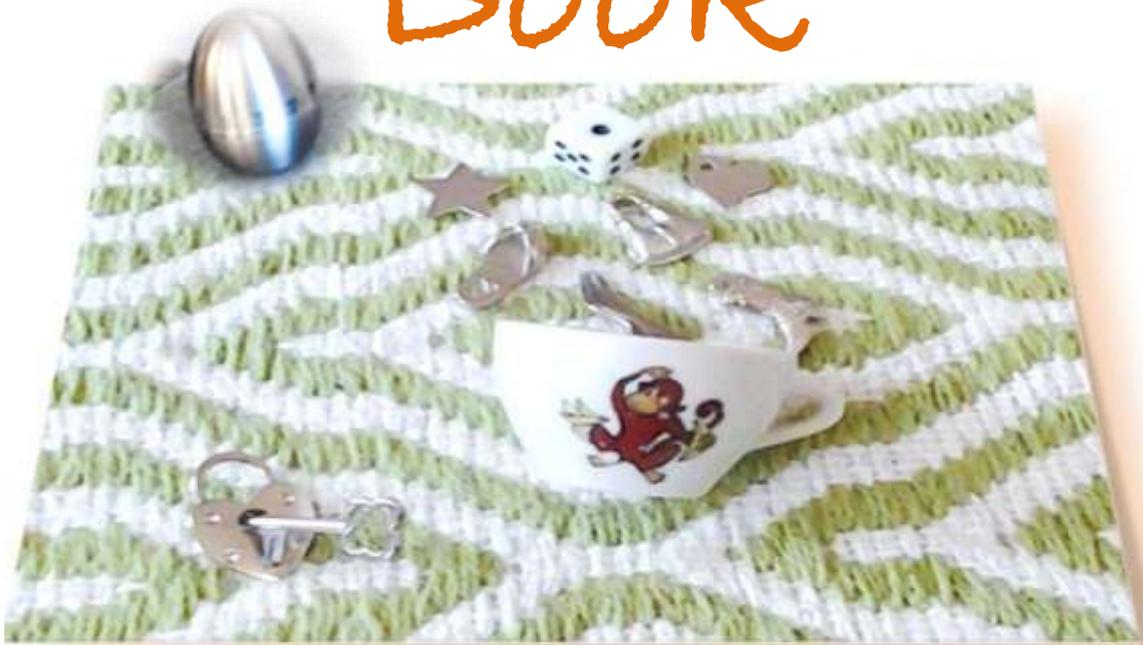


# The EVERIES Book



Lists, systems and worksheets to help you  
manage ... *every*thing!

An Inspector Ross Publication

by

Heidi Ross



# The Everies Book

*Everies* is a coined word meaning those tasks you've read– or been told – you're supposed to do every day, every week, every month, every year, and so on: like, 'vacuum every week' or 'prune regularly'. You want to do the right thing, but there's never enough time!

How do you  
bring the Everies under control  
so you can  
get on with your real plans?

Read, and gasp!

Then have a go.

## The Everies™ Book

©2009-20 Heidi Ross  
E-book standalone edition.

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This 2<sup>nd</sup> imprint of the 2016 edition, published February 2020, incorporates minor corrections & updates to content, along with link checks.

The author asserts the moral right to claim authorship of this book.

Some of the book's content was distributed as tips in leaflets in 2009, and these were later expanded into newsletters as the book's draft progressed, which in turn have been included in blog posts; minor content edits to align with publication of the Finish Your Pet Project program have been incorporated into this latest edition – hence the 2009-20 copyright coverage.

Note that the ™ symbol will not be added next to each separate use of the word 'Everies', but that it *is* a trademark which has been in use for several years as part of a package of trademarks, service marks & copyrighted terms owned by Heidi Ross; for example, The Everies™ Book, The Paperwork Everies™ Self-tutoring Lift-out, The Everies™ Reminder Planner, and Inspector Ross<sup>SM</sup>:

Exercise due diligence in applying any suggestions in this Book or its associated website

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Seasonal Everies are sometimes specific to Western Australia, and other information may be oriented to Australian events, dates or institutions. However, you will find the Everies™ Book useful wherever you live, by adjusting details to suit your location.

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That should leave no grey areas.

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# About The Everies Book

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## **The book itself**

This book forms the theory component of *The Everies Reminder Diary* 3-volume set, especially compiled to function as a standalone text. The other 2 set components are a *Paperwork Everies Self-tutoring Lift-out*, and *The Everies Planner*. These will teach paperwork skills and provide a diary with pre-filled tasks as a year's challenge for more experienced self-organisers. Until those are completed, a feature has been added to this standalone edition, proposing how to master the Everies by gradually implementing them until you settle into a rhythm of staying reasonably organised while moving your life plans forward.

*The Everies Book* explains the Everies™ and will occasionally refer to the *Lift-out* (or 'Course') and *Planner*. This book is not just theory. It's a workbook, too. Please write or draw freely in it. I've left as much white space as possible to allow this, while keeping pages, images and colours spare for printing economy. Print your purchased copy with a clear conscience as long as you intend to apply the ecologically friendly contents ☺

**You'll need 50 sheets of A4 paper. Print double-sided. Black & white is okay, but colour provides memory cues. Take it to an office supply store and have it stapled or bound in a way that lets you easily turn pages back and forth. I recommend a narrow spiral spine.**

If you're experienced with printer settings, you might prefer to go to smaller A5 paper or simply read as a PDF, printing out selected pages when needed. If using it this way, take care to preview the print first, as the page number the printer uses may differ from what is on the document or at the bottom of your software window. Experiment with previews &/or test printouts.

## **The book and you**

Compartmenting the Everies – which is what this book does – will help you balance your time between needs, wants and long-term plans. Simply put, these are the benefits of using The Everies Book:

- It's suitable for men & women of all ages.
- You'll experience the relief that decluttering brings.
- You will learn how to do what's necessary, when necessary, leaving you free time to enjoy life and get on with your plans.
- You'll no longer have to feel torn between getting organised and getting things done.
- Over the course of a year everything will get done!
- It additionally guides you through a year of action plans on your New Year's Resolutions or other goals – this book can act as your personal coach!

Decluttering and goals-attainment complement each other very well. The clearer your space gets, the easier it is to take the next step on a long-term plan; and the more steps you take on such plans, the easier it is to declutter, because you'll become more certain of the relative worth of elements in your surroundings. Even if you don't have particular goals you want to achieve, or you're not too excited about the organising culture, please give The Everies a try – even simple decluttering can have *amazing* effects. Clearing up the kitchen can lead you to healthier eating habits. Sorting out papers can help you see ways to reduce debt. Smoothing household traffic flows can unruffle feathers. There's health, wealth & wisdom right there! So, when you bundle decluttering & regular tasks together in a targeted way, the results can be astounding.

Readers from all walks of life are sure to find something helpful in The Everies Book. References are given, indicated by numbers in square brackets [o], followed by a comprehensive bibliography if you want to read more on the subject. I wish you the very, very best for your Everies journey.



# Introduction

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*The Everies Book* is designed for use by individuals, couples, families, or any household mix. Simply strike out inapplicable tasks or overwrite them to suit your situation.

In here, you will find lists of the Everies™ – those tasks we've read, or been told, we should do every so often in order to keep things running smoothly at home and in life. For example, "Vacuum every week" is an Every. Reading household tips can be motivating, but can later be a huge letdown when we realise it's too much pressure to try to fit them all in. That's what urged me to compile the Everies and see if I could work it out.

I don't mind telling you that during one phase, this challenge seemed like a really, really dumb idea. While I enthusiastically tested, sketched & drafted to get them into working order on paper, my physical space became awash with papers, plans, half-done jobs & surprising patches of dust. When I persisted and found my rhythm, it all settled down and became simple: life and the Everies have to balance.

For that reason, this book has been kept focussed on just that: balancing life with The Everies. You won't find lengthy chapters devoted to explaining the theory of housework or clutter, nor of decluttering. Other authors have done that admirably, and I highly recommend finding yourself some good reading in this area if the subject is new to you. My own website is the ideal starting point to background this particular book. However, I wish to now get you into **action**. I've included only as much theory as I think you may need to utilise the lists.

The apparent downside of this is that, in some cases, listed tasks may seem repetitive, tedious or just plain obvious. Why bother mentioning them? Well, even the plain obvious can get overlooked. Have you ever forgotten to answer your mail or eat balanced meals when life gets busy or worrisome? If I don't remind you, who will?

On the upside, explanations are saved for a range of unusual & creative ways to make your home and family life more fun, and better-looking!

By the way, I've taken liberties with capitalisations and ampersands ('&') to help you remember key terms and find them more easily when you're flicking pages. Between that, the Glossary and detailed Contents you should be able to get by without an index.

This is not generally a how-to book. Again, others have written great ways to clean, tidy & store. You'll find many of those authors in Further Reading. This book is a *what-to*, *when-to*, and occasional *why-to* book.

The information can be used at 3 levels, by anyone from new self-organisers to old hands:

- 1 Follow the suggested tables as described in the chapter, 'Mastering the Everies'.
- 2 Use it to prompt diary entries when you see your schedule lightening up, whether on a daily basis or by planning whole months ahead.
  - When entered into a diary, such Everies become 'Reminders', and are sometimes referred to this way in the book.
- 3 Let the book sit near your favourite chair so that you can flick through and find inspiration for giving yourself, your home or your household a lift.

Overlooking Everies opens the door to problems – from blocked drains to family breakdown. If repeatedly ignored or undervalued, Everies can really cause havoc. Likewise, taking them to extremes can blinker out golden opportunities & prospects of adventure. Household management can take over your whole life!

This book, especially when coupled with good diarising, provides a way for you to keep it all in balance – and that means *you* decide what good balance feels like. For me, it's not about creating a show-home (far from it, really far). It's more like building a force-field of...*nothing*, against the inevitable clutter of everyday life. Don't give it any chaos to cling to! It's awful to feel powerless against 'stuff', whether material stuff, mental stuff, or stuff that 'just happens'. Take matters into your own hands: read this book; make sure you understand it (use the glossary at the back), make plans, and then put The Everies to work for you.

## Guidelines

If you want a taste of how *The Everies Book* works, flick through to locate a desired or interesting Every. Read its explanation, then put it straight into action. When you've tried that on a few Everies, you'll be ready to read the whole book with a greater sense of purpose.

Take before- & after-Everies photos of each room, even each household member! You'll be amazed at how far you've come after a year of steadily reminding yourself to do the little things that keep life running along even when you're under pressure (or bored witless). Next year, you'll do even better!

Please, don't try to do *all* the Everies in this book.

Repeat: **Don't try to do *all* the Everies!**

I was so relieved when I found my first housekeeping expert to admit to being selective about housework [1]. As a caution, therefore, don't use the Everies to give yourself or anyone else a hard time over shortcomings. *The Everies Book* is designed to help, not to create conflict or burden you with ever more expectations.

The Everies are ideals for a notional householder who has all the resources – including enthusiastic, cooperative family members – to help her/him carry out these many tasks. If you are lucky enough to be in that position, simply share out the Reminders and life will be a breeze! However, most householders will take on the Everies challenge single-handedly. If no-one else participates, enjoy practicing them yourself at your own pace.

Remember that you can, and should, use the Book in conjunction with a diary – whether a routine one, or one designed for a special purpose such as a health or business diary. Simply add in your own prompts from *The Everies Book* wherever they are most likely to get done. I've found many fascinating resources on this subject of Everies. The ones I've used, or been most influenced by, are listed under Further Reading. My website provides more tools to download from time to time on its DIY page [www.inspectorross.com.au/diy](http://www.inspectorross.com.au/diy) . I also post selected Everies at irregular intervals on my blog [www.inspectorross.com.au/blog](http://www.inspectorross.com.au/blog) .

You don't need to read these or anything else to start using *The Everies Book*, though. Just grab a push-pencil and your diary to get started. If you don't have a diary, please go out and buy a plain one now, or at least get a big calendar/planner with non-shiny pages so you can write in the squares with a pencil. I suggest a push-pencil because it makes it easier to erase mistakes. You should feel free to make mistakes while learning.

## Tips & Tools

During your first years at this, there will be days when you don't keep up – maybe whole weeks. Don't worry. You're having to unlearn old ways to learn this new way. Oh, did I say 'years'? Yes! Don't expect to master the art of being organised without long-term practice, some false starts, and occasional chaotic patches. Life can become livelier as you put order into things, even temporarily setting your organising progress back. That's okay. Put your feet up occasionally. It does no-one any favours for you to be run ragged.

To help you keep up or get back on track, use the tips & tools suggested in THE ONE-PAGE COACH overleaf. It refers to a tool called the RE-FOCUS CHECKLIST, which in turn refers to a TIMER SHEET (also mentioned in other parts of the book). I placed these last 2 troubleshooting tools later in the book, just before the Glossary, so you won't be tempted to overcorrect yourself before you've even started.

Follow The One-Page Coach first. Read it often. Start using it from today! Go to the Re-focus Checklist only if needed. Don't do the checklist too late at night. Get a good sleep, eat a fortifying breakfast, then answer the questions in the checklist when you're refreshed. Stop at the first question you tick, and do what it says. Depending on the situation, you might get back up to speed immediately, or you might have something else to do on it for a while. Following the instructions should soon get things rolling along again.

**Important:** Please note that I am a big believer in natural health, but I have no related qualifications beyond a certificate in Medical Terminology. Any health-related Everies information in this book is not to be construed as medical advice. It is offered purely for personal organising & decluttering purposes. Exercise due diligence.

## THE ONE-PAGE COACH

During the day, **use a timer** – a cooking timer or a similar function in your mobile phone will do – to help you start & stop activities on schedule. This is really important when you want to be more productive. A timer is your mini-coach, so let it be boss. It will improve your sense of how long tasks really take, and prevent you from wasting more time on problems or trivia than they merit.

If, by day's end, you didn't accomplish enough, you might know immediately what to do to be more efficient tomorrow. The solution is usually obvious: minimise personal calls, turn the TV off, actually refer to your diary, etc. **Quickly sidestep distractions** as soon as you identify them. Continuing the Everies will deal with distractions more directly over time.

You no doubt have tools at your disposal to help motivate you – affirmations and so forth which you've read or heard elsewhere. I'm not going to give you more of these. Instead, this Book directs you to **move into action** to overcome negative attitudes. To me, this is the beauty of organising & decluttering. Many Professional Organisers will tell you, it's terrific therapy! There is often no need to sit and figure out why things aren't working; one only needs to get busy on specific actions to start feeling better and thinking more clearly. Answers sometimes reveal themselves while you're getting on with things. If they don't, who cares? You got things done in spite of yourself! Let *The Everies Book* help you to **practice good habits**.

Having said that, if you're continually falling behind, and you don't know what to do to get back on track, you can **turn to the RE-FOCUS CHECKLIST** (near the Glossary) to help you plan & act more efficiently.

Since you're going to be using more energy fitting Everies in, it's also a good idea to **pace yourself** with well-earned breaks and to **eat nourishing snacks & meals**. These actions keep you calm & strong. Put that timer to work for these, too – have it reminding you to break for rest or nourishment, and prompting you back into action, like the old school siren 😊

Finally, make sure you do **go to bed on time**. No kidding! Sometimes when people get very excited about organising, they want to stay up all night making things perfect. Don't. Sleep is simply another Every that must be slotted in. There are different schools of thought on the amount you need, so here's a suggestion: If overall commitments drain your feelings of *energy, restfulness, or both*, allow at least **one early night, a sleep-in or a nap** each week to recuperate.

If you're still over-tired, adjust your commitments, bearing in mind that there's a risk of sleeping fitfully if you haven't used enough energy during the day. The ensuing lack of sleep *then* tires you so you can't keep up with even ordinary commitments. In this case, you might need to **strike a better balance between mental & physical tasks** (and *monitor any other sleep/energy factors*, using the Timer Sheet to do so).

To summarise, as a daily guide:

- 1 **Use a timer.**
- 2 **Quickly sidestep distractions.**
- 3 **Move into action.**
- 4 **Practice good habits.**
- 5 **Pace yourself.**
- 6 **Eat nourishing snacks & meals.**
- 7 **Go to bed on time.**
- 8 **Get an early night, a sleep-in or a nap at least once a week if you need it.**
- 9 **Strike a better balance between mental & physical tasks if sleep itself is not restful.**
- 10 **If you still have trouble getting things done (seems unlikely, doesn't it?), then turn to the Re-focus Checklist and do what it says.**

## Nutshell Decluttering

There are varying philosophies about how to declutter and why. (See Further Reading.) I'll just give you the steps in a nutshell here. For any space or type of item:

- 1 Decide on your reason for decluttering. Is it to tidy up? To upgrade? To make a fresh start? Etc.
- 2 With your purpose in mind, divide the contents into sorting receptacles. I use bags or boxes labelled *Keep Here, Keep Elsewhere, Discard, Recycle*, and *Review on \_\_\_\_\_* [insert date].
- 3 Place the Review tub in storage (Archives) with a date-label for when you will drag it out and review the contents for decluttering anew.
- 4 Throw out the Discard items.
- 5 Further sort the Recycle items into their sub-recycling types – roadside bin, specialised drop-off point, give-away, re-sale, etc.; place these new containers ready for disposition; and *diarise the 'When to do'!*
- 6 Distribute the Elsewhere items to their proper homes.
- 7 Arrange the Keep Here items to your liking. In doing this, try to remedy any aspect of the prior arrangement which may have contributed to the space becoming cluttered.

If you've never decluttered before, choose a small area you can complete in under an hour (like a drawer or shelf) and have a practice-run now. (See also 'rapid-declutter' in the glossary – that's the 'light' version.)

If your home is very cluttered, continue this in other small areas until you feel more comfortable getting rid of things. *The Everies Book* will help you declutter the whole house over a full year. Just follow along 😊

## Warnings

Both of the risks mentioned below are not about what can go wrong, but about what can go *right* that you might mistake for setbacks. The risk is only in *how you interpret and manage* these developments:

- 1 Because The Everies cover a wide scope of life and bring many parts of it together in new ways, you will very likely experience change while working through the steps. Some things might get worse before they get better, like the messy phase while converting paper piles to paper files. Whatever you do, *don't stop there*. Think of the phase as a sign of progress – which it is, and the promise of a better future – as it should be – if you persevere.

*Keep moving forward with your Everies.*

- 2 One other thing that can happen to *anyone* engaged in self-improvement, but is especially painful if you are very cluttered or have been hibernating, is that you may suddenly have a rude awakening! You will notice grime, disrepair, stilted relationships & frightening backlogs you'd successfully blocked out until now. Worse, family & friends who'd stopped complaining because they thought you were a lost cause may *notice* your awakening and take the opportunity to give you a good (bad) talking to. The worst thing you can do at that point is to get upset or angry and give up your plans.

Another lousy thing you could do would be to crumble into penitence and agree with their opinion of you. True friends won't really want to see you in a hair shirt; they'll just want to know you understand how it's been for them. Also, you might not be the only one becoming guilty, ashamed, shocked or hurt by what lies beneath layers of clutter. The interplay will change and improve as you calmly persist.

The best thing to do if reproached is to show that you understand, without inviting ever more pointed remarks. Say something like, "I appreciate your telling me how you've felt [or whatever they expressed]. I'm working with Inspector Ross to fix things." Then show them *The Everies Book* & tell them to visit the website so they know what you're doing. Include them in the journey without getting side-tracked. Then *redouble your Everies efforts*, knowing that this turn of events is fantastic! It's proof that your progress is really happening. It's become visible to others, and will help *them* get relief, too.

*Just keep moving forward with your Everies.*

## Two Secrets for Getting Results from The Everies

### 1 **Make a pledge**

Responsibility is highly under-rated. It's empowering and can really put weight behind your commitment to get results. I dare say you glossed over the disclaimer given on the back of the title page. Just legal stuff, right? I've written another one here a bit differently. While reading it, imagine sincerely taking it on board and applying it to *everything* you do. Consider what a difference that would make! Here it is:

Readers should exercise due diligence as described in, but not limited to, the following disclaimer:

*In using The Everies Book, the reader undertakes to apply the information in it – &/or in any accompanying texts – at her or his own discretion, taking full legal, moral, social, corporate, environmental or other responsibility for any perceived consequences, whether good, bad or indifferent. A user should at all times practice duty of care for oneself and for those in one's charge, especially in terms of health, safety, harmony & finances. The author is very interested to hear of readers' experiences and may review the contents in light of these, but responsibility for effective application remains with the individual reader.*

If you want to make a pledge *to yourself* about this, sign here:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2 **Be a good sport**

Now we're through all the matter-of-fact bits, here's what I really want to tell you:

This book is a bit like a game. You can play by yourself or you can get other household members to join in. There will be guest players for some tasks, who may not realise they're playing Everies with you, so be kind & patient. The playing pieces consist of all your 'stuff': papers, clothes, furnishings, décor, etc. These are the things you will move around (or off!) the board while carrying out The Everies. The object of the game is not actually 'to get organised'. Surprised? The object is this: to be able to happily pursue your plans and enjoy good relationships while becoming more efficient & well-organised. Everies that are directly related to long-term plans are highlighted in yellow, to prompt you back to them as beacons, carrots, guiding stars, banging gavels, or whatever brings you back to the game board when you're drifting off.

