find you need to downsize your home, sometimes even quickly? You may be moving into a smaller home to be near family, or perhaps you have a health issue that requires a change in living environment. Whatever the reason, having to face the daunting task of getting rid of possessions in your life can be not only overwhelming but downright depressing. After all, these are not just "things" or "clutter," but our cherished possessions that reflect back memories of our very lives. Of course, there is also the actual clutter: outdated magazines, clothes, books, unfinished projects, etc. Rather than allowing these items to gather dust or contribute to disorder, there is an alternative that not only benefits you but also your community: Donating! This guide will show you the way.

Chapter 1: Why Donate?



First, you have to decide what you are willing to donate. Many items can be sold or gifted to family members for their own financial benefit. For this guide, we are discussing only the items you have already identified as not needed for you or your family and friends but that will be needed and wanted by others.

When I donate to others, I feel as though I am the one who is getting the gift. I know that may sound counter-intuitive, but I really do. Being a real estate broker, one of the causes near and dear to my heart is homelessness. Where I live in Providence, I see homeless individuals on street corners and in tent communities. I like to go to Aldi supermarkets and put together care packages of water bottles, snacks, tuna and crackers, nuts, and the like to give to them. It fills my heart to do even the smallest of things.

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At holiday time, I look through my own gift drawer, where I pick up things at a discount throughout the year. Sometimes the gift I thought was perfect for someone is no longer right. When I have new items with tags, I like to donate them so others can give them to loved ones at the holidays. It's such a small gesture.

So consider what you may have in your own home. There could be some gems that can sparkle for others.



Is it furniture, clothes, electronics, books, or food? There are people right now in our state in need who would truly benefit from the items that no longer serve a purpose. In giving to fellow Rhode Islanders, you can feel good that you are contributing to the well-being of others in our state.

Knowing that your belongings will find a new purpose and bring joy to someone else's life can bring a sense of satisfaction and happiness. It allows us to give back to our community and make a positive impact on the lives of others.

Chapter 2: Getting Started

Now the real work begins. As you move through the process, it may be helpful to set a timer for 20 minutes and take 10-minute breaks in between. Otherwise, frustration and overwhelm can take over. So before we talk about identifying items that can be donated and those that are more challenging, let's ask ourselves some questions.

- Does this item represent who I am now?
- If I saw this in a store today, would I buy it?
- What feelings are triggered by this item?

Identifying items that can be donated



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When you find yourself in a house full of things that have taken up residence like an unwelcome guest, you have options. Let's start first by understanding what can and cannot be donated. Then we will provide all the resources available right at your disposal (pardon the pun). Not all of your items are candidates for finding new homes. Let's explore this a bit further.



Understanding donation guidelines and restrictions

Condition of Items: Donation centers typically accept items that are in good, usable condition. This means they should be clean, undamaged, and in working order. As long as the items are not in need of repair, the range of items that can be donated is wide, from books to furniture, electronics, clothes, used blankets, and towels.

Prohibited Items: Donation centers often have a list of items they cannot accept due to safety or legal reasons. These may include items such as mattresses, cribs, car seats, hazardous materials, and expired medications. Just because some donation centers won't take these items, don't worry; we will provide a list of places where you can dispose of them.

Where to Donate Items in Rhode Island



I can't tell you how many times I've filled my trunk and told myself, "Time for a Savers run."

Where I live in Providence, it's an easy option for quick delivery and drop-off. Plus, I get a coupon for future purchases, which I can give to someone to save at their thrift store.

Savers is my go-to choice out of sheer convenience, but there are so many more options that we have here in Rhode Island, from the "Big Box" of donation centers like Savers and Goodwill to much more local and niche organizations. Let's examine our options.

The Major National Donation Centers

Here is a list of the National Donation Centers that will take the most items and have the most locations across the state. Check their websites for specific items they accept and do not accept.

These drop-off centers take most household items and furniture. They are the biggest donation centers that take the most items. See links for locations.

