



Waste Not, Want Not: Tips for Rehoming Unwanted Items

By Jill Roberts • Photo by Jill Roberts

Thinking about cleaning out the attic or basement? Are you moving and have items you'd rather not take with you? Do you need to downsize or declutter? Before you toss out unwanted items, consider donating or offering them to the community. It can reduce landfill waste and give unwanted items a chance to once again be useful and appreciated. Like the adage, "One man's junk is another man's treasure."

Here are some tips on how to rehome unwanted items:

Leave unwanted items at the curb. People like to tinker; Rugs can be steamed cleaned; Old furniture can be painted and repurposed. Snap a picture of what you're leaving at the curb and share it on social media. You'd be surprised how fast it disappears.

Offer items on the "Buy Nothing" Facebook Group. The Facebook group, "Buy Nothing," is part of a national social movement, *The Buy Nothing Project*, that provides a forum for people to give items they no longer use to someone in their community who can. For more information check out the buynothingproject.org.

Advertise an item for sale or free in this publication. Want to reach your neighbors with something to sell or give away? To place a free classified in *Neighbors of East Wallingford*, simply go to www.bestversionmedia.com and click on "submit content."

Donate items to local thrift stores. Thrift stores are delighted

to receive unwanted items. The donations help the community as well as the local charities they support. The larger thrift stores, like the Salvation Army, will even drive to your home to pick up unwanted items.

Some Senior Centers accept unwanted medical items. Some Senior Centers will accept unwanted medical items that they in turn give out freely to those who can use it. Call first to see what they accept as each Senior Center will be different.

Find a drive or coordinate one. Community soup kitchens collect shoes, for example, and pet shelters are always looking for blankets. Winter coat drives are popular in the fall and winter. If you can't find a drive, consider coordinating one that benefits a local charity.

Seek out the help of a professional organizer. A good professional organizer understands the emotional impact to declutter or downsize, especially with the elderly or those who grieve. There are several in the area who will work closely with clients to thoughtfully find appropriate ways to relocate personal items.

Find a good estate company. A good estate company will have the passion for finding leftover items a second chance. Through estate sales, online auctions and donations, items will find their way to someone who will use them. An estate company does the work, and typically keeps 40% of the profit.