Along the way, you'll run into challenges like confusion, frustration, and lethargy. Chance enters in repeatedly! (See 1 above to optimise the effects of this.) People will interfere. Others will get interested, and may even want to help. Persistence will pay off. Luck may grace you. You'll reap rewards – sometimes directly in areas you're working on, other times unexpectedly. Hopefully, the only penalties will be occasional smirks from onlookers, and reduced TV or social media time.

It will be fun! It will be exciting! At times it will be a drag. You'll feel stupid. You'll think I'm stupid. You'll laugh, you'll cry, get mad, get bored! You won't take it out on anyone else, though, because you must be a good sport to have decided to play The Everies. Over time, you'll notice a new level of peace & good cheer take over. The stuff will lose its grip. Your time will free up. Goals edge closer and...the winner of The Everies game is you! And anyone who plays with you!

Okay – we both know I can't *promise* all the above good things, nor can I pretend discomfort won't happen when you embark on a life-changing journey; but if you enter into the spirit of things and follow through on your selected projects, I am quite sure *The Everies Book* will help you immensely.

Let's get started!



## Snapshots

It is a good idea to take benchmark snapshots occasionally. Record the state of various elements as your first Everies step. Use general terms that reflect your own opinion rather than someone else's judgement, or use some numerical measure if preferred. Even sketches will do. Whichever you choose, use the same standard for the 'during' and 'after' snapshots.

The key elements are listed below, but copy the full page that follows so you have more room to write. You can easily locate the Before, During and After snapshot pages by their purple trims, or in the Contents.

You are also welcome to copy pages for other participating household members to record their snapshots or other worksheet information (*Please don't fill worksheet sections out for anyone else if they're able to read & write – let participants answer for themselves.*)

Suggested elements you can use as benchmarks are:

- Health & fitness
- Figure/physique (not necessarily 'weight')
- Grooming & presentation
- Typical mood
- Relationships (of various types)
- Work satisfaction
- Finances
- Lifestyle/standard of living
- Your 'something bigger' – any spiritual/religious/personal-passion drivers.
- Pictures of you & yours today: (If they're digital pictures, file carefully and write the file path here.)
- Pictures of your home & yard today:
- Throw in pictures of things you're working on, or your car or pets, if you like.

Jot down any other progress markers you thought of while reading through:

Any time you're ready to set goals for these, write or draw next to each one where you'd like it to be in a year's time (or in 2-5 years for the longer ones). It's not *essential* before your first run through the Everies, though.

## 'Before' snapshot

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date &/or reason for snapshot: \_\_\_\_\_

Health & fitness \_\_\_\_\_

Figure/physique \_\_\_\_\_

Grooming & presentation \_\_\_\_\_

Typical mood \_\_\_\_\_

Relationships \_\_\_\_\_

Work satisfaction \_\_\_\_\_

Finances \_\_\_\_\_

Lifestyle/standard of living \_\_\_\_\_

Your 'something bigger' \_\_\_\_\_

A picture of you & yours:

Pictures of your living quarters:

Pictures of pets, important possessions/creations, or any other progress markers:

# Mastering the Everies

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The only real way to master the Everies is by practice, practice, practice. There is no shortcut, because the nature of Everies is that they are ongoing. Some version of them is inevitable if you own any stuff at all. Further, each time you move house or change household circumstances, the Everies that apply to your home and life change, too.

One way to learn them is very **simple**: Pick up any task in *The Everies Book* that seems like an appealing challenge, and do that until it seems easy. If it's one of the less frequent Everies, just do it once through to a good result. Then pick another and do that in the same way – either to a good result, or repeatedly until it's easy. Work your way through the whole book at your own pace in this way.

However, you can learn the Everies in a more orderly way that I think you'll find more rewarding once you've got a feel for them. I've put together some tables to help you do that at whatever level you're ready for.

I modelled them on the arguable notion that *it takes between 21 days and 2 months – or more – to either form or break a habit*. (You can read some such arguments by inputting the above italicised wording into a search engine.) My experience is that it takes as long as necessary for you to fall into a rhythm with it, and this is helped along by close repetition. That is, the more factors you can replicate each time you do it, the more habitual it becomes. Think of the sameness of making a cuppa, or brushing your teeth. In fact, you could probably break habits faster by purposely doing them differently each time, before trying to cut down! (If you give that a try and it works, I'd be interested to hear from you.)

Anyway, each column lists key, somewhat repetitive, activities to do over a 21-day cycle. I could have called them Cycles, but I called them Learning Curves instead, because when you do them you may expect – as with any learning curve – that it will start off being easy, become more difficult as you go along, and eventually fall back into a workable rhythm at a higher level of ability. The actions in each box are all listed in the Contents page of *The Everies Book*, so you can look them up and see the details of what to do.

There are 12 Curves plus a set of preliminary steps to set you off on the right foot. Not every day's assigned task needs to be done, especially in the Yearlies and above, so altogether it amounts to about 6 months of practice. This way gives the fastest genuine results possible, all things considered.

**When you first read the book, ignore the tables and use the simple method mentioned above**, of trying any tasks that interest you. When you've finished the book, turn back to the start and work your way through the tables, starting with the Preliminaries and then moving steadily through the Learning Curves from Dailies right up to the 3-5 Yearlies. This will keep you nicely busy for ages! (Remember to take snapshots.)

## **A Note about Hoarding**

Although I've downsized several times (which magnifies clutter initially), and helped a small number of just-this-side-of-hoarders move house (in an earlier role as a house-packer), I haven't test-run The Everies with that extreme level of clutter known as hoarding. If you have been hoarding, I would recommend that you call a Professional Organiser to help you arrange a blitz. Get the more dangerous clutter out of the way. Then the Preliminaries can be done thoroughly. This is vital for your safety & wellbeing.

If you suspect you may be hoarding but are not sure, this will become clear during the Preliminaries. If reflecting on the Snapshot at Step 1 doesn't convince you either way, running the Main Fire Drill at Step 9 should. Decluttering a storage area at step 12 may yet suggest you're on the border. You *may* be able to restore order without a team of helpers, but it's essential that you take much, much more stuff **out** of the home than comes in *each day*. Treat it as a matter of urgency, because it is! Turn again to the Nutshell Decluttering section in the Guidelines and apply that to one manageable portion each day, without fail.

As soon as you've got the hang of it, clear escape routes from each room so that:

- a) your clutter doesn't endanger you, and
- b) you can easily cart other clutter out of the house while working through the Learning Curves.

## 21-Day Learning Curves

Do these Curves one after the other in one long cycle, or cycle through an individual Curve repeatedly until it's mastered before going onto the next.

If you are very well organised and want to take on bigger projects, do the Preliminaries, and then work *backwards* through the Curves instead, from 12 down to 1. In this way, they are more like "Makeover Curves" which settle into daily maintenance. In either case, start with the Preliminary steps below. This table is repeated at the end, but placed here to remind you to do the Preliminaries before embarking on the Learning Curves when you come back for your second-round read. It's also a good idea to run through steps like these any time you face major household or lifestyle changes. The steps might appear big & complicated, but they needn't be. Do them simply but honestly. Skipping them altogether could bring you that pain so typical of any false economy – the one from kicking yourself afterward ;-)

### Preview: Preliminaries Learning Curve

Set-up Curve: <i>Prepare for safe change with these preliminary actions.</i>	
Step	<i>Do selected Yearlies and 3-5 Yearlies as below.</i>
1	Take a 'Before' Snapshot, and make relevant appointment(s) for step 10.
2	Write your Annual Plan, or at least a Plan to cover the next 6 months.
3	Do some New Year Paperwork (enough to provide a bit of 'cheerleading' when you look it over).
4	Break the Annual Plan down into 4 parts you can accomplish in Quarterly Plans, & write the 1 <sup>st</sup> one.
5	Break that 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarterly Plan into 3 parts, and write the main steps to do in an initial Monthly Plan.
6	Write the <i>immediate</i> steps to do in a Weekly Plan! Begin that while you continue these Prelims.
7	Get a diary if you don't have one, and use it to write daily steps from your Weekly Plan as of today.
8	First-aid Preparedness project (section XI-A).
9	Main Fire Drill (section XI-B).
10	Medical &/or other check-up(s) as required to ensure fitness for your chosen Everies.
11	Write your own Workday Routine & Odd Jobs list to keep with your diary as a checklist.
12	Declutter 1 storage area so you've got room to store decent items from other decluttering steps.
13	Inform anyone affected of what you are trying to do with these 21-day Everies Learning Curves. Note that this could include informing insurers or your local council, etc., depending on projects.
14	Decide it is not 'serious' – that it will be fun!
	Now you are safely prepared to tackle the Everies Learning Curves.
	Using your paperwork from the above steps, begin Curve 1.

The steps in this table are all explained in the book, so read the book first.

When you've come back to it, make notes on the Preliminaries as you go:

## The Everies

---

The following pages list and explain the Everies. Do some as you read through so they don't pile up in your head. There's no race to finish reading the theory. Do any steps that take your fancy, then pick up where you left off reading and continue.

Likewise, if a step takes longer than it's assigned at first – say a Daily that takes 3 days to complete, that's totally okay. It's better to finish things off and learn them properly. You can later adapt them to your own needs and will get faster through habit.

The Learning Curve tables at the end of each section are designed to help you do just that. Their use is explained in the previous chapter, 'Mastering the Everies'.

All that being said, you do have your timer ready, don't you?



# I Dailies

## Daily Planning

Essentially, the day's diary entries constitute your Daily Plan. You can add to this with thoughts, ideas, and strategies as much as you like, or not at all. I have seen someone plan in colourful, hand-drawn pictures! It was beautiful, inspiring. I felt like dropping my plan and doing hers on looks alone! However you do it, the object is to move your long-term planning along in balance with the day's requirements.

If you usually create this Daily Plan 'off the top' by jotting a quick list of to-dos on notepaper, it may surprise you to realise how many factors you're probably taking into account mentally while doing so. These are your existing take on the Everies, even if you didn't know what they were before ;-)

The Everies ask you to consciously scan for expected or desired actions and assign them to specific dates & times. With practice, this will become as second-nature as what you do now, yet more effective. Here is a list of possible places referred to, if only mentally:

- the Weekly Plan
- the day's appropriate Everies
- your To-Do list
- bills rack
- wall calendar notes
- mobile phone organiser
- phone message pad
- flagged emails
- email calendar
- social media events calendar
- family noticeboard
- fridge door
- purse note scraps.

Obviously, the fewer of these, the better!

- 1 Try to limit such clamour for your attention by:
  - a. reducing the number of places in which you keep notes, and
  - b. forming the habit of directly entering forward planning into your diary to cut out the 'middlemen' of notes, multiple calendars and anxiously-recalled to-dos.
- 2 Meanwhile, you'll need to keep track of all the places you currently keep notes.
  - a. Circle those from the above list, then add any extras here:

b. Work out how you will simplify this reminder-gathering step:

*NOTE: Whenever you see a heading on a light green banner like the one below, it means that section has been adapted from the Paperwork Everies Course (Self-tutoring Lift-out) – part of the 3-volume Everies Reminder Diary.*

## A Paperwork System Every

### Daily Paperwork System

At the start of the day, or the night before, plan your activities & *expenses* in a diary or other chosen planner. Yes – in addition to the daily time planning discussed on the previous page, it's a good idea to plan money movements, too. If you run a business or earn money in some other variable way, this means planning money *in* as well as out. Some of this information may be referred to again at tax time, so keep it legible & orderly.

During the day, collect & keep receipts for every purchase, except sundries where it's impractical to ask for a receipt. Polish up your mental maths for these and round such figures *up* to be on the safe side.

At the end of each day, transfer all receipts and other completed papers to your desk and enter the data into your preferred financial data entry tool – either a handwritten Day Book (Counter) [2] or a simple bookkeeping program. If you want to use the latter but don't have one yet, test run a few for compatibility, and ensure the one you choose can be reliably used for small business purposes if you also need it to do that.

Whenever you collect the mail, open it immediately (or at an appointed time) and deal with it as appropriate. This includes electronic mail and any downloaded paperwork such as forms & invoices. 'Deal with it' means to take whatever action you can on it, right at that moment. If the actions required can't be completed then, the papers should have a place to go where they will be dealt with on time. Examples would be:

- to pay → bills rack
- need more info, or can't do yet because... (other actions needed first, etc.) → Pending tray (or a Day-File as mentioned in the Weekly Paperwork section)
- straightforward actioning that simply requires more time → a daily To-Do file or tray (keep it see-through so the contents don't get forgotten)
- to answer → a letter-writing file (old-fashioned, I know, but still often called for)

When any one item has been completed, it then goes ... → filing, of course! That means *actual* filing, not a file called filing, unless you are greatly disciplined at actually filing from that file before it gets too fat to find anything in.

File any of the day's papers you'll need again this year in your short term filer – this is the one mentioned in the July Paperwork After-tax Reorganisation section. File papers you'll need now and again, or permanently, in your regular filing cabinet. Place/store odd-bods where they belong (such as photographs in their albums, and so on.) Discard/recycle/shred whatever won't be needed again. Check off Done items in your diary, and enter any overlooked information.

Do anything else you can fit in in the evening. Before retiring for the night, rapidly review the day's progress against diarised plans. Acknowledge what was accomplished, however minor. Prepare well for tomorrow.

That's it – your daily paperwork done. It sounds like a lot, but if done every day, there are only a few items to take care of. If you have a backlog to catch up on, make sure you always do the current day's papers from now on, but add another 20 minutes or so per day to whittle down the backlog until it's gone.

*Make any notes here about your own daily paperwork needs:*

## A Daily Deskwork

Here's the *Everies* way of incorporating Daily Planning and the Daily Paperwork System into your routine:

- 1 **Dawn planning**
  - a. Consult diary, calendar, fridge notes etc., and write/adjust your Daily Plan in your diary.
  - b. Carry out the Plan.
- 2 **Dusk check-in**
  - a. Gather the day's money records & other papers from bag, wallet, phone notes, etc.
  - b. Enter money movements in your Counter\* – whether a handwritten in/out version, or a bookkeeping software program.
  - c. File entered receipts (or dispose of non-essential ones).
  - d. Catch up on whatever of the day's planned to-dos you can still fit in tonight.
- 3 **Nightly review & preparation**
  - a. Review daily progress against diary/planner and make any notes.
  - b. Especially note achievements and be sure to protect/strengthen these while you continue forward.
  - c. Re-diarise undone-but-needful steps into a future day.
  - d. Prepare items needed for the next day – bag, clothes, lunch kit, etc. to minimise morning fluster.
  - e. Let today go.

### **\*A Note For People Who Hate Paperwork**

I have it on good authority [3] that if you're not able to keep good records (like Counting), you are better off just putting all your official papers in a shoebox & handing them over to a bookkeeper or accountant as-is.

It's great if you can keep only the relevant papers so there isn't too much to sift through. However, if you're not sure what's important and what isn't, just throw *all* your daily papers into a big shoebox & give it to a trustworthy person to manage on your behalf at the end of each month. If they're not a bookkeeper or accountant themselves, ask them to set you up with one and to act as liaison.

The person you appoint will also need copies of, or access to, any electronic financial records you may have. Ask your appointee to read *The Everies Book* so they'll know the overall picture of what you're trying to achieve, and will act in your best interests.

### **Reminder about Using the Learning Curves**

Remember that when you read through the first time, you're not expected to undertake the full tables of Learning Curves yet. You'll be directed back to them at the end of the book.

Don't be deceived by the apparent monotony of Curves 1 & 2. The Preliminaries include an Annual Plan, so your Daily Deskwork will be driving action on that Plan. As you consistently carry out your Daily Plans, you should begin to have a very interesting time of it!

Additionally, decluttering steps help you see results right from Day 1. Choose a small pocket of clutter that you can definitely finish off each day in Curve 1. During Curve 2, challenge yourself with slightly bigger areas.

So, do the Preliminaries first, then put your Annual Plan into motion with Curve 1's Daily Deskwork for 21 days, decluttering gently to warm up for the later Curves. Oh, and for continued motivation?

*Give yourself something to look forward to each day.*

Furnish your own reward for putting order into daily life. It can give you a reason to get up in the morning, for going to work, or for coming home safely. Promise yourself some simple, beneficial pleasure you can count on without depending on anyone else, and make sure you collect on it!

## Dailies Learning Curve A

	Curve 1: <i>Groove in the Daily Deskwork habit.</i>
Day	<i>Daily Deskwork</i>
1	Dawn Planning + Declutter 1 Small Thing
2	Dawn Planning + Declutter 1 Small Thing
3	Dawn Planning + Declutter 1 Small Thing
4	Dawn Planning + Declutter 1 Small Thing
5	Dawn Planning + Declutter 1 Small Thing
6	Dawn Planning + Declutter 1 Small Thing
7	Dawn Planning + Declutter 1 Small Thing
8	Dawn Planning Dusk Check-in + Declutter 1 Small Thing
9	Dawn Planning Dusk Check-in + Declutter 1 Small Thing
10	Dawn Planning Dusk Check-in + Declutter 1 Small Thing
11	Dawn Planning Dusk Check-in + Declutter 1 Small Thing
12	Dawn Planning Dusk Check-in + Declutter 1 Small Thing
13	Dawn Planning Dusk Check-in + Declutter 1 Small Thing
14	Dawn Planning Dusk Check-in + Declutter 1 Small Thing
15	Dawn Planning + Declutter 1 Small Thing Dusk Check-in Nightly Review'n'Prep
16	Dawn Planning Dusk Check-in + Declutter 1 Small Thing Nightly Review'n'Prep
17	Dawn Planning + Declutter 1 Small Thing Dusk Check-in Nightly Review'n'Prep
18	Dawn Planning Dusk Check-in + Declutter 1 Small Thing Nightly Review'n'Prep
19	Dawn Planning + Declutter 1 Small Thing Dusk Check-in Nightly Review'n'Prep
20	Dawn Planning Dusk Check-in + Declutter 1 Small Thing Nightly Review'n'Prep
21	Dawn Planning + Declutter 1 Small Thing Dusk Check-in Nightly Review'n'Prep
	Well done!
	Now, keep doing your Daily Deskwork while adding in the other Dailies from Curve 2.

## B Personal Dailies

These 15 Personal activities provide foundations for the getting of health, wealth & wisdom. That may be an exaggeration, but not by much. See what you think when you read them. They're broken up into 2 parts – commitments to the world outside yourself, which yet require your *personal* commitment to keep up; and commitments that are specifically to yourself. They naturally complement one another – or at least, they should. For example, your livelihood commitment should make self-care more possible, due to having an adequate income. Conversely, being in good personal condition should make maintaining your livelihood easier. Be mindful of that give and take as you read through these Personal Dailies.

### **Commitments**

- 1 Stick to an appropriate time schedule, so as not to overdo any one Every to the exclusion of other obligations & beneficial activities. (Use the organiser function in your mobile to prompt starts, &/or set a cooking timer to tell you when to stop!)
- 2 Carry out your basic livelihood obligations. (More on this in the 'Most Days' section which follows.)
- 3 Send & receive required communications.
- 4 Clean up after yourself. (Or, as the oft-repeated house rules go: If you use it, put it back; if you soil it, clean it; if you break it, fix it; etc., etc. [4]. This one commitment works wonders.)
- 5 Spend less than you earn. If you have a credit card use only what you can – and do – pay off every month before incurring interest.

TIP: If you've gone past this point already, stop using the card until you've paid it down to zero, and then only use it as above. If you start paying interest on interest again, stop handing over your hard-earned pay to the bank just to buy more expensive money (that's what credit is – you seem to get free money, but you're actually *buying* it for more than it's worth). Instead, hand your money back to yourself by rapidly paying the card down to zero again. Then swap it for a Debit Card so when you put money onto it, it's really yours to spend without paying interest. See how that works?

- 6 Pay bills on time, or negotiate with creditors before due dates so you are not harassed or threatened while you work things out.
- 7 Keep & monitor an ongoing To-Do list (spiral books designed for this purpose are great, or the Notes function in your phone if preferred). Add ideas whenever they strike, and tick them off when finished – this keeps you freely forward-thinking but acting from the present.

