

# MARNI

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### 3. Out with the old

Once your color-coordinated decorations are up, look critically at what is left (or not working). Donate or toss décor and ornaments that you've grown tired of or that don't fit the scheme.

"If you have ornaments or decoration that you haven't used in two years, let go," Krogh said. "People buy new holiday decorations and push old stuff to the back just like they do with their closets."

Instead of pushing tired, old decoration further into storage, push them to the curb.

### 4. Go all out in limited areas

Pick three or four areas in your home to decorate to the nines, then stop. Every surface doesn't need to be decked.

Consider, for instance, decorating only the tree, the mantel, the dining table, and front porch. Don't dribble Christmas doodads all over the house.

Having well-done vignettes simplifies set up and also makes post-holiday take-down a lot easier. This way, you don't find a stray elf in the laundry room long after the Christmas boxes are back in the attic.

### 5. Subtract before you add

Houses can quickly look congested when home decorators layer seasonal accessories on top of existing décor. It can be too much.

To fight the congestion, as you add holiday décor, put everyday décor away in the now-empty Christmas storage boxes.

Krogh likes to make a swap. If she puts a big Santa on the mantel in place of a vase, she puts the vase in the box she stores the Santa in. When it's time to put the holidays

away, she simply switches the vase for the Santa.

### 6. Simplify wrapping

So your gifts look pretty under the tree, pick and stick with just a couple of patterns of paper that work with each other and with your decor. Buy deep. Wrap adult gifts in one pattern, say a Scotch plaid, and kids' gifts in another with, say, a snowman motif.

Get large spools of one type and color of ribbon or twine and use it exclusively. I like thick craft yarn, because it's inexpensive and comes in large quantities. This will simplify the job and unify the look.

### 7. Store with next year in mind

Use order and logic when you pack holiday décor away. To do this, write down and number the sequence in which you would ideally like to decorate. For instance, 1. Tree. 2. Tree lights (though I highly recommend artificial, pre-lit trees, which

have proven to save marriages). 3. Base ornaments (all one color). 4. Finishing ornaments. 5. Mantel decor. 6. Dining table centerpiece. etc.

Label and number bins or boxes accordingly. In bin No. 5, for instance, you would store all items for the mantel, such as nutcrackers, stockings and stocking hangers. Box No.6 would contain the holiday centerpiece.

Label and separate outdoor décor. Store the numbered, labeled bins so the lowest-numbered ones come out first and highest-num-

bered come out last. This won't help you this year, but, if you pack items away with this system, next year you will thank me.

Marni Jameson is the author of seven books, including the forthcoming "Rightsize Today to Create Your Best Life Tomorrow: A Motivational Guide for Those Seeking Their Ideal Home Later in Life," due out Jan. 2, and "What to Do With Everything You Own to Leave the Legacy You Want." She can be reached at [www.marnijameson.com](http://www.marnijameson.com).

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