



Clutter on your computer, smartphone, or tablet is almost as distracting as a mess in your living room. With these services, you can tidy all your devices right up.

— Tap Below for More —



DESKTOP Never again will your cute kitten-themed desktop wallpaper be hidden by unsightly icons. With *Fences for Windows* (\$10; stardock.com) or *Desktop Groups for Mac* (\$10; kitestack.com), you can sort icons into organized clusters on your desktop, which can be visible or hidden, so they're easy to find and easier on the eyes.

Life Will Always Be Messy. That's a Good Thing.

Psychiatrist **Melva Green, MD**, coauthor of *Breathing Room: Open Your Heart by Decluttering Your Home*, reveals the truth about the piles of stuff that just keep coming back. (Hint: They can set you free.)

TO CLUTTER IS HUMAN. We collect stories, experiences, and memories—why not things? It's natural to accumulate, and to believe otherwise is a setup for disappointment and failure.

Almost everything we hold on to—even down to our junk mail and extra pens—symbolizes what's happening in our lives on an emotional and psychological level. Since we are constantly evolving, it makes sense that our possessions are, too. Think about the items you loved years ago that no longer speak to who you are. Maybe you have tons of expensive dishes because you used to love to host big dinner parties—but these days you appreciate a quiet evening with just you and the dog. You don't need those dozen place settings anymore, and that's as it should be. Just because something

made you happy in the past doesn't mean that you have to keep it forever.

When your clutter comes back (and it will), you might be tempted to criticize yourself. Instead, try to remember that de-cluttering is a chance to open up physical and mental space, creating room for possibility. It's something that should happen periodically, because your closets and shelves contain so much more than stuff. They may hold love, joy, and comfort—say, your grandmother's linens. But they also may harbor items that bring you guilt or regret—like the trinket your ex gave you—and it's time to let those things go. As you clean, you can and should be mindful of every item you give up and what it once did for you. Engage with your things. And as your pile grows, dig in and appreciate it. It means you're growing, too. **Q**