Note: A To-Do list is not very good at keeping you productive each day, though. The inspiration it allows is soon dampened if the list grows like Jack's beanstalk while its real-world actions never get off the ground.

Therefore, consult your To-Do list when writing Dawn Planning (and your longer-term plans). You'll be pleased to see more To-Dos getting crossed off as 'Done!' throughout the year.

The above 7 items might seem like statements of the obvious. Yet they don't just happen by themselves. Think of them as ongoing habits to cultivate.

### **Commitments catch-up, explained**

(This is the Catch-up step referred to in the 6-Weekly section.)

- 1 Read over Commitments 1-7 above every 6 weeks to check whether some need extra attention.
- 2 Diarise what you'll do to catch up on those.
- 3 Do what you wrote in your diary.

The next 8 items are specific actions to include in your daily regimen.

### **Self-care**

- 1 Clean & groom your body.
  - a. A note about brushing your teeth:  
Many people don't realise that brushing before bed is the most important end of the day for it – saves your enamel from steeping in a corrosive salivary formula while you sleep. For further detoxing benefits, use a low- or no-chemical toothpaste at night, saving your heavy-duty types for morning.
    - i. Gentle night flossing combats decay, and helps avert killer morning breath. Test different brands/types to find a floss that slides easily and doesn't cut your gums (or fingers).
    - ii. If your teeth are too densely packed to floss, swish with a near-natural mouthwash instead.
    - iii. Chant this message at your family (or the mirror): 'Clean every tooth, all over, morning & night.'
  - b. And a note about hair: Wash it daily if it gets greasy. 'Nuff said.
  - c. Be mindful of other grooming conventions in your society.
- 2 Dress well (i.e., in clean, well-kept clothes which are appropriate for the day's activities).
- 3 Eat a balanced diet.
  - a. My digestive system is feeling better on a move toward Paleo. Find what works for you.
- 4 Take any well-considered supplements or *evidence-based* medications that you may be on, *as recommended or prescribed*.
  - a. Monitor your well-being while on them. (Adjust the Timer Sheet for such use.)
  - b. Seek expert advice/second opinion if they don't seem to be helping the condition you took them for.
- 5 Get some form of physical exercise (especially outdoors, like walking).
- 6 Engage in some mental challenge. (Consider Neurobics [5] as part of this.)
- 7 Do a little something on your plans, dreams or current project, however slight.
  - a. If you're lucky enough to work in the very field, you can make a choice:
    - i. Do something to support & nurture your ongoing participation in it, or
    - ii. Switch your attention onto a different style of activity for a regenerating break after 'work' :-)
- 8 Get enough sleep &/or rest for your needs.

Write any extra Personal Dailies you like to attend to:

## II **Most Days**

### A **Workday Routine**

Incredibly, this enormous list shows the real workday demands on many busy parents. I know, because I wrote it out when I was a young mother. Singles or couples often fill up their days this well, too ;-). Compare it to your typical workday routine and adjust steps to taste ;-)

- 1 Get up on time, throwing back the covers so the bed can air.
- 2 Open up a screen-secured window or door near bedrooms to allow a dose of early morning breeze in.
  - a. If you're going to be home a while, let fresh air in at other safe points too.
    - i. Fully lock up before you go out.
- 3 Eat a sustaining breakfast.
- 4 Diary check. As part of this, monitor:
  - a. Family/social/community mini-commitments; e.g., calls, chores, tasks, drop-ins
  - b. Overdue To-Dos
  - c. Current To-Dos.
- 5 Quickly make the bed(s). (Delegate so others help here and at other steps, such as 19 - 24.)
- 6 Get ready. (Clean, groom & dress your body; double-check bag/briefcase contents.)
- 7 Set up kids, pets &/or other good souls in your care so their day runs well, too.
- 8 Turn off any electrical & gas appliances + anything with standby lights.
- 9 Lock everything up.
- 10 Go to work (making any required detours to day-care etc. on the way), or do whatever livelihood activities apply.  
... *head home*
- 11 Pick up kids, if applicable, and/or run on-the-way-home errands.
- 12 Mudroom shoe-exchange (a vital routine to minimise dusting, vacuuming, mopping):
  - a. Leave today's shoes in mudroom, or on a mat near entry; put away any cleaned/dried shoes.
- 13 Walk the dog &/or attend to other pets. (Switch 13 & 12 if more logical.)
- 14 Water indoor plants or other pots as required.
- 15 Give yourself an 'Instant Fix'\* if needed, and allow others to do the same.
- 16 Deal properly with mail (action, reply, pay, file, etc.) and return any phone or email messages.
- 17 Make your own calls or send out any new messages.
- 18 Help kids with homework etc., &/or do your own.
- 19 Ensure at least one of your meals is fully on-diet (whatever dietary guidelines you happen to be following), regardless of what else you consume daily.
- 20 Wash dishes.
- 21 Clean kitchen floor as needed.
- 22 Dispose of kitchen trash:
  - a. Wrap deteriorating meat or other smellies and place in freezer until bin collection day.
  - b. Some substances should not be poured down sinks – check with your local water supplier.
- 23 Tidy any flat surfaces.
- 24 Prepare for next day.
- 25 Free-choice activities if still early, or now all go to bed on time for a good night's sleep.

#### **\*Instant fix – special note**

No, that's not a brandy. An Instant Fix is an exercise, regimen, foodstuff or personal practice that acts as a fast 'antidote' to the various troubles that crop up during a typical day. It can be a lie-down with an eye mask, a stint of weeding, a game of ping pong, or any other fast, healthy pick-me-up. Take regular action to declutter your attention this way. You can find more ideas in 'The Five Minute Healer' [6], listed in Further Reading.

Confession: Since becoming an empty-nester, there's no way I fit this much into each day. I hardly know how I did it before, especially considering the days that were even busier! Yet writing it all down is really helpful when life gets as frantic as that. If you're a working parent (or otherwise hold 2 full-on jobs), you'll be hard-pressed to reduce this list and stay organised. Try listing your routine actions for yourself but don't then feel pressured to stick to every step every day. They'll be *your* steps. Make them serve you best – and don't shortcut the Instant Fix if you need one!

## **B Other Routines**

There are other situations where you might want to write a full day's routine. For example, if your lifestyle means most days are spent doing something other than working, or if you have a couple of days a week that are more intensively scheduled than others. Volunteers take note!

Write any other full day's routines you need to monitor:



### **III Odd Days**

#### **A Watering Day?**

Watering days are usually published in local/state newspapers during water restriction periods. At other times, look up or contact your Department of Water – [www.water.wa.gov.au](http://www.water.wa.gov.au) in WA – to find out.

- 1 Water garden only on allowed Watering Days.
- 2 Hand-water potted &/or indoor plants on other days as required.

#### **B Water Features**

- 1 Freshen up any flower arrangements, fountains, or other water features.
- 2 Clean sink & vanity basin.
- 3 Give any problem-drains a quick clear/clean. E.g., any indoor drains that readily develop odours, or outdoor drains that are leaf-traps in autumn, etc.
  - a. If you're able to remove the source of drain issues, that would naturally be preferable.

#### **C Money check**

Ensure you are covered for payments that may not generate bills to remind you. Besides the weekly Banking step where you cover planned payments, set another day – say, Tuesday – where you do a quick check (with calendar or family) in case your bank account or cash levels need replenishing for overlooked/upcoming:

- Automatic debits
- Children's needs
- \_\_\_\_\_

Try to limit top-ups to these days only, to help train-in the habit of planning financial needs before the last minute. It also makes the bank statement easier to reconcile if you keep transactions to a minimum.

#### **D Odd Jobs**

Note other odd-jobs & conditional tasks you may have thought of. E.g., if you have a Post Office Box, check it at least once a week.

Add anything relevant from this Odd Days section to your next Learning Curve over the page.

### Dailies Learning Curve B

Curve 2: <i>Groove in Personal Dailies.</i>	
Day	<i>Dailies – Personal</i>
1	Commitments + Declutter 1 Small Area
2	Self-care + Watering Day?
3	Commitments, Money Check
4	Self-care + Declutter 1 Small Area
5	Commitments + Watering Day?
6	Self-care
7	Commitments, Water Features + Declutter 1 Small Area
8	Self-care + Watering Day?
9	Commitments
10	Self-care, Money Check + Declutter 1 Small Area
11	Commitments Self-care
12	Self-care Commitments + Watering Day?
13	Commitments + Declutter 1 Small Area Self-care
14	Self-care, Water Features Commitments
15	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
16	Daily Deskwork + Declutter 1 Small Area Commitments + Watering Day?
17	Daily Deskwork Commitments, Money Check Self-care
18	Daily Deskwork Self-care + Declutter 1 Small Area Commitments + Watering Day?
19	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
20	Daily Deskwork Self-care Commitments + Declutter 1 Small Area
21	Daily Deskwork Odd Jobs of choice
Basic routines should be settling in now.	
Next, insert the Weeklies while maintaining the Dailies -- especially Daily Deskwork.	

## IV Weeklies

### A Weekly Review

Review progress against Monthly Plan. Incorporate *its* priorities into the current Weekly Plan.

### B Weekly Paperwork

Your Weekly Plan is done as part of the Weekly Paperwork process of wrapping up loose ends from last week and predicting what you'll do and need in the week ahead. At its minimum, it's steps 4-8 below (**in bold**). However, by doing it in this thorough way of reviewing and prioritising first, you'll avoid accumulating backlogs and will be able to give your full attention to daily challenges.

- 1 Deal with any outstanding mail or other deskwork.
- 2 Tidy up office desk.
  - a. Be sure to process or file each piece of paper correctly, not just make the desk look tidy. If you don't have time to process an item yet, put it where you *will* deal with it on time.
    - i. I can't be trusted with a lone Pending tray, and I also suffer if I write overly-detailed diary instructions. I don't feel like doing them if they took too long to write. I solve this dual problem by making Day-Files to deal with Pending paperwork:

I've used a hanging file system I bought from the post office, to which I inserted clear sleeves labelled with each day of the week. I pop the pending papers, along with any random notes, into their appointed day-sleeves. I then pluck out the appropriate sleeve each morning and sort its contents into the order they need to be dealt with. Then I only need to diarise any additional notes about them, such as, 'Get to bank before it closes', etc.

You could use a tower of trays instead or any such 7-day separator. I don't recommend anything opaque, though. The last thing you want to do is cover them up. They'll never get done.

- 3 Monitor any financial success actions you may be taking: wealth program, debt-reduction plan, etc.
- 4 **Diarise upcoming birthdays, special occasions.**
- 5 **Diarise plans for upcoming Special Days, e.g., public holidays or official-recognition days.**
- 6 **Plan/deliver any business (or other money-making) promotion.**
- 7 **Plan & diarise other actions for the week ahead.**
- 8 **Allocate the next week's spending based on the planning just done.**

TIP: If you are an employee *and* a sole trader, you can overcome the 'but I get paid fortnightly' dilemma using a different time span. E.g., do a household allocations plan/budget/forecast – whatever you like to call it – from your salary one week, for the whole fortnight. Do a separate fortnightly one for business income on alternate weeks.

It's a different approach, but it makes the 'weekly' allocations task simpler while keeping the personal and business money nicely separated.

- 9 Prepare any banking required.
  - a. Allocate your weekly cash limit to withdraw (and stick to it), and schedule any deposits/transfers.
    - i. Check whether your piggy-bank has enough coins to deposit, or to change into notes. The less cash you keep in the house, the safer. (See Everies IV-C & IV-K.)

## C Banking

Do your planned banking – deposits, transfers & cash-readiness for the week ahead.

TIP: Don't carry more cash around than you're willing to lose. Use EFTPOS where possible, or a Debit Card, and observe bank rules about card security.

## D Weekly Tidy-up

- 1 Return everyday stray items to their proper homes – papers, magazines, used cups, etc.
- 2 Utilise or remove any neglected & dust-gathering items lying around the house.
- 3 Bring forward back-of-fridge/pantry items to use in the weekend menu, and discard those past their use-by dates.
- 4 Do a thorough dish-wash, finishing half-done soaks etc. and wiping down kitchen cupboards, stove exterior & benchtops.
- 5 Tidy up bedroom(s).

## E Gizmo Maintenance

Let's call all your electronic toys & equipment 'gizmos' (a word for mechanical or electronic gadgets). The first 2 tasks are easy if run while you're pottering around or doing the Weekly Tidy-up.

- 1 Do a *full* virus scan if this is not set to auto-run regularly.
- 2 Perform any other scanning or software updates due.
- 3 Clean electronic components – keyboard, remote, earphones, etc.
- 4 Recharge all battery-run gizmos – phones, cameras, etc. You will get to know which ones don't really need such frequent re-charging, so drop these back to a more battery-life-friendly schedule per the instructions that came with the device.
  - Especially ensure any safety equipment is kept charged.
- 5 List any parts/supplies you may need to purchase soon – inks, cables, upgrades, etc., and diarise when to buy them.

## F Shopping

Keep an ongoing shopping list in a handy place to jot down needs throughout the week.

### ***Fresh food shopping***

Suggested for Saturday:

- Shop only for fresh food & listed grocery items (i.e., basic items you immediately need this week).

### ***Staples & non-grocery shopping***

Suggested for Sunday:

- 1 Look through pantry & freezer, listing staples & longer-life provisions that are running low.
- 2 Also list any extra...
  - a. 'quite healthy' work/school lunch treats – delicious enough to reduce the takeaway temptation,
  - b. non-food household goods (detergent, tissues), and any other
  - c. non-grocery shopping (gifts, clothing, hardware, etc.).

Switch this to night-shopping or some other day if it works better – just separate it from the fresh food shopping to encourage you to do that first and base your meals around the freshest, most natural ingredients.

## G Weekly Cleaning 1

(Alternate with Weekly Cleaning 2 every other week)

- 1 Change some pillow-cases, sheets & towels (including hand- and tea-towels).
- 2 Wash full loads of laundry.  
TIP: Optimise wash-loads across 2 weekends to save on water, laundry detergent, electricity, machine & clothing wear'n'tear, and personal labour.
- 3 Dust everything in easy reach indoors, starting from highest level/floor of home.  
TIP: Ensure Weekly Tidy-up steps 1, 2 & 5 are done first, or you'll double your dusting work!
- 4 Clean up front entranceway to remove cobwebs, dust & dirt.
- 5 Vacuum all edges & fiddly bits with edge attachment, etc.
- 6 Clean/clear sinks & drains.
- 7 Clean toilet(s).
- 8 Wipe down all flat surfaces with a gentle, natural cleanser.

## H Weekly Cleaning 2

(Alternate with Weekly Cleaning 1 every other week)

- 1 Change alternate pillow-cases, sheets & towels (including hand- and tea-towels).
- 2 Wash full loads of laundry.
- 3 Clean up rear entranceway to remove cobwebs, dust & dirt.
- 4 Dust the indoor spots that are harder to reach.
- 5 Vacuum whole house with floor attachment.
- 6 Mop hard floors with a non-chemical cleaner.
- 7 Wipe down all flat surfaces with a microfibre cloth.
- 8 Clean & deodorise any areas that are prone to malodour.
- 9 Polish mirrors & other shiny surfaces.

Health & Safety note: Breaking up housework across 2 weekends takes ergonomics into consideration – you will be varying body movements to avoid repetitive strain. Your body may find other combinations more comfortable for health & safety. Experiment by trying the above and adjusting to suit.

*Note: The letter 'I' has been intentionally omitted from listings to avoid confusion with numerals.*

## J Sunday Tasks

- 1 Extra washing of part-loads or handwashing left from Saturday if they can't wait 'til next weekend.
- 2 Clean scatter rugs if not done as part of vacuuming yet.
- 3 Tend the garden.
- 4 Refresh oil in any burners, replace spent candles.
- 5 If you are so inclined, do some Spiritual Housework\* of your choice.

### **\*Spiritual Housework – special note:**

If you've never heard of this before, just cheer the place up for now. Clean or rearrange areas toward the object of 'lifting household spirits'. You can read more about this topic later in The Placement Arts chapter.

## **K Personal Tidy-up**

- 1 Clean out wallet/purse of scraps & spare coins.
  - a. Put the coins in a piggy-bank or Friday-charity-collection jar, and deposit/donate or exchange for notes regularly.
  - b. Deal with the scraps as you would with any paperwork. (See Daily Deskwork.)
- 2 Restore order to grooming tools – cosmetics, combs & so on.
- 3 Give feet a soak.
- 4 Maintain hair, nails & skin.
- 5 Carry out any simple clothing or accessory repairs needed. (A stitch in time really does save nine.)

TIP: If you don't have a dedicated sewing/workshop space, create one with a mini 2-drawer cabinet. Place some hangers on a hook above the chest for clothes that need mending. Put damaged objects in the bottom drawer; glues, tools & a sewing kit in the top drawer; and your sewing machine on the chest for ready carting to a table or desk. Each repair job need only take a few minutes if you're properly set up.

## **L Social/Nature/Culture Catch-up**

Mingle in an upbeat environment:

- 1 Catch up with friends or extended-family members.
- 2 Go out for a nature walk (parks & gardens\*, zoo), or
- 3 Revel in a cultural pick-me-up (outdoor concerts, theatre – whatever you find uplifting).

\*One proviso: Take precautions against toxic garden sprays that may be in use in public parks.

Waiting at a bus stop near a large city park recently, I had to quickly cover my face and hurry to a further stop. Why? Weed-sprayers had suddenly appeared through the trees, treating the nearby grass. They were in full protective gear, but I sure wasn't!

I realised my gardening ignorance had blinded me to the obvious about sculptured, weed-free parkland. It's probably treated with chemicals. If you have a favourite retreat, it might pay to check into its upkeep, and time your visits well outside the spraying schedule.

## **M Family Regroup**

Have the whole family (or household) sit around a table for a well-prepared, shared meal at least once a week, and regroup on only positive aspects for each member. Permit no challenging pressures, even with the menu. It's just a time to touch base on individual & shared goals or activities, and to let members know they are welcome in the home, and have backup for whatever they may be facing outside the home.

I'm sure there are families who may enjoy this as the norm, but relationship clutter is common and can really wreck mealtimes. The Family Regroup is a simple way to bring harmony back by creating safe experiences.

To save the ritual from becoming rigid or conflicting with individual timetables, roll it forward one night each week to make 8 days between each Regroup (Monday one week, Tuesday the next, etc.). Everyone then gets a chance to turn up. For real fun, roster the cooking too!

I've suggested some rules over the page to keep this dinner from falling into old patterns of other family dinners, and to make it a pleasant game for attendees.

## Family Regroup Rules

- 1 Set and maintain an upbeat atmosphere (low, cheery, instrumental background music helps).
  - If things have been a bit tense in your home, eat out for early regroup. Choose somewhere relaxed like a family restaurant, or enjoy fish'n'chips at the beach. Anywhere that is neither too isolated nor too crowded will do.  
Introduce the ritual gradually and don't give up if the first few times are strained or awkward. Once everyone trusts that it's a dependable time-out, things should ease up.
- 2 Share only light topics, good news, laughs & achievements.
- 3 No button-pushing! That includes 'innocent' questions and similar side-swipes.
  - a. Together, devise a fun system to encourage sticking to this key rule. A kids' reward chart even for a grown family is a great way to keep it light, with black dots allotted to rude remarks, etc. It can be a shock to learn you've been hurtful or harmful, so the system should be gentle, yet firm.
  - b. Chronic button-pushers may be out of the scope of this book. Something from the detox steps at section X-A-6 could be done in tandem with this Regroup to at least de-escalate things while you seek more tailored, professional advice.
- 4 If someone hasn't been carrying out chores or otherwise participating in the family unit, make a mental note to see them *separately* – keep the Family Regroup as friendly as possible, so that everyone can look forward to this time together, no matter what. Consider it bah-lees. (Never heard of that? It's a childhood cry for time out when a player is hurt or a game gets too rough.)
- 5 For couples, treat it as a date & agree to keep meal conversations light-hearted and, preferably, romantic. If there's an issue between you, choose a different time to take it up, when it is more likely to create a win-win outcome. Meanwhile, stick to topics you agree on and let your partner eat in peace.
- 6 If you live alone, the Regroup works like this:
  - a. Cook for 2 and store the second serve for tomorrow (a good idea any night). Still set the table and keep it for the meal only – TV off, paperwork away. Don't worry, you won't have to stare at the walls while you chew. A cookbook, pencil and a diary or journal are allowed at the table.
  - b. *Follow the rules above* to be your own good company. Worries, grievances & negative self-talk are all *off* the table. Bah-lees, remember? Idea: Try keeping a journal that's reserved for these solo dinners to help supply the 'shared pleasant memories' effect of a full Family Regroup.
  - c. Review status of communications with family, or people you might consider family, and diarise times to return messages, or to send special-occasion greetings & general catch-ups.
  - d. If you would like a partner, diarise some dating ideas, or other specific plans to support your dating efforts. If happily single, diarise some fun 'out & about' activities for yourself.
  - e. If you have time left over – since no-one's talking back 😊, browse a cookbook and plan next week's special meal.