- [Savers](#)
- [Salvation Army](#)
- [Goodwill Industries](#)

For building materials, furniture, hardware, and tools. Habitat for Humanity will take furniture and lighting, even door knobs, toilets, power tools, and more. The link to the website will give you their guidelines.

- [Habitat For Humanity](#)

Local Donation Centers

Here are some more localized resources that take donations from our state of Rhode Island. Review these links. There may be a charity that speaks to your heart.

Household Items, Clothes and Furniture

- [Rhode Island Donation Exchange](#)
- [Big Brothers Big Sisters of RI](#)
- [Rhode Island Center Assisting those in Need](#)

Clothes

- [Goodwill Industries](#)
- [Dress for Success](#)
- [Amos House](#)

Food

- [Rhode Island Community Food Bank](#)
- [Rhode Island Center Assisting those in Need](#)
- [Good Neighbors](#)

Books

- [Providence Books Through Bars](#)
- [RI Center for the Book](#)
- [Books Are Wings](#)

Disposal and Recycling Services

I remember listening to Joe Gebbia, a Rhode Island School of Design graduate and co-founder of Airbnb, recount a story of a memorable field trip in Rhode Island. The professor in his industrial design class suggested that they visit the Johnston landfill so the class could see what actually ends up in a landfill versus what can be recycled. It had an impact on what the class chose to design and their materials.

The impact of recycling and properly disposing of our household items has a profound impact on our environment. Keeping things out of the landfill is a worthy goal.

Considering that, one of the greatest resources we have in Rhode Island is the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation <https://rirrc.org/>

The number of helpful links on this site is invaluable. The site lists almost any item you can imagine, from old paint cans, mattresses, hazardous materials, and Christmas trees to local organizations in need of specific materials by city and town.

There are 5 main categories of residential trash and unwanted items which have specific disposal methods. They are:

1. Regular Household Waste for Trash
2. Items that go in Recycling Bins
3. Items that must be brought to the landfill or transfer station for disposal
4. Hazardous Items
5. Items that can be delivered and donated (like books) through RIRRC

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Chapter 3: Logistics

Donation Centers that offer free Pickup in Rhode Island



So you have identified those items you wish to donate and decided where they will go. I don't know about you, but my car is a sedan and not appropriate to transport larger items. Fortunately, there are several pickup services available throughout the state that can assist you in this process for free.

1. Goodwill Industries of Rhode Island: Goodwill is a well-known organization that accepts a wide range of donations, including clothing, electronics, and more. They offer a pickup service for larger items, such as furniture. To schedule a pickup, you can call them at (401) 861-2080 or visit their website at www.goodwillri.org.

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2. Salvation Army: The Salvation Army is another charitable organization that accepts donations of furniture, clothing, appliances, and household goods. They provide pickup services for larger items. To schedule a pickup, you can call them at (401) 421-5270 or visit their website at www.salvationarmyusa.org.

3. Vietnam Veterans of America: This organization accepts donations of various household items and provides pickup services for larger items. To schedule a pickup, you can call them at (800) 775-8387 or visit their website at www.pickupplease.org.

4. Habitat for Humanity ReStore: ReStore accepts donations of new and gently used furniture, appliances, building materials, and more. They offer a pickup service for larger items. To schedule a pickup, you can call them at (401) 831-5511 or visit their website at www.habitat.org/restores.

5. Big Brothers Big Sisters Foundation: This organization accepts donations of clothing, shoes, accessories, small household items, and more. They provide pickup services for larger items. To schedule a pickup, you can call them at (800) 483-5503 or visit their website at www.bbbsfoundation.org.

These are just a few of the pickup services available in Rhode Island. By utilizing these services, you can easily donate your unwanted items without the hassle of transportation. Remember to contact the organizations in advance to schedule a pickup and inquire about their specific donation guidelines.

Websites, contact information, and resources for further assistance



Rhode Island Donation Websites with Contact Information:

1. The Rhode Island Donation Network (www.ridonationnetwork.org) is a one-stop platform that connects donors with various charitable organizations in the state. Their user-friendly website allows you to search for specific items and find the nearest organization accepting those items.

