

**Generations**

**2019 housecleaning tips**

**B**efore New Year's, I wrote about the need for taking care of any health warning signs and the importance of getting a checkup as we enter 2019, and last week about never giving up on a dream no matter how difficult your path becomes.

This week, a *Good Housekeeping* article by Adam Schubak and Brie Dyas caught my eye about doing an assessment of items that should be slated for the junk pile rather than taking up space in 2019 households. Some I agreed with, but many will still find a home in the DeMarco abode.

First on the list was unmatched socks. Everyone, myself included, has a sock drawer with at least a handful of single socks that lost their partners somewhere along the way. Where did the mates go? It's not that far from the dryer to the drawer, which is something I think about everytime I search for a matching black sock and end up with only blue ones.

The next throwaway was plastic utensils, which probably signifies you've indulged in a lot of takeout food. I've stashed a few sets, but only for those summer days when it's cookout time, so I was okay with this one.

However, I was guilty with the next one: old condiment packets, mostly in the form of soy sauce and hot mustard. I'm guilty, as far as yummy Chinese takeout food goes.

Alcohol doesn't stay good forever and hard liquor has a longer shelf life of about two years before it starts to evaporate and change. The bottle of rum in my cabinet has been there for quite some time, but I'll keep it. Uncorked bottles of wine don't fall in this category; reds should be drunk within two weeks of opening the bottle, while white wine should be used within three days.

The next one, old workout gear, is foreign to me, but the article did give tips on how long to keep stuff. For example, sports bras worn consistently for several workouts per week should be replaced every six months while running sneakers are good for about eight months. Things like yoga mats and water bottles can be used for several years before it's time to upgrade.

The next one, DVDs, is one suggestion that I would never follow. Nothing on earth could get me to discard my Garbo, Bogart and Bette Davis collection of movies no matter how advanced technology becomes. For die-hard movie collectors, the article did bend a little and encourage saving the ones you treasure, but

dumping the ones you never watch. Maybe — but



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most likely my two DVD cabinets will remain stocked and secure.

Expired spices were next on the list because, as the article suggests,

"at some point, it's no longer cinnamon — it's flavorless dust." That I can easily do since I have few spices I actually use with the exception of oregano, basil and parsley, which are three basics for good spaghetti sauce.

The next was a CD collection, but that's grounds for divorce in my household since my husband takes great pride in his Lynyrd Skynyrd collection, especially the complete version of "Freebird." They suggest uploading music to your computer, but I'll pass to keep the peace.

This next one is iffy for us, too: Get rid of VHS tapes because they're not coming back. Again, this is in the potential reasons for divorce column since the DeMarco "Godfather" collection in its original format is the only authentic copy, according to my husband.

Clear florist vases that come free with flower deliveries were next and I have to admit that I've already discarded many to make space under the sink. They suggest keeping your favorites and donating the rest.

The article also suggests assessing your shoe rack and discarding uncomfortable shoes by donating them or holding a shoe swap with friends. Frankly, I don't want anyone else to endure corns or bunions, so the trash may be the best place for mine.

A new mattress is recommended if yours is old (like mine). Experts say that a mattress should be replaced every eight years.

The last one was to ditch old greeting cards, but this was a tough one for me, too. The article suggests recycling the cards or using them for the basis of a craft project, but it's the handwritten sentiment in the cards that I treasure more than the actual card.

There were other suggestions, but I've run out of space. My advice? Keep what you love and discard the articles that tell you to throw out the stuff (including this one).

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