This helps keep you in the habit of a) cooking balanced meals; and b) staying in touch with people you value, even if you don't spend time with them often.

Add notes about ways to personalise the Family Regroup for yourself & loved ones:



## Weeklies Learning Curve

Curve 3: <i>Suggested start day for this Curve is Friday.</i>	
Day	Weeklies
1	Banking Weekly Tidy-up Gizmo Maintenance
2	Fresh-food shopping Weekly Cleaning 1 Social/Nature/Culture Catch-up
3	Staples & non-grocery shopping Sunday Tasks Personal Tidy-up
4	Family Regroup
5	Daily Deskwork
6	Commitments Self-care
7	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
8	Banking Weekly Tidy-up Gizmo Maintenance
9	Fresh-food shopping Weekly Cleaning 2 Social/Nature/Culture Catch-up
10	Staples & non-grocery shopping Sunday Tasks Personal Tidy-up
11	Daily Deskwork
12	Family Regroup
13	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
14	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
15	Banking Weekly Tidy-up Gizmo Maintenance
16	Fresh-food shopping Weekly Cleaning 1 Social/Nature/Culture Catch-up
17	Staples & non-grocery shopping Sunday Tasks Personal Tidy-up
18	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
19	Daily Deskwork Commitments
20	Family Regroup
21	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
	Don't worry if things are getting unsettled again -- it'll be temporary if you keep going.
	Next, try to keep the Dailies & Weeklies going while practicing selected Monthlies.

## V **Monthlies**

### A **Monthly Review'n'Plan**

Review progress against the Quarterly Plan to prioritise this month's targets.

*The rest of these Monthlies include tasks that may not need doing so often, but which will benefit from being monitored each month in case they are due for attention. As with any Everies that may not at first seem applicable, scan over them regularly so you **can** take action if warranted.*

### A Paperwork System Every

B & C together below constitute 'Monthly Paperwork'.

### B **EOM (End of Month) Paperwork**

Close to the end of every month, there are particular tasks to help you take stock of your recordkeeping so far, ensuring nothing has been overlooked. A typical list of these follows:

- 1 Reconcile your bank statement(s). [See the glossary.]
- 2 File loose papers.
- 3 Toss unnecessary papers (non-vital records).
- 4 Review allocations.

### C **Additional EOM *business* paperwork tasks**

(Skip these if you don't run a business.)

- 1 Bring business records up to date.
- 2 Send out monthly statements to clients, if applicable.
- 3 Pay outstanding bills.
- 4 Collect outstanding payments.
- 5 Compile monthly financial reports.

If done by a bookkeeper/accountant, you will still want to oversee any reports contributing to your:

- a. Profit/Loss Statement – referred to as Income/Expense Statement in a service business, and
- b. Balance Sheet(s).
  - i. You may also wish to maintain a personal Balance Sheet, as this can be very enlightening.
- 6 Declutter electronic *business* folders & emails.

### D **Month-specific actions**

Attend to any special monthly tasks such as in:

- 1 November – prepare for Christmas expenses and temporary lifestyle changes.
- 2 Any other month ends that may precede events requiring greater time or money allocations.

### E **Non-paper Dollar Sense**

- 1 Kitchen – clear out pantry & fridge of older staples & long-term provisions, using up items approaching their expiry date, and listing new stocks needed.
- 2 Bedroom/bathroom – check over toiletries & drawer items in a similar way.
- 3 Any extra EOM economy tasks that have occurred to you to do:

End Tutoring Step

## F Monthlies 1

Do some of these near the first weekend of each month:

- 1 Carry out any month-/season-appropriate gardening chores.
- 2 Move indoor plants, pictures, and objets d'art around for fresh appeal.
- 3 Help clean up or make safe any local neighbourhood risk-pockets.
- 4 Take a walk in the moonlight, with some company for security.

Note: At full moon is generally safer, werewolves notwithstanding ;-)

## G Monthlies 2

Do some of these near the second weekend of each month:

- 1 Give away donation-worthy items.
- 2 Discard everything that doesn't work.
- 3 Make progress on a favourite project.
- 4 Have friends over or go visiting.
- 5 Do any brief detox procedures.
- 6 Plan/take any weekend break\* desired.

### \*Weekend breaks – special note

I like many ideas in a book called *The Weekend Healer* by Jane Alexander [7], but you can devise your own chill-out breaks: go fishing, visit a spa, or shut out the world for a weekend-in with your favourite hobby.

As an Every, make sure this break is reinvigorating or healing. If incomplete chores & projects are piling up to worry levels, schedule a decluttering blitz. In this situation, it is the most pampering break you can take.

## H Monthlies 3

Do some of these near the third weekend of each month:

- 1 Check over the condition of any pets and deal with presenting issues.
- 2 Do any special cleaning necessary – of mould, stains, etc.
- 3 Replace or empty vacuum bag as called for.
- 4 Dust & clean the fussy bits: displays, ornaments, knick-knacks & picture frames.
- 5 Spruce up personal dream-space &/or pooja room. [See Glossary.]

## J Monthlies 4

Do some of these near the fourth weekend of the month:

- 1 Oil hinges.
- 2 Open all cupboards & drawers ready to let fresh air flow through while you:
  - a. securely\* open *all* doors & windows, cleaning each opening as you go so it doesn't blow dirt in;
  - b. leave these secured airways open for at least one hour;
  - c. lock up afterward, closing the cupboards & drawers in each room as you go.
- 3 Declutter & clean fridge, freezer & pantry.
- 4 Air mattresses/pillows. (If you can get disinfecting sunshine on them, that's a bonus.)
- 5 Fix faulty lighting.
- 6 Attend to ongoing projects.

\*If rooms you can't supervise continually for the hour don't have secure screens/locked-ajar mechanisms, skip step 2b. and re-lock directly after dusting &/or cleaning. The space will still get a breather.

## K E-Monthlies

These are the devil-in-the-details actions that have big effects on your productivity & sense of calm. Spend time on them around mid-month:

Declutter e-files & emails down by at least one level of folders, ensuring file paths are manageable.

TIP: Shorten file names, combine folders &/or minimise sub-folders so you can rapidly navigate through.

[If this section is going over your head, don't worry. See the glossary for terms and a diagram, then read it again. Hopefully, it will now make more sense. If not, bring in a computer expert to help you get started.]

### 1 To declutter e-records:

- a. Delete duplicated documents & folders, after verifying contents *are* identical.
- b. Rename hard-to-find documents (so they're easier to find).
- c. Group loose, individual files in well-named folders or sub-folders.
- d. Make backups of important files & messages – a thumb drive will do, and if you have a lot of data, label a separate one for each topic – Messages, Business, Photos, and so on.
- e. Especially, keep confidential data on separate storage devices – Client Files, Family Records, etc.

Doing this step, however clumsily at first, will gradually clarify which kinds of files are worth creating/saving in the first place, so that the task becomes more streamlined over time.

### 2 To declutter emails:

- a. Deal with last week's tags (see c. below).
- b. Read, answer (or action & acknowledge), then file or delete new messages.
- c. Tag any you can't remove from your inbox yet.

TIP: Type a to-do at the front of the message header in capitals ('READ', 'DO FRIDAY', etc.), so you won't repeatedly open & re-think it. (Remove this header addition before forwarding or replying.)

- d. Delete any stale & no-longer-applicable messages.
- e. Answer any stale messages where you know the sender is still awaiting a response!
- f. Streamline email folders similarly to 1 above (about decluttering e-records).
- g. Do the monthly actions called for on any financial, success or self-improvement program you may be on (besides this one 😊)

## L Other monthly tasks

*List any other monthly tasks or check-ups here, and diarise their recurrence.*

Examples:

- Clean rubbish bins.
- Declutter bedroom(s).
- Thoroughly refresh entryways, including any repairs & maintenance due.
- Stimulate household air with oils, candles, sounds, or whatever appeals.
-

## Monthlies Learning Curve

Curve 4: <i>Monthlies are compressed into 3 weeks here; pick &amp; choose wisely.</i>	
Day	Monthlies
1	Banking Weekly Tidy-up
2	Monthlies 1
3	Staples & non-grocery shopping Sunday Tasks Non-paper Dollar Sense
4	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
5	E- Monthlies
6	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
7	Family Regroup
8	Banking Month-specific Actions
9	Fresh-food shopping Weekly Cleaning 1 Social/Nature/Culture Catch-up
10	Monthlies 2
11	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
12	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
13	Monthlies 3
14	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
15	Banking Family Regroup
16	Monthlies 4
17	Fresh-food shopping Weekly Cleaning 2
18	Other Monthlies
19	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
20	EOM Paperwork If applicable: Business paperwork & Review Business Plan
21	Monthly Review'n'Plan
	How many of the Monthlies did you try? Diarise the missed ones ahead as needed.
	If the season isn't at a change point, do the next Curve's Seasonals as best you can, regardless.

## **VI 6-weeklies**

Time between these can be extended slightly by treating them as bi-quarterlies. For example, you could start around the 15<sup>th</sup> of February, then schedule for the 1<sup>st</sup> of April, then the 15<sup>th</sup> of May, etc.

### **A Grooming pick-me-up**

- 1 Make a hairdressing appointment (for trim, style etc. as needed).
- 2 Check condition of skin (overall), and treat as required.
- 3 Tend to extra manicure/pedicure details.
- 4 Clean jewellery, shoes, scarves, gloves or coats – anything you wear that hasn't been part of washday.

### **B Commitments catch-up**

- 1 Read over the Commitments list under Personal Dailies (I-B) to check whether any daily commitments need extra attention.
- 2 Diarise what you'll do.
- 3 Do what you wrote in your diary.

### **C Additional 6-weeklies**

List any other 'now & then' Everies that apply to your household:



# VII Seasonals

## A Wardrobe Review

Keep this form as your clean copy. Make extra copies each time you do this review, so you can write on the back, too.

A Fast Wardrobe Organising Method for: \_\_\_\_\_(name)

1 With regard to the next 8 – 12 weeks, write how many days a week – or a month or year, for less frequent activities – you expect to participate in these areas:

	<i>Per</i> ...	<u>Week</u>	<u>Month</u> or	<u>Year</u>
Work.....		_____	_____	_____
Business.....		_____	_____	_____
Education .....		_____	_____	_____
After-work/study quick-change acts .....		_____	_____	_____
Home (relaxing) .....		_____	_____	_____
Home (activities with specific clothing needs – name each type)				
.....		_____	_____	_____
.....		_____	_____	_____
.....		_____	_____	_____
Sports/exercise .....		_____	_____	_____
Evenings out .....		_____	_____	_____
Weekend outings.....		_____	_____	_____
Romancing.....		_____	_____	_____
Other(s) .....		_____	_____	_____

- 2 Group current clothing in wardrobe/drawers to suit the above activities.
  - Include smalls, shoes, bags & accessories.
  - Set aside unwanted, unflattering or worn-out items as you go, for discard or recycling at step 6.
- 3 Note gaps (missing items for any activity):
  
- 4 List immediate *needs* & seasonal top-ups ('Wardrobe Refreshers' overleaf):
  
- 5 Buy just those, at the best quality you can afford.
- 6 Dispose of the discards &/or recycling from step 2. (Recovering anything that *could* work with new items...)
- 7 List remaining optional purchases:
  
- 8 Fill these gaps on an ongoing basis, priced at your discretion.
- 9 Review wardrobe each season in the same way.



### ***The Six Seasons of South-Western Australia***

In this book, I sometimes break from the 4-season tradition to use the 6-season breakdown described by the Noongar people of south-western Australia [8]. It is more accurate for our part of the world. I've made minor additions based on my experience of living here.

Months	Name	Characteristics
Dec-Jan	<i>Birak</i>	Hot & dry
Feb-Mar	<i>Bunuru</i>	Varying to cool, with warm easterlies tempered by afternoon sea breezes
Apr-May	<i>Djeran</i>	First dews, pleasantly cool, but with increasing sou'-westerlies & showers
Jun-Jul	<i>Makuru</i>	Cold & wet (stormy)
Aug-Sep	<i>Djilba</i>	Varying to warm, rains lessening, flash storms
Oct-Nov	<i>Kambarang</i>	Warming pleasantly, little rain

Still, be mindful of climate surprises, and adjust seasonal Everies accordingly.

The great news? We get to buy clothes 6 times a year instead of 4! That can actually prove to be more economical. Prediction of needs is more accurate and we can shop less hungrily, knowing we'll be back in just a couple of months 😊

If you're handy with a needle, you can save on new purchases with simple alterations to old favourites: new buttons, adjusted hemlines or stylish trims can extend the lives of older clothes in otherwise good condition.

## **B Wardrobe Refreshers**

Sort clothing and accessories; discard or recycle what you no longer want in your wardrobe, then mend/enhance &/or upgrade the rest *for the season ahead* in these months:

### **January** (for Bunuru)

Prepare wardrobes for warm-hot but windy conditions, and sudden drops in temperature.

### **March** (for Djeran)

Prepare for cool change & squally rains – third layers, lightweight jackets and pants.

### **May** (for Makuru)

Provide warm & waterproof outer clothing, but moderate inside layers – beware of overheating indoors.

### **July** (for Djilba)

Build up a selection of easy-on/off layers, as days will warm up but nights cool quickly.

### **September** (for Kambarang)

Prepare for more outdoor activities, staying mindful of sudden shifts in weather.

### **November** (for Birak)

Retire coats and boots in favour of leisurewear, cool fabrics and open footwear; sprinkle in some festive clothing and lightweight 3<sup>rd</sup> layers – with growing heat comes the onset of frigid air-conditioning!

Milder spells in the named *months* above are also great opportunities for spending a day out 'getting the wind in your hair'. Experiencing seasons safely is one of life's joys, so try to arrange your lifestyle to take advantage of pleasant weather whenever possible.

*Other parts of the world naturally have their own season variations, as do different parts within larger countries.  
Research your area and try drawing up your own season table.*

## C Seasonal First-aid Kit

At each change of season, replenish & update stocks with the next season in mind, according to your family's personalised health needs. E.g., make sure you are fully prepared at the start of allergy season if members of your household are susceptible to serious reactions.

Note seasonal kit needs here:

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## D Gardening

Attend to seasonal gardening tasks. Garden health is best tracked every month, but at least do the key tasks at each change of season. Although I'm getting better at it, this is my weak area. If it's yours too, follow the instructions of those in the know. I've trawled online for good local calendars [9], and if you're reading this outside Australia, I encourage you to do the same for your local zone.

**Birak** (in January)

Inspect & plan for improved garden health (companion planting helps here).

**Bunuru** (Feb/Mar)

Sow seeds, plant bulbs.

**Djeran** (Apr/May)

Tend lawns, make compost.

**Makuru** (Jun/Jul)

Plant and care for deciduous trees, consider garden design improvements.

**Djilba** (Aug/Sep)

Plant vegies, remove weeds, tour wildflower zones.

**Kambarang** (Oct/Nov)

Plant Australian flora, carry out DIY outdoor projects.

**Birak** (in December)

Improve water-wise factors – shade, mulch, etc.

You might also like to learn about Moon Gardening [10]. I haven't tried it yet, but it seems like a beautiful way to give your plants the best start. If you take it up, make task notes for it in the Monthlies section.

## E Pamper Kit

Strategic pampering can act to shortcut downtime from 2 days to 2 hours: Any time you feel under the weather, use it as a preventive health measure to molly-coddle those aches, pains or blues *before* you need first-aid. Prepare a separate kit for the purpose with whatever comforts you: say, soup, eye mask, skin-repair cream, selected essential oil products, and something to give you a good laugh.

## Seasonals+ Learning Curve

Curve 5: Things to do every 6-9 weeks	
Day	Seasonals+ [6-Weeklies & (6-)Seasonal activities]
1	Banking Weekly Tidy-up
2	Seasonal First-aid Kit & Pamper Kit
3	Staples & non-grocery shopping Grooming Pick-me-up Personal Tidy-up
4	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
5	Gizmo Maintenance
6	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
7	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
8	Banking Weekly Tidy-up
9	Fresh-food shopping Weekly Cleaning 1 or 2 Seasonal Gardening
10	Wardrobe Review
11	Daily Deskwork Commitments
12	Family Regroup
13	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
14	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
15	Banking Weekly Tidy-up
16	Wardrobe Refresher!
17	Staples & non-grocery shopping Sunday Tasks Personal Tidy-up
18	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
19	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
20	Family Regroup
21	Commitments catch-up
Diarise when to next do the Seasonals+ at their proper times.	
Enjoy any wardrobe or other improvements you made!	

## VIII Quarterlies

### A Quarterly Review

- 1 Review progress against your overall Annual Plan to clarify the next quarter's priorities;  
OR,  
If you didn't have an Annual plan, simply write down what needs to be done on forward plans, and what you'd like to achieve over the next 3 months:
  
- 2 Diarise the major steps involved.

#### A Paperwork System Every

### B EOQ (End of Quarter) Paperwork System

(Aka, Quarterly Paperwork)

*Note: I've maintained the pre-eTax term 'tax return' to cover all types & formats of tax reports for individuals.*

Quarterly tasks fall around the ends of September, December, March & June each year. For personal papers, these are:

#### September

Complete the quarter's data entry, pay any outstanding bills, file all papers, and ensure you have completed your Individual tax return, including any corrections you may need to report. It's amazing how many receipts & statements turn up *after* your tax return seems finished. Get it finalised well before the October 31 deadline.

#### December

Complete the quarter's data entry, pay any outstanding bills, file all papers, and reconcile bank accounts to immediately get on top of any over-expenditure that Christmas may have brought.

#### March

Complete the quarter's data entry, pay any outstanding bills, file all papers, and make plans for any tax-related income/expense planning that needs to be taken care of before June 30.

#### June

Complete the quarter's data entry, file all papers, and set up a tax-time work area in preparation for completing your tax return. This area may be a whole desk, a folding table near the computer, or any cleared space big enough to sort out your 'shoebox' in readiness for delivery to your accountant.

*NB: If you run a business that collects GST, you know you will need to prepare your Business Activity Statement. Certain other business conditions require quarterly reporting, too. Check with your accountant or on the ATO website.*

### C Quarterly Time & Money Planning

- 1 Diarise realistic timeframes for accomplishing any major personal, household or business tasks that you'd set for the quarter ahead.
- 2 List any significant expenses coming up in the next 3 months, and devise a savings/set-asides plan.
- 3 Especially if in business, check expiry dates of any required insurances, registrations, memberships, licenses, etc., and renew/review as needed.
- 4 Manage social decluttering with regard to time/money/energy drainers. (This may require detox steps as given later in the Yearlies (X-A-6), or simply wiser scheduling.)

**D Quarterly Chores**

- 1 Replenish or update first-aid kit supplies.
- 2 Replace insect deterrents; use the lowest-chemical, most humane types that work.
- 3 Replace mould/moisture trappers in under-sink cupboards, etc.  
(If you've ever bought commercial tubs or pouches for this purpose, you'll know how much water can accumulate, and how quickly! Replacement may be needed more often.)
- 4 Do any chores or tasks that may have been transferred or overlooked from the General 6-monthly list (IX-B).
- 5 Distribute bigger tasks from other lists as you see fit. Add these to the Quarterly Routines below.

**E Quarter 1 Routine: July - September**

- 1 Weed your library, dusting books and sorting shelves as you go.
- 2 Flip chair & sofa cushions.
- 3

**F Quarter 2 Routine: October - December**

- 1 Declutter wardrobes & grooming areas.
- 2 Repair or discard any broken ornaments, knick-knacks or objets d'art.
- 3

**G Quarter 3 Routine: January - March**

- 1 Clean any ventilating/humidifying equipment &/or ducts that are safely reachable.
- 2 Clean up front yard, paths & driveway.
- 3

**H Quarter 4 Routine: April - June**

- 1 Clean globes & light-fittings.
- 2 Gather stray papers in preparation for EOFY data entry and before-June-30 payments.
- 3

If you have time left over in any of these quarters, take a short getaway, or a hobbies-at-home weekend.