2. The Goodwill Industries of Rhode Island (www.goodwillri.org) is another excellent resource for donating unwanted items. They have multiple donation centers across the state and accept a wide range of items, including clothing, furniture, electronics, and household goods.

3. Salvation Army Donation Center: Call 1-800-SA-TRUCK or

visit www.salvationarmyri.org for information on drop-off locations and accepted items.

4. Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Rhode Island: Call (401) 921-2434 or

visit www.bbbsri.org to schedule a pickup for larger items like furniture or appliances.

5. Habitat for Humanity ReStore: Call (401) 351-8719 or visit www.habitatri.org to find

out about their donation guidelines and drop-off locations for building materials, furniture, and appliances.

Furniture and Household Items

- [Furniture Bank Of Rhode Island](#)
- [The Salvation Army Thrift Store & Donation Center ReStore RI](#)
- [Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island Donation Center](#)
- [Savers](#)
- [Donation Centers of New England](#)
- [The East Bay Food Pantry and Thrift Shop Northern Thrift](#)
- [Habitat for Humanity for Rhode Island South County](#)
- [Declutter USA Rhode Island Center](#)
- [Assisting those in Need Epilepsy Foundation](#)
- [Dorcas International Institute of RI](#)
- [Jonnycake Center of Peace Dale](#)
- [Jonnycake Center of Westerly Lucy's Hearth](#)
- [RI Donation Exchange RI Center Assisting those in Need \(RI Can\)](#)
- [Women's Resource Center](#)
- [Find Help org](#)
- [Donation Town Rhode Island](#)
- [Exchange ReStore Rhode Island - free donation pickup](#)

Books

- [Providence Books through Bars](#)
- [Books Are Wings](#)
- [RI Center for the Book](#)
- [Literacy Volunteers of Kent County](#)

Jewelry

- [Helping Hands of America foundation](#)
- [Providence Diamond](#)
- [Rhode Island Monthly](#)
- [McAuley Ministries](#)
- [Rhode Island Foundation: RI Foundation](#)

Cars, RV's etc.

- [Wheels for Wishes](#)
- [Vehicles for Veterans](#)
- [Animal Car Donation](#)
- [Car Donation Wizard](#)
- [Ralph Car Donation Group Central Falls RI](#)

Clothes

- [Forgotten Children](#)
- [Clothing Collaborative @ DIIRI](#)
- [Clothes To Kids RI, Inc.](#)
- [Clothe Donations](#)
- [Donate Cloth & Linen-Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island](#)
- [Goodwill of Southern New England - Rhode Island](#)
- [Angel in Action RI](#)
- [Charity Services LLC Donation Centers of New England](#)
- [Rhode Island Center Assisting those in Need](#)
- [The East Bay Food Pantry and Thrift Shop](#)
- [Good Neighbors](#)
- [Goodwill Bristol, RI Attended Donation Center](#)

Toys

- [Toys for Tots](#)
- [Gingerbread Express](#)
- [Santa's Knights](#)

Pet Supplies

- [Animal Rescue Rhode Island](#)
- [Providence Animal Center](#)
- [Rhode Home Rescue](#)

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The Rhode Island Department of Elderly Affairs (www.dea.ri.gov) provides valuable information and resources specifically for senior homeowners. They can guide you through the process of downsizing, connecting with local support services, and finding suitable donation centers. Your local senior center is an excellent resource for connecting with other seniors who have gone through the donation process. They can provide first-hand advice and recommendations based on their own experiences.

We hope this guide helps you in the process of making space in your life. If you have any questions at all, reach out to us at Courtenay.Clifford.com.



About the Author

Courtenay Clifford "C.C." is a 20+ year Real Estate Broker, Downsizing & Senior Home Specialist, Airbnb Host and Entrepreneur. She lives in Providence, RI in a historic 1804 home with woefully inadequate closet space. Her latest adventure is building a Tiny Home on Wheels of 275 square feet. Talk about downsizing!