## Quarterlies Learning Curve

Curve 6: <i>This Curve compresses 90 days of Everies into 21! Do your best.</i>	
Day	Quarterlies
1	Quarterly Review & General Plan
2	Quarterly Paperwork Time & Money Planning
3	Staples & non-grocery shopping Choose from Quarterly Chores Personal Tidy-up
4	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
5	Family Regroup
6	Daily Deskwork Commitments Quarter 1 Routine
7	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
8	Banking Weekly Tidy-up
9	Quarter 2 Routine
10	Staples & non-grocery shopping Choose from Quarter 3 Routine Personal Tidy-up
11	Gizmo Maintenance
12	Family Regroup
13	Daily Deskwork Quarter 4 Routine (may not have much choice here!) Self-care
14	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
15	Banking Weekly Tidy-up
16	Fresh-food shopping Weekly Cleaning 1 Choose from Quarterly Chores
17	Other Quarterly Chores
18	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
19	Daily Deskwork Commitments Choose from any Quarterly Routines or Chores
20	Family Regroup
21	EOM Paperwork Business paperwork Review Business Plan OR any free-choice Quarterly if you're on top of these paperwork tasks from the Monthly Learning Curve
	Diarise missed Quarterlies to do throughout the remainder of the year.
	Take a 'During' Snapshot.

## 'During' Snapshot

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date &/or reason for snapshot: \_\_\_\_\_

Health & fitness \_\_\_\_\_

Figure/physique \_\_\_\_\_

Grooming & presentation \_\_\_\_\_

Typical mood \_\_\_\_\_

Relationships \_\_\_\_\_

Work satisfaction \_\_\_\_\_

Finances \_\_\_\_\_

Lifestyle/standard of living \_\_\_\_\_

Your 'something bigger' \_\_\_\_\_

A picture of you & yours:

Pictures of your living quarters:

Pictures of pets, important possessions, or any other progress markers:

## IX Half-yearlies

### A Emergency Preparedness

See local emergency services websites for advice on any of these points. In Western Australia, the first stop would be the Department of Fire & Emergency Services [www.dfes.wa.gov.au](http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au) [11].

Write in the month that each gets done, then set the next check for 6 months ahead. E.g., May ✓ Nov \_\_\_\_  
Then diarise that due date!

- 1 Check batteries in torches, lamps & other emergency equipment. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Re-stock emergency preparedness kits & provisions. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Declutter fire escape routes and all zones around electrical outlets & appliances. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Test-run any emergency management actions recommended for your zone. \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Include running entire household through a refresher fire drill. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Fix any dangers that showed up while doing these tests & drills. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Declutter & restock freezer. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Declutter & restock pantry. \_\_\_\_\_

### B General 6-monthly Tasks

Diarise 1 or 2 of these each month, as applicable. Some should be done quarterly, depending on your household, but at least remind yourself every 6 months.

- 1 Clean the oven & surrounds of built-up grease/yellowing. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Thoroughly clean all other whitegoods (fridge, freezer, washing machine). \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Maintain all floor treatments according to their type: staining, polishing, etc. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Sweep fencing, house eaves, and the ceilings, walls & floor of shed/garage. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Beware of spiders scuttling towards you or dropping from webs, but don't kill those that pose no threat. They're part of a healthy ecosystem and can take a hint, moving away from frequently swept areas.)
- 5 Do a rapid-declutter of the shed &/or other workrooms. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Clean all washable furniture (outdoor-type, etc.). \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 Wash doonas & blankets. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 Flip mattresses. \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 Replace odour-absorbers in fridge & damp cupboards. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Tip: Use opened boxes of bicarbonate of soda.)
- 10 Get chimneys, gutters & downpipes cleaned. \_\_\_\_\_

### C Variable Tasks

Other tasks to mix'n'match with the above, depending on when you start. (That would average 2 Half-yearlies a month over the whole year, omitting the busier months – say, December & June):

- 1 Spot-clean the whole house. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Clean silverware &/or special-occasion crockery/cutlery. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Clean all kitchen appliances, even the ones resting in cupboards. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Scrub grime from skirting boards & stair risers. \_\_\_\_\_

Add other variable tasks of your own:

## Half-yearlies Learning Curve

Curve 7: Do all <b>bold</b> reminders, choose a few others, & diarise the rest.	
Day	Half-yearlies
1	<b>Check batteries &amp; stocks for emergency equipment &amp; kits</b>
2	<b>Declutter for safety &amp; emergencies</b>
3	<b>Run entire household through various emergency drills</b> <b>Fix risks</b>
4	Scrub grime from skirting boards & stair risers Commitments Self-care
5	Clean oven & surrounds
6	Daily Deskwork Commitments Clean silverware &/or special-occasion crockery
7	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
8	Banking Clean & maintain all whitegoods
9	Weekly Cleaning 2 Social/Nature/Culture Catch-up
10	Wash doonas & blankets, flip mattresses
11	Maintain floor treatments
12	Daily Deskwork Clean all kitchen appliances, even those resting in cupboards Self-care
13	Clean washable furniture (outdoors, etc.)
14	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
15	Clean chimneys, gutters & downpipes
16	Fresh-food shopping Spot-clean the whole house
17	<b>Emergency provisions: Declutter &amp; restock freezer goods &amp; pantry non-perishables</b>
18	Place/replace odour absorbers in fridge & cupboards
19	Sweep house eaves, plus ceilings, walls & floors of shed/garage (mindful of spiders & other scaries)
20	Family Regroup
21	Do a rapid-declutter of shed &/or other workrooms
	You've done a lot of work so far! Diarise when you'll next do each Half-yearly.
	Now, take a deep breath -- the Yearlies list is outrageous! Do some for real, and make a token effort at some less vital tasks so you do get physical practice but don't get overloaded. Schedule unfinished Yearlies into the year ahead.

## X Yearlies

### A Yearly (Ideally) Homemaker Tasks

Here are some fun activities to kick-start positive change in your home, along with some that are really hard work! The list was inspired by numerous suggestions I've read for major revitalising [12]. Pick and choose from it as you like. New Year is the traditional time to begin such activities, but *schedule for whenever convenient*.

- 1 If you have any unused musical instruments, tune them up and get their owners playing them, whether individually or in a rusty jam night. (Singing voices count as musical instruments, too.)
- 2 Spruce up your wider environment:
  - a. Carry out any specific repairs or maintenance due.
  - b. Declutter the whole house, corner by corner, over several or many weekends.
  - c. Upgrade/rearrange home furnishings.
  - d. Redecorate with soft furnishings, accessories, new colour schemes, etc.
  - e. Declutter your office – home &/or work/business.
  - f. Freshen up garden, courtyard or balcony design.
  - g. Maintain the car [or other mode(s) of transport] & any outdoor rooms.
  - h. Bring all health checks up to date if not recently done.

List them here with their appointment times & other notes:

- i. Medical check-up(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. Dental check \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. Diet/nutrition review \_\_\_\_\_
- iv. Exercise/fitness review \_\_\_\_\_
- v. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- vi. Health & grooming checks for pets too: \_\_\_\_\_

- 3 Sitting around a log fire in cool weather is great for storytelling and sharing confidences, but if – like most urban-dwellers – you can't burn a real fire, have a candle-burning feast at the dining table instead. Bring out the marshmallows and tell campfire stories.
  - Mind the candles – you don't want them setting off the smoke alarm!
- 4 Get rid of junk you've set aside to repair and never gotten back to. Only retain such items if – once repaired – they would be either useful, beautiful, delightful, valuable, an heirloom, or an antique. Get these *properly* repaired or restored, and then either utilise, display, sell or bequeath them. Dispose of the rest as appropriate.
- 5 Review your memorabilia likewise, mindful of the fact that items you may not value yourself might be treasures to future genealogists. Even trivial material can reveal keys to otherwise elusive dates, places, events or relationships. These incidentally valuable items are known as 'ephemera' (items not originally intended to last a long time).
  - a. If you possess the only photograph in existence of Great-Great-Grandma, no matter how aged & faded her image, please don't throw it out. It might mean a lot to a future family historian.
    - Archive such items. Alternatively, give them to your current family historian if you have one, or donate them to your (or Great-Great-Grandma's) local history museum.

6 Detoxify the home, office &/or their occupants. This is a huge subject, well worth learning more about over time. For now, seek out professionals to guide your actions where needed. Here are the main areas to tackle, with quick tips for action to take:

a. Reduce chemical usage & stocks.

- Phone your local council regarding safe disposal or visit <http://recyclingnearyou.com.au> [13].

b. Find & deal with any excessive electromagnetic fields (EMFs), such as those surrounding televisions, computers, sound systems, hand-held devices, dimmer lights, electric clocks, etc.

- The World Health Organisation gives an easy-to-understand explanation of what EMFs are and how they factually interact with the human body [14].
- I encourage you to research more to decide for yourself whether these pose a significant threat to your health or wellbeing. I include them in the detox list because they certainly present another source of clutter. Since they have at least been shown to directly influence the body, treat excessive EMFs as toxic clutter and reduce them.

The easiest way is to turn equipment off when you're not actively using it. Keep clocks and phones as far from your body as feasible. Don't get me started on audio-visual equipment in the bedroom!

c. Detect & resolve any substance misuse – preferably *before* it becomes an abuse!

- The 'substance' could be anything, from sugar to alcohol to drugs – any substance over-indulged in is yet another source of clutter that can impact negatively on your life. The 'over-ness' of the indulgence would depend on the substance and its potential for ill-effects. In some cases, once can be too often. Use one of the Timer Sheets to monitor any substances under suspicion.

d. Break bad habits.

- I'll let you decide what these are 😊 You can sometimes benefit more by using the Timer Sheet in reverse for these, focussing on replacement *good* habits. E.g., to break a habit of not eating enough vegetables, record every time they *are* eaten and try to build it up.

e. Declutter toxic relationships. Often-times we just fumble in the dark when faced with troublesome people or outright conflict. Without good training or someone trustworthy to talk to – or even *with* these things if toxic behaviour should take you by surprise, we need a reliable, self-help starting point. Luckily, you can use Nutshell Decluttering principles to help detox relationships! In these situations, *declutter* translates to mean *mend*, *repurpose* or *unhitch* relationships which harm you, the other person, or others.

- To help you decide which to do, consider first your own part in how the relationship operates. This is Step 1 of Nutshell Decluttering – your *reason* for embarking on it.
- If you feel less than great about your side of things, try *mending* that first – the 'Keep Here' of decluttering. (Points c. or d. above may help, or 8b. on the next page.)
- To *repurpose*: Change the main focus of the relationship ('Keep Elsewhere'). E.g., if you always get into strife by mentioning work, find something else to talk about with that person; or meet in a different location; or experiment with becoming more listener than talker. (Vice-versa if you've been getting steamrolled.)

Take the initiative to change whatever isn't working between you, without emotion-dumping. They could be quite ignorant of the effect they have on you or others, so stay even-tempered. That's also the safest bet if you think their toxicity *is* deliberate – don't rise to the bait, but do take initiative.

- To *unhitch*: This can be a difficult one. Unless we're talking about a mere acquaintance, it's usually better to not burn your bridges (i.e., to keep communication possible). *Usually*, but not always.

Therefore, first verify that you have sincerely tried to *mend* or *repurpose* the relationship. This can take several or many interactions, so don't brush it off.

If you have given it an honest effort and nothing worked, you might conclude that it's time to unhitch. Pause a moment, though: What will the ramifications be? If it looks risky\*, complicated or messy, or if it would hurt *you* to lose them, you will need to come up with some healthy ideas about how to unhitch responsibly.

One way is to gradually lessen contact until the relationship no longer exerts its toxic effect, all the while sticking to the 'mend &/or repurpose' strategy. Let's call this sub-step of unhitching *distance* – a slow unhitching that gives the other person a chance to contribute to *mending* or *repurposing* as a gesture of *their* good faith, too. The gradually increased distance (or loosened reins!) might take enough pressure off the relationship so you can *mend* or *repurpose* it to get along again on different terms. If the other party won't also try, just continue distancing and let the relationship fade out.

\*IMPORTANT: Naturally, if toxicity takes the form of violence or other threats, put safety first. This includes *taking especial care with any decision to unhitch*. If in danger, seek professional advice appropriate for the type of relationship and level of threat. Continue to declutter (with Everies), and to mend &/or repurpose as gently as you can meanwhile. With persistence, these combined de-fusing actions can create a safe enough space for both parties to resolve issues, or to amicably part ways and move on.

*If it is too difficult to address any of the step 6 toxins a-e, use Timer Sheets to simply record contact (or incidents, exposure) for at least 10 days. For cyclic toxicity (binge drinking, etc.), monitoring will take longer. Record as best you can until a pattern emerges. Recording factually will help you view the situation honestly, and better see ways you can gain control over it. It has the added advantage of providing evidence should official interventions become necessary.*

Now, let's lighten up:

- 7 Give the whole house a once-over with an all-natural, all-purpose cleaner to rapidly freshen up & unify spaces. As a guide to which surfaces constitute 'whole house' for this step, use the list of possible surfaces listed on the bottle!
- 8 Minimise degeneration wherever you can:
  - a. Plug up resource leaks (wastage of water, food, money, etc.).
  - b. Apply TLC (Tender, Loving Care) in appropriate measure to neglected, benevolent relationships or contacts, preferably in person.
    - For a nice surprise, drop real postcards in the mail for dear-but-distant friends who aren't on social media ;-)

Whew! That should keep you busy! You have likely read great books on these subjects. If not, you can find some in the Further Reading section at the end of this book [15]. If you need more ideas, type keywords from the above list into a search engine, or ask about them at your local library or bookstore. Don't spend too long researching before taking action, though. Delays could undermine your best-laid plans elsewhere.

If you like, add other Yearly tasks of any kind here:

When you've decided which ones you'd like to do first, incorporate them into your Annual Plan, described on the next page.



## **B Annual Plan (aka January Setup)**

This can be as elaborate as you like, or you can simply jot down the main things you want to get done this year, in general terms. Before you do, however, review the past year's progress. Hence,

- 1 Review progress against your Annual Plan (however hazy it may have been) for the year just gone:

- 2 Formulate a clear Annual Plan for the year ahead (include any snap New Year's Resolutions you still like, so you can act on those for real):

- 3 **Diarise the major steps involved in carrying out your Annual Plan.**

Improve your chances of carrying through on this plan by implementing the system below.

### A Paperwork System Every

## C EOCY (End of Calendar Year) or New Year System (Aka, January Paperwork)

The whole Christmas season invites reflection and desires for improvement, so both 'New Year' & 'End of Calendar Year' can generally mean anytime from mid-December to mid-January. One can make a fresh start anytime, though. Do January Paperwork & the New Year System whenever you make long-term plans.

A lot of New Year 'paper' may be of the motivational kind – dream boards, books, quotes, and so on. The rest of it is mainly leftovers from last year. Sorting these out is important, and almost all of the plans will benefit from diarising, so that task comes both first & last in the New Year System below:

- 1 Diarise a schedule to carry out New Year's (or the-past-year's-so-far) resolutions. This is only a rough schedule of when you wish to reach the milestones predicted, so be brave and just write them in.
- 2 Complete, update, archive or shred any stale paperwork from earlier resolutions so that defunct ideas won't distract you from this year's plans.
- 3 Gather any necessary papers for the new resolutions and place them in a tray, file or other portable receptacle. This averts a common source of procrastination – hunting for paperwork. Oh, and pens/pencils! Keep a stock near any paperwork station.
- 4 Include related expenditures in your allocations planning for the year.
  - This averts another temptation to procrastinate – discovering you can't afford the next step planned. Plan the money, and diarise related actions.
- 5 Create/compile any inspirational paperwork in a space designated for active dreaming – that's the kind where you really mean it.
  - a. Unless your New Year plans coincide exactly with your financial plans, it's usually better to keep this dream-space separate from any office in use – thereby unclouded by day-to-day concerns. It can be as simple as a comfy corner chair with a side table or as purpose-built as a private studio – for this program, choose the quicker option to start with, and upgrade every year if you like.
  - b. If possible, help other household members set up their own dream-spaces so they won't resent or appropriate yours ;-)
- 6 From this freshly organised perspective, diarise your New Year plans more specifically now.

End of Tutoring Excerpt

Add any January Paperwork tasks particular to your circumstances:

## D January Annual Chores

*You may do this Every in any longer-holiday period if January is busy.*

- 1 Discard stale medicines & cosmetics.  
These do go off. Besides smelling bad, the ingredients are not good for you then, either.
  - a. If your home is not well-insulated, store fresh stocks of these in a cooler-bag or lunch carrier during hot weather. If you have a cool-room, all the better.
- 2 Dust ceilings & walls.
- 3 Scrub or spot-clean walls.
- 4 Wash/dry-clean window treatments.
- 5 Clean interior windows/shutters/screens.
- 6 Declutter kitchen cupboards.
- 7 Clean/repair large soft-furnishings.
- 8 Get carpets & upholstery professionally cleaned (even if with hired DIY equipment).

## E Mid-year Annual Chores

- 1 As soon as the weather starts to cool, implement your choices in cold-prevention measures – boost your warmth, hygiene, sleep, supplements, etc. The idea is to strengthen your immune system. (I start this in April to ward off allergies, too, and carry it right through to October.)
- 2 Clean under/behind heavy furnishings & fixtures as far as you can.
- 3 Clean any areas that tend to mould/mildew during winter, including wet-rooms and any long-standing clutter-pockets.
- 4 Especially check items stored against outside walls (i.e., whether on the inner or outer side of the outside wall) for signs of damp. (Wear gloves as there may be redbacks at these locations).
- 5 Check behind items stored against wholly internal walls to detect insect/vermin havens, plaster cracks or paint bubbles that could all point to needed maintenance.
- 6 Arrange any plumbing or other repairs found to be needed.
- 7 Clean exterior windows/shutters/screens.

### A Paperwork System Every

## F EOFY (End of Financial Year) System

(Aka, July Paperwork)

**Important:** *The following information is not to be construed as financial advice. It is offered purely for organising & decluttering purposes.*

Having done all your End-of-Month (EOM) & End-of-Quarter (EOQ) tasks, in July you'll begin tax-reporting tasks. Note: If the EOM & EOQ tasks *aren't* up to date, these would be the first EOFY tasks.

### 1 Individual taxpayers

It is highly advisable to become familiar with the *Individuals* tab of the Australian Tax Office (ATO) website [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au), even if you have an accountant to report for you. ATO ultimately holds *you* responsible for the validity of your tax return, not your accountant or tax agent, so you should understand your tax obligations and always know what you are signing.

The rules are not static, so check in regularly throughout the year. Sometimes they even change in your favour! That's worth finding out, isn't it?

From July onwards, the mail will bring a number of documents you'll need for your Individual tax return. Here is a sample of items that should be mailed to you promptly after June 30:

- Bank statements containing a summary of annual interest earned
- Payment Summaries from employment
- Private health cover statements
- Superannuation statements
- Statements of investment profits/losses.

Note any other expected reports here:

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- a. Begin to gather these and other tax-related papers together in a file or tray.
- b. Chase up any lagging reports (those not in by September 30, or as early as you need them).

Once they're all in, complete your tax return. Do whatever research is necessary to be sure that your tax reporting reflects all assessable income and only allowable deductions & offsets. This should get easier each year, as you become familiar with tax rulings described in, or through, the ATO website.

## 2 Business taxpayers

*You can skip this section if you don't run a business.*

The financial year can end in a different month for some businesses – ATO or your accountant will likely have told you when yours ends. If in doubt, check with them now and write the date here:

My Business EOFY is \_\_\_\_\_.

This section, as well as any other which discusses business paperwork, is intended for sole traders, especially those who work from a small-office/home-office (SOHO), perhaps running a micro-business around your employee job hours. This is the area I'm familiar with.

*If yours is a larger business or you have staff, you'll already know most of what I've written below and will likely have a bookkeeper & accountant to manage business finances for you. By the same token as the advice given for Individuals, though, a business owner is held responsible for her/his business tax affairs, so you might as well read along to refresh yourself on these EOFY Everies.*

Business owners will need to do some extra business paperwork (i.e., extra to your Individual Income Tax and whatever GST reporting you may have been doing).

- a. Prepare Annual Reports (or have your accountant/bookkeeper do so):
  - i Annual Profit/Loss or Income/Expense statement
  - ii Annual Balance Sheet
  - iii The tax return business 'schedule(s)' relevant to your line/type of business.

These terms are defined in the glossary. The how (and more complete why) of these business reports is beyond the scope of this book. If you need more education in taking care of your business records, a book I've found useful for tutoring purposes is Rod Caldwell's *Learn Bookkeeping in 7 Days* [16].

Start doing this step early, because the Balance Sheet should capture the scene on the exact EOFY date as accurately as possible. All 3 reports have a tendency to take longer than you would expect, so get these underway promptly.

Fully armed with the financial knowledge gleaned at step a., it is then time to review your Business Plan so you stay on track to achieve business goals. (If you don't have a Business Plan, now is the time to write one!)

**b. Review Business Plan**

- i. Review progress on the plan and on your overall investment/career/business goals & aims.
- ii. Write/adjust the Business Plan as required to bring it closer to fulfilment.
- iii. Do the same for your overall financial goals & aims.
- iv. Make 3-2-1 backup copies of the Business Plan especially, and store these securely.
- v. Store the *originals* in a secure but accessible place so you can refer to them often.

**3 After-tax Reorganisation**

Finally, the following 2 steps apply to both individual & home office desks:

- a. Once you've extracted any papers you'd needed to complete your tax return, work through your short-term filer (such as a desktop filing case) and declutter it: Distribute papers according to their current applicability – long-term filing cabinet, archive boxes, trash, or recycling, etc. Only leave papers in the short-term filer if you'll need easy access to them in the year ahead.
- b. Review Paperwork System:
  - i. Consider your system: Did it help keep your finances & clutter under control, or did some of it let you down? Write your ideas about this here:

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- ii. Reinforce the helpful parts, and make any needed adjustments to the rest.

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End Tutoring Step

**G Other Yearlies**

**1 December Annual Chores**

Diarise & carry out specific Christmas shopping and other Silly Season plans. Write notes here:

## 2 Annual Personal Care

It's not suggested that you do all 3 of these Personal Care annual Everies at once; each could be done once a year, at any time you see fit.

- a. Put your body through different hoops. E.g.:
  - i. Go swimming at the beach or another natural water body, if you normally don't.
  - ii. Alternatively, go horse-riding or bushwalking.
  - iii. Name your own adventure!
- b. Take a holiday.
- c. Review values & modus operandi.
  - i. Have they been adhered to, and have they been working?
  - ii. Re institute any that may've weakened.
  - iii. Revise or retire those that routinely gave poor results.
  - iv. Celebrate and continue those which really helped!

This can be easier said than done. Try looking at results first, then decide which values &/or modus operandi may've contributed to these.

Ignore trivia and petty quibbles that didn't amount to anything, or you'll be at this all next year, too ;-}

Consider only the highlights (wins/successes), and lowlights (*specific* loses /let-downs). Examine your possible part in both of those: What values were you sticking to? Which modus operandi? Which did you not stick to? Which are hard to maintain, and are any a lazy way out? You don't have to go far into soul-searching here. These questions simply ask you to inspect & declutter some basic ideas and behaviours. Neat, huh? The answers would satisfy step c.i. above. With those examined, continue from step c.ii.

- d. If you've never given much thought to your values or modus operandi, set some guidelines & strategies instead, so that you have something concrete to monitor and review this year:

## 3 Extra Annuals to Distribute

- a. Thoroughly clean walls inside (after rainy season) & out (mid-dry season), using appropriate products for surface types. (Always opt for the most natural product that will be effective.)
- b. Clean, maintain & check working condition of heater(s) – Mar/April (autumn).
- c. Clean, maintain & check air-conditioner(s), fans, vents – Oct/Nov (spring).
- d. *Replace* batteries in torches, smoke detectors and other safety or emergency devices – April &/or October, depending on use.

Does the amount of work seem overwhelming yet?

Take heart. Not every step will apply to you, and Annuals are spaced apart throughout the 365 days in most cases. Given all together here, they are for your reference & consideration, and so you can find any dismissed or overlooked major Everies easily. Diarise chosen Everies at your convenience.

## Yearlies Learning Curve A

Curve 8: <i>The 1<sup>st</sup> of 4 for the Yearlies.</i> <i>Be selective from these 4 Curves; diarise the rest evenly ahead.</i>	
Day	Yearlies 1
1	Discard stale medicines/cosmetics (in harsh climates, store fresh ones in insulated containers).
2	Fresh-food shopping Weekly Cleaning 1 Social/Nature/Culture Catch-up
3	Manage debt levels & credit rating as applicable
4	Family Regroup
5	Clean inside windows/screens
6	Daily Deskwork Commitments Self-care
7	Diet & exercise review
8	Banking Weekly Tidy-up
9	Address any specific health, fitness or beauty concerns
10	Staples & non-grocery shopping Sunday Tasks Personal Tidy-up
11	<i>Replace</i> batteries in safety/emergency equipment
12	Daily Deskwork Commitments
13	Polish up all household surfaces with fresh-smelling, natural products
14	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
15	Plug up resource leaks: money, water, power, etc.
16	Fresh-food shopping Weekly Cleaning 1 Social/Nature/Culture Catch-up
17	Dust interior walls & ceilings
18	Daily Deskwork Commitments
19	Scrub/spot-clean interior walls & doors
20	Gizmo Maintenance
21	Clean areas that tend to mould/mildew
How many Yearlies were you able to get done?	
Diarise those that weren't done, and try the next Yearlies Learning Curve now.	

## Yearlies Learning Curve B

Curve 9: <i>The 2nd of 4 for the Yearlies.</i> <i>Be selective from these 4 Curves; diarise the rest evenly ahead.</i>	
Day	<i>Yearlies 2</i>
1	Banking Weekly Tidy-up
2	Declutter office/home-office
3	Staples & non-grocery shopping Sunday Tasks Personal Tidy-up
4	Spruce up outdoor rooms & any vehicle(s) you own
5	Family Regroup
6	Dental check-up
7	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
8	Annual Personal Care: Swim/hike/ride etc.
9	Fresh-food shopping Weekly Cleaning 2 Social/Nature/Culture Catch-up
10	Health & grooming checks for any pets.
11	Gizmo Maintenance
12	Personal Detox
13	Daily Deskwork Commitments
14	Maintain heaters & other warmers (meant for pre-winter months)
15	Banking Weekly Tidy-up
16	Apply TLC to neglected relationships/contacts
17	Staples & non-grocery shopping Sunday Tasks Personal Tidy-up
18	Implement your choice of cold-prevention measures (also meant for pre-winter months)
19	Daily Deskwork Commitments
20	Clean under/behind heavy furniture & appliances
21	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
Keep at it!	
The next Yearlies are physically harder, more time-consuming &/or more expensive. Use the same 'do or diarise' principle as you've followed so far.	

## Yearlies Learning Curve C

Curve 10: <i>The 3rd of 4 for the Yearlies.</i> <i>Prioritise tax-time Everies if it's really that time of year.</i>	
Day	Yearlies 3
1	Declutter entire house, corner by corner over many weekends (Tip: draw a floorplan for scheduling.)
2	Fresh-food shopping Weekly Cleaning 1 Social/Nature/Culture Catch-up
3	Fix or get rid of long-unrepaired junk
4	Daily Deskwork Commitments
5	Detox home
6	Family Regroup
7	Clean exterior windows & screens/shutters/shades
8	Banking Weekly Tidy-up
9	EOFY Paperwork: Business Reports & tax preparation (for your business year-end)
10	Staples & non-grocery shopping Sunday Tasks Personal Tidy-up
11	EOFY Paperwork: Income Tax (do in the appropriate month for your reporting obligations)
12	Daily Deskwork Commitments
13	EOFY Paperwork: Income Tax
14	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
15	After-tax paperwork declutter & reorganisation
16	Family Regroup
17	Business Plan Review
18	Daily Deskwork Commitments
19	Annual Personal Care: Review & dust off values & modus operandi
20	Family Regroup
21	Music jam session
Nearly there!	
Diarise the missed bits and keep going...	

## Yearlies Learning Curve D

Curve 11: <i>The last of 4 for the Yearlies.</i> <i>Continue selectively from this Curve; diarise the rest evenly ahead.</i>	
Day	<i>Yearlies 4</i>
1	Banking Weekly Tidy-up
2	Freshen up garden, courtyard or balcony design/appearance
3	Staples & non-grocery shopping Sunday Tasks Personal Tidy-up
4	Review memorabilia - cull &/or archive properly
5	Family Regroup
6	Specific repairs/maintenance due
7	Weekly Review Weekly Paperwork
8	Refresh hard floor surfaces
9	Fresh-food shopping Weekly Cleaning 2 Social/Nature/Culture Catch-up
10	Upgrade/rearrange hard furnishings
11	Daily Deskwork Commitments
12	Redecorate w/ soft furnishings, accessories, colour changes, etc.
13	Family Regroup
14	Wash/dry-clean window treatments
15	Banking Weekly Tidy-up
16	Clean exterior walls
17	Daily Deskwork Commitments
18	December Annual Chores & Christmas Planning
19	Annual Personal Care: Plan/take a holiday
20	Annual Review
21	New Annual Plan
Celebrate whatever you achieved on these Yearlies!	
Take an 'After' Snapshot – or another 'During' one, followed by work on the 3-5 Yearlies Curve.	



Now, let's see what's left to do after the year!

## **The Year Just Gone, First Thoughts**

Write or sketch your first impressions about the year's progress.

Skip regrets as such. Word or draw them as things you will do better or recover from in the year ahead.

**Snapshot**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date &/or reason for snapshot: \_\_\_\_\_

Health & fitness \_\_\_\_\_

Figure/physique \_\_\_\_\_

Grooming & presentation \_\_\_\_\_

Typical mood \_\_\_\_\_

Relationships \_\_\_\_\_

Work satisfaction \_\_\_\_\_

Finances \_\_\_\_\_

Lifestyle/standard of living \_\_\_\_\_

Your 'something bigger' \_\_\_\_\_

A picture of you & yours:

Pictures of your living quarters:

Pictures of pets, important possessions/creations, or any other progress markers:

## **XI Every 1-2 Years**

### **A First-aid Preparedness**

While topping up the first-aid kit appears in the Seasonals section, pay attention once a year to overall preparation for medical emergencies. You've heard the saying: Expect the best; prepare for the worst [17].

**If you don't have a home first-aid kit, go out and buy at least one now.** The car should have one, too, as should any other regularly-occupied space away from the house (granny flat, holiday home). Choose kits with good, clear instruction sheets.

Go on. Off you go.

When you're back with your Kit, continue with these steps.

- 1 Whether new or established, ensure all first-aid kits are fully-stocked & up-to-date.
- 2 Add items to meet your family's individual first-aid needs if they are not typically included in the kit. Write what these are here:  


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- 3 Post emergency numbers clearly next to all phones.
- 4 Once the above is done, run everyone – according to their age/abilities – through the basic first-aid instructions given in the kits. Every household member should have appropriate first-aid skills. Part of this is knowing the nearest safe house to run to for help when needed.
  - Yes, this will require you to be on friendly terms with at least one of your neighbours 😊
- 5 At a minimum, have one adult in the home take a standard course (or a refresher) in first-aid, even if merely online in the first year. (Every year, improve on skills & equipment for this and other key survival needs. Don't allow yourself to get complacent.)

### **B Main Fire Drill**

You'll be reminded of this again in the Half-yearly Emergency Preparedness tasks, but start the year off right with a Fire Drill:

- 1 Install – or check existing – smoke detectors.
- 2 Provide – or maintain – fire extinguisher(s) & fire blanket(s).
- 3 Next to each piece of fire equipment, post simple versions of the instructions given for it.
- 4 Draw up\* & post all escape routes, using starting points from various parts of the home.
- 5 Place a Not-To-Be-Removed key near each internally-locked fire exit, but not where intruders could reach it from outside. This may be necessary for key-lock windows too.
  - Check with your insurer if there are any guidelines/restrictions about this, but put your safety first – switch insurers if *they* don't!
- 6 Run the household through a fire drill for a variety of potential circumstances.
- 7 Fix any dangers that show up.
- 8 Note what they are here, and diarise follow-up:  


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\*Why draw them up? So visitors can quickly catch on should they be unlucky enough to share an Emergency event with you!

## **XII Every 3-5 Years**

### **A Home rejuvenation**

Renovate, remodel, redecorate as desired. Tackle the house or rooms corner by corner. Only start the size of project you are able to complete in the time available. If you are doing this major home rejuvenation, reduce all Annual Everies (Yearlies) for that year in order to accommodate it. Most Yearlies will be taken care of in the course of this less-frequent overhaul.

Now, here's a piece of information that may not be what you were expecting of me, yet it is the main reason I've come to write a book like this. I made a decision as a young woman that I wouldn't buy a house. Rightly or wrongly, I never have. That's right. I've more or less rented continuously. So my regular Home Rejuvenation has typically consisted of moving house. How often? Over 30 times. Ugh. Admittedly some of those were housemate situations in my youth. The rest...oh, boy. Do I know how to downsize! Or upsize, resize, wishsize for that matter!

I was able to transfer house-seeking skills to home rejuvenation when I settled down for a longer stint of 10 years in one location, honing the following tools which may help your inspection & planning phases before you jump in and change everything. You can do them even if it's not 'rejuvenation year', to give you time to mull over ideas. If you, too, are renting, or if the budget is tight, don't let these facts stop you. Soft furnishings and other portable décor can work wonders.

#### **1 Consider Optimum Home Functions**

Here is a fun look at the many functions a home may cater to, whether it provides the formal spaces for these or not. Somehow, it's expected to serve them. In total, these could be called 'ideal' home functions, and that is how I looked at them when drawing up the chart 4 years ago, as you can see by its title. Today, in keeping with the Everies idea of *perfect vs achievable*, I think it's better to call them 'optimum' home functions.

Study the Optimum Home Functions Chart over the page. I drafted it the old-fashioned way, with a straight-edge and drafting pen, just because I wanted to use up my old drafting pens. It sketches out a different set of Everies: every functional space a home could provide to satisfy all needs of its occupants. They're not in any particular order, but placed roughly in groups that might be built together. This is not to suggest they *should* be arranged like this, as the way each family uses their home creates different pathways, or traffic flows. A visual stroll through these functions will help you build an overall picture of *your* optimum home.

You can draw lines connecting the functions your own home serves, and consider how it is performing in the areas you value. Another fun way is to colour in the boxes, making up your own legend for what each colour means. Whichever way you do it, this function assessment will help you become more aware of what you really want from your own home, however humble.

The chart can even be used by itself when rearranging furniture at other times. Small pockets of space can serve in clever ways to give you some of these functions that are not built into the architecture: a sewing room in a closet [18], an office in a bookcase, etc. Use it to spark your imagination. Wanting a games room while living in a small flat can even inspire you to join or start up a local Games Club. There's no reason to limit yourself just because the square metres of your floor plan are limited. You can still get desired functions happening in your life.

Notice there is no back door plotted on the chart. These usually erupt from other rooms, such as the family room or laundry. They are often ill-placed. Add yours wherever it happens to be, and take its merits or faults into consideration at the assessment stage.

The Optimum Home Functions Chart can be used in lots of other ways, too – draw up a floor plan for your dream home; roster different uses for a spare room so each family member benefits; streamline traffic flows from one function to the next; you can even create a board game out of it! (Wait, I'm already doing that. But go ahead and make up your own for games night – just don't try to sell it 😊)

So, start at either entrance – up the driveway or down the garden path – and read your way around the functions, drawing connector lines, colouring in, or jotting down ideas.



## 2 Do a Holistic Home Inspection

A complete, holistic home inspection can be done next, to uncover a wide range of factors for possible improvement. You can do this based on your own ideas if you like. I've designed one that embraces my understanding of compatible parts of Feng Shui, Vaastu, Wabi Sabi, sustainability, passive solar design, interior design, and associated sub-topics. (See chapter, 'The Placement Arts' for my take on these.) It is non-superstitious\* and highly practical, only including elements that have sound reasoning in their application. There is not much that would escape this inspection! Therefore, it is quite long. If you've got time to seriously do this, enquire about my *Re-Vibe Checklist™* via the form at [www.inspectorross.com.au/contact](http://www.inspectorross.com.au/contact).

If you want a quicker way, patiently walk around your home & neighbourhood with a notepad on a clipboard (partly so you won't arouse suspicion for loitering), and note the bits that bother you. Tackle these first in your revamp, seeking advice where needed. E.g., ask your local council to get street lights fixed, and so on. As a note on that example, it's a good idea to walk around in conditions of both night & day, rain & shine, if possible & safe. If it's not safe, that's probably the first thing you should try to improve!

*\*I acknowledge Lillian Too's remark about superstitions often being a form of oral history, relaying ancestral wisdom [19]. I just like to examine these for current relevance in case they didn't survive the transmission too well. Ever played Whispers? Or read Shakespeare?*

## 3 Schedule home rejuvenation

When you have completed whatever actions you chose from the suggestions above, schedule your full home rejuvenation/revamp as projects in your forward planning. Continue to break this scheduling down further and diarise the sub-steps as you work along through projects. Important sub-steps might even include checking whether you need to get insurance, council approvals or other regulatory or legal cover.

## B Image & Mindset

A full rejuvenation includes choosing your own personal makeover or spruce-up.

- Keep yourself up-to-date & fit with applicable steps in *The Everies Book*, and double-check every few years that you're not going stale in health, fitness, appearance or mindset.

There will be Reminders throughout the year to help you stay healthy, fit and bright. I find it's also good to read a popular book or magazine on each of these topics at 'rejuvenation' time, whether I agree with the writer or not. It's a rare book that doesn't contain at least one useful idea to take away.

Let's look more at this subject of appearance, though. In the Everies system, this is still about harmony and order. Whether you prefer casual or sharp dressing, a good appearance simply shows that you like and respect yourself, signalling others to regard you likewise. Wearing colours and lines that suit you is the most authentic way to do this because they flatter your natural qualities. For this reason, I strongly recommend that all\*\* household members get their Colours & Styles done at a salon staffed by fully trained, professional Image Consultants. Your Colours® is the original & best franchise for this [20].

No, this isn't a sponsored ad. I qualified as a Styles Consultant with them in my younger days, and really believe theirs is the best know-how in the Image field. You will learn how to stock your wardrobe with flattering, easily mixed'n'matched clothes & accessories, even on a tight budget. It's an excellent investment in long-term wardrobe economics & personal good looks.

- Optional: If you'd like to have these consultations done, or refreshed if done before, note ideal times here. Offer as birthday gifts or special rewards, starting with whoever is in charge of the wardrobe budget:

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*\*\*Colours & Styles are separate consultation appointments for women. Men may have their Styles done as an addendum to a Colours consultation. Your own Colours don't change with age, and weight fluctuations are taken into account for Styles, but bone structure needs to settle out for an accurate assessment to be done. Discuss the best age to return for children's Styles with your Image Consultant.*

## C Archives

If the concept of archives is new to you, just think of them as 'the papers to keep for a long time, along with other keepsakes, souvenirs, older photographs, etc.' You can get advice on how to care for them from your local library, or family history magazines & sites. To search online, just input, "How do I archive \_\_\_\_\_?"

- 1 Review the condition & relevance of your archived documents & memorabilia. Rapidly fix any preservation issues, such as mould, insects, etc. Discard or shred most items which have passed their retention date – e.g., tax files older than whatever number of years applies to your situation. Refer to [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au) [21]. Be sure to move significant records & artefacts to your family history archive. [There is more about that in the Yearlies.]

Allow at least one weekend to put your Archives in order, and appoint some kind of cheerleader to drive action and call breaks (with delicious snacks). Note: This should be someone who can keep you from getting lost down memory lane...

- 2 List your archive types here as you gather them together, so you know which ones to ask about when you research how to preserve them. The list will also serve as a reminder of future records you'll want to archive:

- 3 When you have an idea of the quantity of archival material you've decided to keep, go to an office supply store and buy enough acid-free boxes to store them in while you learn the best long-term storage methods for each type of record/artefact.
- 4 Store the boxes in a secure, cool & dry place.

*There you are – The Everies!*

*Life doesn't ask for much, does it?*

### 3-5 Yearlies Learning Curve

Curve 12: <i>Big projects!</i> <i>Do at least 1 easy step on each 3-5 Yearly; then plan the longer-term steps well.</i>	
Day	3-5 Yearlies – Take regular snapshots throughout projects.
1	Complete Home Rejuvenation
2	Fill in these slots as you see fit, depending on whether you are doing this 3-5 Yearly now or not.
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	Complete Archives overhaul
9	Fill in these slots as you see fit, depending on whether you are doing this 3-5 Yearly now or not.
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	Complete Image (health, fitness, appearance & mindset) review & spruce-up
16	Fill in these slots as you see fit, depending on whether you are doing this 3-5 Yearly now or not.
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
Wow!	
TAKE A BOW!!	



#### How to Proceed

- 1 Complete the 'After' Snapshot.
- 2 Fill in the Write-Your-Own-Appendix B.
- 3 Use that to diarise and do suitable Everies throughout the years ahead.
- 4 Keep *The Everies Book* nearby so you can refresh yourself on steps often.

## 'After' Snapshot

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date &/or reason for snapshot: \_\_\_\_\_

Health & fitness \_\_\_\_\_

Figure/physique \_\_\_\_\_

Grooming & presentation \_\_\_\_\_

Typical mood \_\_\_\_\_

Relationships \_\_\_\_\_

Work satisfaction \_\_\_\_\_

Finances \_\_\_\_\_

Lifestyle/standard of living \_\_\_\_\_

Your 'something bigger' \_\_\_\_\_

A picture of you & yours:

Pictures of your living quarters:

Pictures of pets, important possessions/creations, or any other progress markers:

## Appendix A: The Placement Arts

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Earlier in this book I explained a little about Spiritual Housework. Whether based on family lore, cultural custom, or one of the placement arts & sciences (such as Feng Shui), playing with housework in this way can be fantastic and surprisingly effective. There is sound reasoning behind most of it, and the rest can be treated as pure fun, or discarded. I especially disagree with telling people bad luck will befall them if they don't do Spiritual Housework right. I figure that it's worse luck to predict bad luck for others ;-)

Further, I've since discovered this term can have a social science usage [22] in discussions of class & gender distinctions. That is definitely not the way I'm using it. The term could also convey ideas of religious practices requiring a belief system, or even defying some belief system. That may well be an aspect of one's own practice of Spiritual Housework but, as a blanket term, I'm not using it that way either.

I mean this: any housework, done by any human being, which is not purely for cleaning, maintenance or decorative purposes, even though it may well involve cleaning, maintenance, decorating, gardening, repairs, renovations or any household-enhancing activity. What makes the housework 'spiritual' is the fact that the action is not mere labour. It is being done to grace the home with a 'magic touch', if you like. It has the specific aim of generating a positive effect on the inhabitants, their environment, &/or their affairs.

Many actions considered Spiritual Housework are not even housework as such. They may be habits, rituals, paperwork or interpersonal activities. Indeed, they could be any category of thing, as long as they're to do with enhancing the inhabitants' experience of home, or supporting their lives and aspirations outside it. Any sort of intentional household enhancement is all that is meant by 'Spiritual Housework' in *The Everies Book*.

Note that the person with the intention should be the one to impose it through their own labours, unless delegating aids the intention. If you want a teenager to benefit from a cleaned room, it would be better to have them clean their own space. Makes sense, right? Yes, I know: you'll probably need to do your own Spiritual Housework to increase the odds that your teen will go along with you. The object, though, is to empower household members to take charge of their own areas, not to override them. Additionally, tasks legitimately outside your skill set, such as wiring or plumbing, should definitely be outsourced ☺

Spiritual Housework as used in this text is more like Space Clearing, associated with the Placement Arts. These usually have building science at their roots. The best-known of these Arts are Feng Shui, Vaastu and Wabi Sabi, but there are other arts or sciences designed to enhance the home's harmony with its environment and occupants. Simple decluttering is a sub-study of this field. Sustainability is now rightly popular in design, building and everyday living. Passive solar design as a component of this is something we especially value here in Australia. We think of these last two as scientific, relegating the Placement Arts to something more vague. I consider Vaastu, Feng Shui and sustainability to be elements in a continuum of built environment knowledge. That might be contentious. Bear with me.

I believe those earlier Arts began as sustainable design for their region at that time, incorporating other bodies of knowledge and beliefs in an attempt to create the sturdiest environment possible against the ravages of time, the elements, enemies, and the unforeseen.

Wherever technology and understanding ended during the ongoing development of these Arts, factors which were perhaps less sound when viewed from today's knowledge base were also introduced. Similarly, when talking about placement, location is everything! What works in one climate, culture or microcosm may not work in another. We can still learn from these by trying to understand what problem those homemakers were trying to solve or what connection was, however inaccurately, being made between a cause and its effect.

From that, we can examine our current knowledge and substitute a reasoned action that better suits the purpose. In 100 years' time, that too may compare with superstition. Well, okay. Use what you know for now, and be willing to keep on learning. You'll be in good company. For example, the Building Biology movement stemming from Europe [23] is an application of modern health knowledge being coupled with sustainability to improve outcomes and avoid 'sick building syndrome' – where buildings literally make their occupants sick.

If you're very keen, hire an expert in any building science or one of the Placement Arts to show you how their subject works. If you're slightly less keen, but interested, read more about them. I know that people interested in Feng Shui are generally fascinated by its potential to increase luck and success, right? If you want to implement some advice along these lines, go ahead and try it for a bit of fun. That's a perfectly okay motivation. I love to play with boring obligations to make them more fun. I really love that aspect of the Placement Arts. Besides, I think a little magic can come from merely doing the Everies, so I can hardly complain if you want to conjure up magic otherwise!

For my part, I don't engage with astrology, mysticism, superstition or illogical use of compass points. I am happy for readers to disagree with me on any of these ideas and I hope you won't let it stop you from getting all the benefit you can from applying the tools in *The Everies Book*, your way.

I'm a keen researcher but – apart from the Feng Shui component in some recent Professional Development – I'm not formally trained in any of the placement arts or sciences. My ignorance may show. I do love them and find them fascinating and beautiful. Flicking through pictorial books on these topics is one of the best instant fixes I know. They are so aesthetic and transporting. The images alone seem to have a decluttering effect on one's state of mind. The Everies help you start creating that sort of environment in your home even if you know nothing about their background in these arts. If you are familiar with any of the above fields, you'll be able to practice the Everies with even more skill. So, newbie or old-hand, you'll be taking proactive steps to harmonise your entire life, and I believe that should positively impact on your luck and success.

But I could be wrong about all that theory. Let me know what you find, okay?

I would also love to hear from you if you think I've overlooked an Every that might apply broadly to others, or have covered one twice, or included one that isn't widely useful for some reason.

Send additions/amendments/deletions through my contact form [www.inspectorross.com.au/contact](http://www.inspectorross.com.au/contact) , using the subject line, "Everies suggestion".



## Write-Your-Own Appendix B

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Use the following space to write your own simplified lists of the Everies. Add or delete items as suits your household, lifestyle & personal priorities. You can turn to these lists for a fast check on anything you might have forgotten.

Under each heading, I've suggested a way you might think of these, to keep them in mind better.

### **Dailies**

*Everyday things:*

### **Most Days**

*Things to monitor/alternate, but can skip every other day or so:*

### **Weeklies**

*Restore order from the week's 'busy-ness':*

### **Fortnightlies**

*Pause and check how things are going:*

**Monthlies**

*Nip backlogs & wear'n'tear in the bud:*

**Bi-monthlies/Seasonals**

*Attune to the weather or cultural trends:*

**Quarterlies**

*Check progress, deal with obstacles, and re-focus:*

**Annuals**

*Look, refresh, rethink, plan anew:*

**Every 1-2 years**

*Repairs or maintenance + safety & emergency aspects*

**Every 3-5 years**

*Consolidate, repair, make changes &/or improvements:*

Draw your  
own graphic.

## Troubleshooting Tools

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*See the Guidelines chapter for further information about using these tools.*

## TIMER SHEET

Use to track activities on an hourly basis or by segments of the day.

Day/date:		
Times	This heading has been left open for you to overwrite with anything you want to monitor against time – activities, food, etc.	Comments
Before 7 am		
7 am		
7:30 am		
8 am		
8:30 am		
9 am		
9:30 am		
10 am		
10:30 am		
11 am		
Noon		
12:30 pm		
1 pm		
1:30 pm		
2 pm		
2:30 pm		
3 pm		
3:30 pm		
4 pm		
4:30 pm		
5 pm		
5:30 pm		
6 pm		
6:30 pm		
7 pm		
7:30 pm		
8 pm		
8:30 pm		
9 pm		
9:30 pm		
10 pm		
After 10:30 pm		
<b>Summary/Ideas</b>		

## ALTERNATE TIMER SHEET

Use to track activities on a daily basis instead of hourly.

It can also be used to make up your own Learning Curve for particular Everies.

Day-Tracker, Beginning: _____	
Day	Activity/Substance/Results/Etc.
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
<b>Summary</b>	
<b>Ideas</b>	

## RE-FOCUS CHECKLIST

See THE ONE-PAGE COACH on page 10 for when to use this.

Mark the following questions like so: Yes = ✓ No = X Maybe = \

If you only have Maybes on the first run through, go back over the questions and consider carefully if the situation is *mainly* Yes or No, and mark accordingly.

In all cases, **work on the first Yes you come to**. Only continue the list if the first set of instructions didn't solve the problem in the expected time (according to the action required to resolve it).

Looking back over the last few days, did it seem like:

- 1 Too many to-dos were on your list? \_\_\_\_\_  
Focus on only 2-3 priorities a day, adding Reminders gradually as your efficiency increases.
- 2 Diarised steps didn't match your actual lifestyle? \_\_\_\_\_  
List steps to match & improve routines first, then fit in new tasks where you can around them.
- 3 You forgot to diarise steps to do? \_\_\_\_\_  
Make it part of your supertime routine (with the Nightly Review'n'Prep) if mornings are too rushed.
- 4 Life was too demanding? \_\_\_\_\_  
Actually diarise those unavoidable demands, making a **conscious decision** to do them at certain times. I.e., don't just drop everything when they come up; take the lead and purposely schedule the ones you can predict. Then add 1 or 2 of your chosen Reminders daily until **your** Everies get 1<sup>st</sup> call on your time.
- 5 Your home, or life in general, is in too much disorder? \_\_\_\_\_  
Hire a Professional Organiser to help you implement the Everies, if you can.
  - a. If that's not possible, find a trustworthy friend to help you work through this book.
    - i. Begin by doing more from the Nutshell Decluttering section in the Guidelines.
- 6 You wasted time on other things? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. For 3 days, use a copy of the Timer Sheet to record how you spent each half hour. \* Be honest with yourself. Read over the entries at the end of 3 days, highlighting main time-wasting offenders.
  - b. With these offenders, let the timer limit their intrusion until you're boss again. E.g., give the cooking timer a twist to 20 minutes next time you check your emails – **give them your full attention for 20 minutes**, then jump up & get back on task immediately the timer goes off.

\*If you want to track longer times, use copies of the Alternate Timer Sheet & review progress every 7 days.

- 7 You're finding it difficult to prioritise? \_\_\_\_\_  
Declutter (anything) for 20 minutes each day until your own priorities start to surface.  
Decluttering & organising have a tendency to help that awakening of priorities along, which in turn helps you to declutter as a routine. The moral is, **decluttering helps everything!**

If you keep running into the same problem, use the form at [www.inspectorross.com.au/contact](http://www.inspectorross.com.au/contact) to detail specifics of it and what you did to try to fix it each time. I may not be able to answer personally, but will consider the issue for any future editions of The Everies Book (with your information thoroughly de-identified, by the way!).

Reading the glossary can also help! That's next ☺

# Glossary

I've written my own definitions for these specialised or less-common terms, based on a wide range of reading and how I used them in the *Everies Book*. Look them up further in a good dictionary or a search engine if you'd like to know more.

For each word or term, I've provided an example of its usage in some way. Sometimes this is simply a sentence or phrase, but may also be a tip. Yes, it's a biased glossary.

If you're an expert in a field where any of these words hail from, and don't agree with my definition(s), I may be happy to stand corrected. Supply details using the contact form [www.inspectorross.com.au/contact](http://www.inspectorross.com.au/contact), with supporting references where applicable. I love to learn!

If you turned to the Glossary to look up a word that turns out not to be in here, it should be easy to find in a good dictionary or online. If not, use the contact form as above and I'll look into it.

Do follow up on such words, because I want you to fully understand what I've written. (And I certainly want to understand what I've written, too!)

## *3-2-1 backup copies [24]*

Backups based on the idea of making 3 copies in at least 2 different formats, with 1 stored off-site. For example, 1 paper copy safely filed, 1 copy on a USB kept locally and the other on a USB at another physical location. These are in addition to the original.

*Formats & locations chosen for your 3-2-1 backup copies will vary with the item being backed up, and the level of security you require.*

## *archives*

In the purest sense, these would be records kept for posterity – those you never want to part with. In practice, it's best to give these a review date so that after a certain amount of time you can reconsider their importance and save yourself, your heirs or your descendants the pain of trawling through a lifetime of record clutter.

*If you think of them as the papers you intentionally keep for a long time, along with other keepsakes, souvenirs, photographs, etc., it will help you to distinguish archives from regularly accessed records and 'stuff'.*

## *assessable (income)*

Able to be included in the amount that is taxed.

*Tax rules mean that some income may be excluded from the amount you pay tax on; the rest is assessable.*

## *bah-lees*

Something of an Australianism, it means similar to 'time out', or even 'ceasefire'. It's used in children's games to halt action while someone sorts out their understanding of a rule or gets their breath back, etc. It can be used loosely to mean a break from anything that is becoming overwhelming or dangerous.

*After wrangling with his children over chores all week, he called bah-lees on Friday to play ball with them instead.*

## *balance sheet*

Roughly: a report where the total assets (what you have) are balanced against total liabilities (what you owe) to provide an immediate picture of the financial health of a business (or an individual).

*A balance sheet does not usually actually balance; it is made to balance by calculating the difference between assets and liabilities, and this difference is called the 'equity' (as in, 'making equal or even'), which may be positive or negative (a surplus or deficit, respectively).*

### *Business Activity Statement (BAS)*

A business tax report form which accounts for GST collected and paid.

*A BAS is easier to fill out when your data entry is kept up to date.*

### *business plan*

A plan of how you will set up, run, grow and exit your business.

*A good business plan considers the effects of possible changes while growing.*

### *button-pushing*

Saying or doing things to try to get a negative reaction, 'win points', rob another of voice, &/or put them down. Here are the most common ones that show up in crucibles like the Family Regroup: making needling or aggravating remarks, asking pointed or patronising questions, shouting people down, dismissively talking over them, passing judgements, pulling faces, etc., etc. The worst part is, it's contagious. Be the change you want to see at the table.

*While good friends often enjoy mutual banter with its lively give-and-take, unwelcome or underhanded button-pushing is not friendly and can create 'ricochet' conflict even after the button-pusher leaves.*

### *Counter*

A bookkeeping tool, called a Counter (Book). The name could be attributed to the fact the book is used for literally counting the money going in and out, and/or that it was traditionally kept on the counter in a shop for the purpose of entering all transactions, in or out, in a running list.

Sometimes called a Day Book or Cash Book, they're readily available in stationery stores & some newsagents.

Use one of these books, or the Income/Expense data-entry function of a software program, for your own Counting. You can also get an App of this nature for your phone.

*Whichever type you use, the main feature you want in a Counter is that it is very easy to access and use.*

### *Counting*

(Capitalised in this book only to denote special meaning of a common word.) Keeping track of all income and outgo by entering money movements into a running record, preferably daily. This ensures you know at all times exactly how much money you have available, which helps you avoid overspending.

The practise is old – my mother used it in hard times, and I used it in better times, but I found the term for it described in a great book about transitioning between the two kinds [2].

*Her Counting was out of date so she accidentally went into overdraft.*

### *cull*

To declutter by reducing numbers or paring down contents so that there is no more than you need for a particular purpose.

*To cull a kitchen drawer, you might throw out anything broken, and recycle any unwanted or duplicate items until all that is left are the utensils you actually use and like when cooking.*

### *data*

See 'information'

### *data entry*

The entering of financial data into a bookkeeping program, a spreadsheet, or even a simple, written Counter.

*Try to keep all your data entry up to date for each month-end.*

*debit card*

This term is a bit loose and can mean your everyday EFTPOS card, or a card designed for use with the convenience & security of a credit card, but using your own funds instead of borrowed funds. That last definition is the one I mean in this book.

*Always clarify with your bank exactly what terms govern the debit card(s) that you have.*

*diarise*

To enter [information] in a diary. Especially, to assign a planned or recorded action or event to a particular day &/or time.

*If you diarise an idea you get for some intended action, you are more likely to remember to do it even if you forget to refer to your diary later.*

*diary*

It may seem strange to define this, but since I've used the term rather particularly in places, yet loosely in others, I should make it clear why:

The terms *planner/diary/journal* can be used interchangeably in many cases. When they all mean 'a book, file or electronic program designed to help you keep track of date-related activities', they are indeed interchangeable. That is the way I usually mean 'diary' in *The Everies Book*.

However, each term has come about through specific usage, and in some contexts the differences matter:

- A *planner* shows forward time intervals, sometimes in larger spans like weeks or months, and helps the user plan ahead, often with the addition of tips, extra information, tables or prompts of various types – it is a **predictive** tool, relating to **the future**.

*New Year's Resolutions are more likely to be kept if you write them in a planner.*

- A *diary* is dated in days or even down to half-hour intervals, with the idea that one can plan more minutely and enter micro-tasks like appointments or to-dos as they arise – it is an **active** tool, to keep you aware of, and acting in, **the present**.

*New Year's Resolutions can be broken down into their steps in a diary.*

- A *journal* may be pre-dated or left blank for the user to date, in order to record progress, activities *done*, or thoughts, ideas, and even general plans as they are made or being tracked – it is a **reflective** tool, either recording **the past** for reflection now, or recording *present* actions, events and ideas for reflection on *the past*, in *the future*. That's diabolical, isn't it?

*New Year's Resolutions can be monitored and supported by tracking their progress in a journal.*

The 3 columns in the daily pages of the *Everies Planner* will encompass all 3 purposes of *planner, diary and journal*. The essence, though, is to encourage you to be proactive and plan ahead. Hence its name. For the overall *Everies Reminder Diary* set – of book, course and planner, I have selected the generalised term 'diary' to embrace the 3 functions that its content covers.

*disposition*

A records term, meaning 'a disposing of', but not only in the way we typically think of that. It could be discarding, but it could also mean any other way that the item leaves our possession. E.g., recycling, upcycling (converting into something better for new use), selling, etc.

*When you've decided on the appropriate disposition of decluttered items, make sure you do remove them to their assigned destinations within 7 days.*

*dream boards*

A board or other (usually large) space where you can post symbols, images, quotes, etc. to encourage yourself to persist in your journey towards a dream or goal.

*Many people use their fridge door as a dream board.*

**EFTPOS**

Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale.

*When you use EFTPOS, money comes right out of your account, so keep receipts to enter in your daily counting.*

**ephemera**

Literally, 'things that last for only a short time'. In archive terms, this refers to items of fleeting value in themselves, which become worthy of preservation when they help to connect historical dots.

*He kept his last drive-in movie ticket as ephemera after the theatre was bulldozed for redevelopment.*

**Everies**

Those tasks we've read, or been told, we should do every so often in order to keep things running smoothly at home and in life.

*Each of the following is an Every: "exercise every 3<sup>rd</sup> day", "mop the floor once a week", or "make New Year's resolutions" (yet there have been, until now, few follow-up Everies for those!).*

**false economy**

An overly cheap, quick or easy action (or inaction) now, which invites expense or negative repercussions later.

*Not putting things away when you've finished with them is a false economy of time, energy or other costs.*

**family historian**

See 'genealogists (or family historians)'.

**Feng Shui (or feng shui)**

The Chinese art of placement, from two words meaning 'wind' & 'water' respectively. The core principle is that a life force (chi, or qi) surrounds and pervades everything, and that this life force may become either beneficial or detrimental depending on the placement or actions of material objects or forces (like wind & water.) These should allow movement of the life force in gentle curves.

Feng Shui is practised in different ways ('schools'), all of which greatly expand on these principles, but which seem to consistently produce a very aesthetic, comfortable space.

*A glance at the images in a good quality Feng Shui book will serve to illustrate the beauty of this practice.*

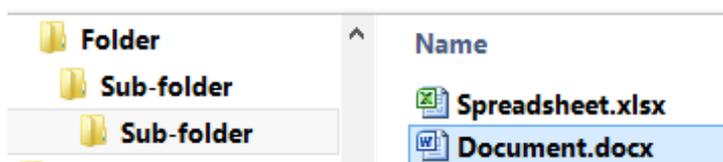
**file (in computing use)**

A single electronic document or picture etc. with its own name.

*When looking for my short story, I had trouble finding the file because I forgot the story's title.*

**file path**

The location of a file, made up of the trail that leads to it through a computer system. *E.g., For the document in the diagram below, the file path would be: Folder\Sub-folder\Sub-folder\Document.docx*



Note: the ending of file names is called an 'extension'. The icon (little image next to the name) and the extension match, telling you what kind of file it is.

**folder (in computing use)**

Like a manila folder for paper, this is a place where a collection of files may be stored electronically. It may have sub-folders, in which case *these* would be more like manila folders, and the largest folder would then compare with a suspension file in a cabinet, holding sub-folders.

*The folder in the illustration above has 2 sub-folders.*

### *genealogists (or family historians)*

Specialists or hobbyists in family history. Often, this is a family member who has taken on the role. Professional genealogists may also research local histories or whole dynasties.

*Genealogists were excited to find the long-lost birth certificate.*

### *GST*

Goods & Services Tax. A tax applied to certain goods & services. The payments are collected, reported and relayed by registered business owners under certain conditions, who may then claim back the GST paid on their own purchases.

*There is a lot of work involved in managing GST for the government.*

### *hazwaste transit*

A place in the home where hazardous waste can be safely stored until it can be taken to a disposal facility.

*I put the old batteries in the hazwaste transit container.*

### *hibernating*

The literal meaning, as you probably know, is about the practice of certain plants & animals tucking themselves away for protection in winter. Yet people can tuck themselves away for protection, too – not always wisely. It may be obvious (whether calmly or dramatically so) or perhaps more subtly, through interpersonal disconnection while appearing to carry on with 'business as usual'.

*He'd been hibernating so long he'd forgotten how to belly-laugh.*

### *hoarding*

Gathering more and more and more 'new stuff' of either specific or general kinds, failing to properly store or utilise existing stuff, and rarely – if ever – disposing of old stuff. Eventually, so much is accumulated that it overwhelms its owner and any other occupants of the house.

Even routine belongings – or whole rooms – can no longer be safely accessed or used. The sheer amount blocks the free flow of persons and appropriate other 'stuff' through the area.

*She'd been hoarding so much that she ended up living out of a suitcase in her front room.*

### *income/expense statement*

A report showing the difference between the business income and the business expenses; the term is usually applied to a business that provides services. (See profit/loss statement.)

*If a tradesperson's income/expense statement showed higher expenses than income, he/she could reduce expenses, charge more, or get more customers to improve the next statement.*

### *information*

data collected together or interpreted in such a way that it can be used for some purpose. E.g., a list of figures is just a collection of data, but if it is put into context or explained, it becomes information.

*Data can be visual (photographs), auditory (recordings), or anything else one can perceive, but if it's captioned or part of a compilation, its information function becomes clearer – it now means something, it informs you.*

### *journal*

See 'diary' for a full explanation of both these terms.

### *long-term filer*

Any cabinet or system where papers or e-documents are filed for the longer-term (longer than 1 year) – either for a definite period of, say, 3-5 years, or indefinitely.

*Insurance policy brochures can be kept in your long-term filer.*

*malodour*

A bad smell.

*Pet beds, shoe stands and unsealed food can produce malodour.*

*Neurobics*

A combination of Neural + Aerobics: brain exercises. Everyday activities to help prevent your brain from aging by making it send and receive messages along different pathways. See Reference [5].

*Doodling with your non-writing hand is an easy way to practice Neurobics.*

*notional*

Based on notions (ideas or theories) only, not necessarily to be taken as real or typical. For example, the form letters you get from banks and other large corporations are usually written to a *notional customer*, not especially to you or even people very much like you, just to the corporation's idea of their customers.

*objets d'art*

'Objects of art' – decorative elements not easily described as ornaments, paintings, etc., although it can include those, too, loosely speaking.

*Knick-knacks are a common form of objets d'art.*

*offsets*

For tax purposes, some activities or life situations that reduce the amount of tax you have to pay, by reducing the taxable amount of your income.

*Offsets change a little from year to year, so read the instructions for your tax return carefully.*

*optimum*

The very best you can do with the time and other resources available.

*It might seem ideal to live happily ever after with no further effort, but meanwhile, it'll be optimum to use selected Everies to get happier outcomes now.*

*paperwork*

Usually, this literally means any actions you need to take with pieces of paper in your possession. It can also mean official procedures where someone else does the paperwork on your behalf (such as when you call to report a change of address), or it can of course mean electronic management of information, too.

*Morning paperwork in the Everies system should only take a few minutes.*

*Paperwork Course, or 'the Course'*

A shortened reference to The Everies Paperwork Self-tutoring Lift-out. This lift-out is part of the full Everies Reminder Diary.

*Use the Paperwork Course to develop better paper-management systems.*

*passive solar design*

Design that capitalises on the location's available warmth & light from the sun, in order to enhance the aesthetics, comfort and energy-efficiency of the structure.

*Solar panels and north-facing windows are aspects of passive solar design in Australia.*

### *placement arts*

Those arts and sciences devoted to the relative benefits or drawbacks of placing items in distinct locations, along with the selection of those items in themselves. These items may be tangible of any size (buildings, furniture, decorations), or less tangible of any size (openings, traffic routes, an absence of decoration).

The best-known example is *Feng Shui*. Less well-known are *Vaastu (or vastu) Shastra* and *Wabi Sabi*. There are others. These are as far as I've gone in my research & the terms are in this glossary. See also 'Space Clearing'. *I would argue that passive solar design and sustainable building or home-making are modern versions of the placement arts, and that all listed here have drawn on the good science available in their time.*

### *planner*

See 'diary' for a full explanation of both these terms.

### *pooja room*

From its traditional Hindu use as a prayer room or altar, you can think of it that way – or consider it any aesthetic space, however small or humble, that allows you to retreat, unwind and commune with your 'something higher'.

*Whether you choose to study, pray, meditate or daydream in your pooja room, keep it sacred from mess, conflicts, or other 'bad vibes'.*

### *profit/loss statement*

A report showing the difference between the business income and the business expenses, usually applied to a business that supplies goods. It literally shows whether the cost of producing and selling the goods resulted in a profit or a loss. (See income/expense statement.)

*If a craft business's profit/loss statement showed a low profit, one could reduce costs and increase sales to raise the profit level.*

### *push-pencil*

One of those refillable pencils with an eraser at the end that can be pushed down to 'sharpen' the pencil by lengthening the lead.

*Everyday push-pencils are best in 0.5 – 0.7mm thickness of leads, so they don't cut into paper when you write.*

### *rapid-declutter*

A fast, superficial sweep of clutter in 4 easy steps: 1. Carrying 2 rubbish bags, go around quickly to pick up all the trash to bin or recycle; 2. pick up all the items that don't belong there and put them in a decent 'Keep Elsewhere' container; 3. tidy up what's left; 4. properly relocate each Elsewhere item within 7 days.

*A rapid-declutter is not a substitute for real decluttering, but it's a good way to get started.*

### *reconcile*

To compare transactions in a statement with other records, to check if they are correct and valid.

When you reconcile your bank statement, there should be no transactions that cannot be explained, and all should show the correct amount.

*When you reconcile a credit card statement, be alert for any purchases you don't recall making.*

### *recordkeeping*

In this book, synonymous with 'paperwork', but it especially means capturing, maintaining and preserving important records.

*Recordkeeping should be treated as quite important – it can protect, help and empower you in your own life, and give much pleasure to family historians who may become interested in you – warts and all – in future generations.*

### *records*

Individual pieces of information which show evidence of some entity, fact, action, interaction, event, achievement or transaction.

*Sometimes letters are the only records people have of their ancestors.*

### *regroup*

To re-assemble together, regenerate, and exchange information after 'splitting up' to tackle outside factors.

*If taking separate routes around an exhibition or fair, it's wise for friends to regroup at regular intervals.*

### *retention date*

The date before which a record should not be disposed of; the record should be retained (kept) until that date.

*A retention date should be set for stored items that are not expected to be kept forever.*

### *risers*

The vertical part of a step, often overlooked in cleaning & maintenance.

*It can be hard to scrub scuff marks off risers – another good reason for removing shoes at the door!*

### *sacred architecture*

The design and/or construction of buildings to support or adhere to the culture's religious or spiritual beliefs and practices.

*Temples and other places of worship are the most common type of sacred architecture, which can incorporate their surrounding structures or other environment – from streetscapes to whole settlements.*

### *schedule (in tax terms)*

A required form completed in addition to your tax return and/or supplement forms.

*E.g., 'Business and Professional Items Schedule'.*

### *Shakespeare*

I'll assume you know who Shakespeare was. The word is used in the text as a reference to his body of work, and how difficult it is to properly understand Shakespeare and other Elizabethan writers until one discovers that historical definitions and cultural context give words a vastly different meaning than in today's language.

*A good glossary for Shakespeare will also explain a little English history to clarify what definition would have applied at the time.*

### *shoebox*

Any small box used to isolate tax records during the year. If you have an accountant or bookkeeper, it's a perfectly legitimate way to store & deliver the required papers to them for periodic data entry.

*If you don't use an accountant or bookkeeper, or if you deliver the information electronically, a shoebox still works, but discipline yourself to enter and file the paperwork before each month's end.*

### *short-term filer*

Any container where papers or e-documents are filed for the short-term (up to 1 year).

*Newsletters of interest could be filed in your short-term filer.*

### *Space Clearing*

Literally, clearing spaces of undesirable elements. These may be tangible (broken furniture, dust & spider webs) or intangible (bad 'vibes') or both (negative images, melancholic keepsakes). This is an ancient concept practiced by many different cultures. As such, it has employed a wide variety of methods, including the placement arts, often (incorrectly) thought of as inseparable from Feng Shui (or feng shui).

*One might employ Space Clearing in a house where domestic arguments have tainted the pleasure and peace which being at home should afford.*

### *spiritual architecture*

Not to be confused with *sacred architecture*, although it is born of that concept: it means the design and/or construction of buildings to enhance the spiritual (or simply personal/subjective) experience of being in the building, and, consequently, the wellbeing of its inhabitants and associated persons.

*Holiday huts built in trees are one unusual use of spiritual architecture for guests who love nature.*

### *spiritual housework (also see The Placement Arts, definition and chapter)*

House 'work' carried out with the purpose of improving or preserving the spiritual/personal/subjective experience of being in the home. That is, housework not seen as material chores, nor decoration for mere appearance-sake, but as a specifically beneficial gracing, if you like, of the home's inhabitants.

*Polishing all the reflective surfaces so that the place 'feels' brighter and more open is one example of performing spiritual housework.*

### *spot-clean*

Thoroughly clean only those grubby spots that stand out.

*There is no need to remove every mark during a spot-clean – limit treatment to stains and concentrated areas of grime such as those around doorknobs and light switches.*

### *sub-folder (in computing usage)*

See 'folder (in computing use)'.

### *sustainability*

The degree to which something can survive or continue in operation, in harmony with the survival or continuance of elements on which its own survival or continuance depends, either directly or indirectly. Think about it. Can you envisage any knock-on effects from the example below?

*One could say a draughty, leaky home with low insulation properties in Australia has poor sustainability.*

### *tax return*

General term for any type or format of Individual tax report submitted at the end of each year.

*It takes less time to complete my tax return if I click on all the question mark links to be sure of what I'm doing.*

### *Vaastu (or Vastu) – both can be lower case*

The pre-*Feng Shui*, Indian discipline of spiritual architecture, from a word meaning *habitat* or *dwelling*. When applied as an art of placement, its full name is *Vaastu Shastra*, where 'shastra' means variously *skill, science, knowledge, artistry*. *Vaastu* as a subject has other applications, too, but the word *Vaastu* when used by itself usually refers to *Vaastu Shastra* [25].

It shares the concept of a life force (*prana*) with *Feng Shui*. However, the movement of *prana* is thought of more as breathing than as inherently flowing the way *chi* does. This makes a difference to how architecture and furniture layouts are recommended, and from there other differences develop.

Certain ancient and far-flung structures outside India show signs of having been built on *Vaastu* principles, including the astonishing Machu Picchu site in Peru [26].

*When you arrange your home on the principle of 'straight lines and right angles' – which you may have heard of in Organising conversations before, you are employing Vaastu rather than Feng Shui, which favours curves.*

### *values*

This can be an awkward word these days, becoming clouded through a couple of societal and workplace uses. In *The Everies Book*, it just means ideas you have about what is important, good or right, and what you feel comfortable tolerating from others in your own life.

*I don't feel good after listening to gossip; it goes against my values.*

### *Wabi Sabi*

A somewhat reactionary practice to *Feng Shui*, arising in Japan. It rejects the attempts to control fate, attract abundance and strictly place items, encouraging a more organic yet minimalist expression of everyday living and the gentle passage of time. Both words have a variety of translations into English which range from sad to happy concepts [27]. My preferred summing up is: wabi ~ honouring the life cycle of things + sabi ~ happy to just **be**, without things.

*An uncluttered yet serendipitous room arrangement is an expression of Wabi-Sabi, which I would also suggest is the art of placing things accidentally-on-purpose 😊*

### *Whispers*

A game where one person in a row of people whispers a message to a person beside them, who whispers it to the next person and so on, until the message gets to the end and is reported out loud to the originator. The object is to see if the intended message arrives back faithfully without alteration – a rare event!

*Information can become altered just like a message in Whispers if it has been passed on verbally, or rewritten and translated many times, or even if it has been transcribed faithfully while its word meanings or context – cultural, situational etc. – have changed.*

Now you're an expert on the Everies language!

## Further Reading

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I'm aware that the way references are constructed & punctuated can be off-putting enough that a non-researcher may brush over them. Therefore, I've simplified the presentation of these so they all follow the basic format below as far as possible and regardless of media type. Some were found 'after-the-fact' – by attaching a possible source to something I've known for years but have no idea where I first heard of it. In these cases I've provided starting points for you to see where they may have sprung from. I haven't repeated information if it wasn't necessary; e.g., where a copyright holder is also the publisher, etc. I hope this referencing approach will make the background for The Everies more transparent for a wide range of readers. It goes like this:

Copyright holder. *Title: subtitle*; Article/chapter/tab title, page number. Publisher: Place [or website address], Year, &/or last access date.

*Annotations (explanatory notes) where relevant.*

You may be surprised at some of these references – they're rarely the latest publication or the most recently popular websites. The reason for this is three-fold.

Firstly, these are the actual references I've appreciated and used over the years, which culminated in my writing of this book. It would be unfair to pretend I got them from sources that would make my Further Reading section look more fashionable. Websites included were correct at time of writing, but a few of the original sites I'd bookmarked were nowhere to be found when it came to publication time; I had to re-find the information elsewhere & provide that instead. You can do new searches, too, if you want to side-check anything against current information.

As to the second reason, I did recently read an excellent article about library marketing [28], which questioned why we need to keep acquiring more and more information about the same things we're trying to do, if we didn't use the information from the first source the first time. It's sometimes the case that we supplant putting information into practice, with simply more stuff to read. I know I can be guilty of that. So, in keeping with the purpose of this book, I've been putting this information into practice, and am now passing it on for you to practice. If you want to read more recent information about anything, simply input a title below into a search engine or online bookstore to find similar, newer articles or sites. For books, look for the 'people also bought' titles or more recent editions.

For the third reason, read on...

### ***The Last Every***

This brings me to a final Every for you, an Every-Thing, starting with written things. If your home is cluttered with books, magazines, tearsheets and interesting pamphlets, try this: Stop bringing more paper into the house. Just stop! Now, appreciate Every Thing you have already. Properly read what is on your bookshelves. *Use* information you already have. If it's not interesting enough to read, or not useful enough when you try it out, get rid of it. *Only then* could you justify bringing in an upgrade or better publication – after you've examined the content of your personal library in case the information you want is in *something that you already own*. You'll be surprised how satisfying it is to really look at Every Thing you have, to use what you have and what you know, and to see results from doing so.

As far as Everies go on this point, the essence of the Further Reading list is already in this book. Put *The Everies Book* into practice before diving off to read more & more & more.

Do the Preliminaries on the end page and then turn back to Learning Curve 1 to begin your Everies journey in earnest.

Let me know how you go, by using the Contact Form on my website [www.InspectorRoss.com.au/contact](http://www.InspectorRoss.com.au/contact).

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(*This concept is popular today, but one of the first times I saw it was in this undated 70s-era publication. I had to include it to let you know how long I've been following this subject!*)
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### **Acknowledgements & Influences**

Thanks & appreciation go to:

My clients, newsletter recipients and blog readers for helping me develop The Everies.

My late mother for demonstrating resilience, self-motivation, resourcefulness and tiny-house furniture rearrangement; and for being the first person to let me practice decluttering on.

Other mothers who shared their parenting years – and friendly advice – with me.

My son and all the extra life he brought into my environment which prompted me to begin consciously practising The Everies.

My sister, brother, his wife, & my friend Rick for supporting my writing, business efforts and other projects at all times.

(Rick was the first person I ever knew to drastically declutter, and like it!)

Certain other men in my life who, I have to admit, set a more organised and calm example than I.

I also acknowledge those *other* people throughout my life who've helped me appreciate the peace and refuge to be found in reading, decluttering, and rearranging the furniture. I'm sure they didn't mean to help, but everyone's good for something ;-)

*I have drawn on my formal training in various ways while both writing and testing this book:*

BA (Librarianship & Corporate Information Management)

Certificates III & IV in Bookkeeping & Small Business Management

Model of Admin Know-How Course & Program

Certificate in Interior Design

Certificate in Style Consulting

*I am also grateful to fellow Organisers who were in our original Perth group of the Australasian Association for Professional Organisers (AAPO), for their kind support and generous knowledge-sharing during the years that association ran.*

*I'm proud to be part of this diverse industry that truly helps its clients and, by extension, their clients' loved ones and environments.*

### **About the Author**

You can find out everything you need to know about the author by browsing the *Inspector Ross* website, [www.inspectorross.com.au](http://www.inspectorross.com.au) and/or visiting my [LinkedIn page](#).

I'll now be catching up on those Everies I've neglected while working on this book and a follow-up program called [Finish Your Pet Project!](#)

If lots of people like these, I'll resume work on companion publications, including *The Everies Bookmarks*, the *Paperwork Everies Self-tutoring Course*, and *The Everies Planner*.

Visit [Inspector Ross Updates](#) for updates!

You can also find lots of DIY tools [here](#).

Thanks for reading!

# Get Started!

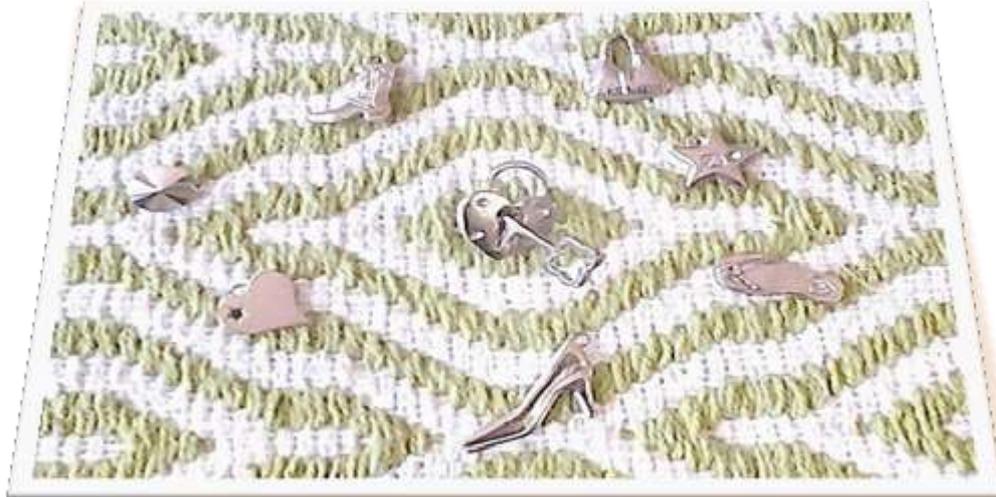
Use the Contents pages to find descriptions of capitalised items in the table below.

## Preliminaries Learning Curve

The Set-up Curve: <i>Prepare for safe change with these preliminary actions.</i>	
Step	<i>Do selected Yearlies and 3-5 Yearlies as below.</i>
1	Take a 'Before' Snapshot, and make relevant appointment(s) for step 10.
2	Write your Annual Plan, or at least a Plan to cover the next 6 months.
3	Do some New Year Paperwork (enough to provide a bit of 'cheerleading' when you look it over).
4	Break the Annual Plan down into 4 parts you can accomplish in Quarterly Plans, & write the 1 <sup>st</sup> one.
5	Break that 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarterly Plan into 3 parts, and write the main steps to do in an initial Monthly Plan.
6	Write the <i>immediate</i> steps to do in a Weekly Plan! Begin that while you continue these Prelims.
7	Get a diary if you don't have one, and use it to write daily steps from your Weekly Plan as of today.
8	First-aid Preparedness project (section XI-A).
9	Main Fire Drill (section XI-B).
10	Medical &/or other check-up(s) as required to ensure fitness for your chosen Everies.
11	Write your own Workday Routine & Odd Jobs list to keep with your diary as a checklist.
12	Declutter 1 storage area so you've got room to store decent items from other decluttering steps.
13	Inform anyone affected of what you are trying to do with these 21-day Everies Learning Curves. Note that this could include informing insurers or your local council, etc., depending on projects.
14	Decide it is not 'serious' – that it will be fun!
	Now you are safely prepared to tackle the Everies Learning Curves.
	Using your paperwork from the above steps, begin Curve 1.

To begin mastering the Everies, flip back to *Dailies Learning Curve A* on page 21.





An Inspector Ross Publication

