

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

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E-book standalone edition.

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This 2nd 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 RossSM:

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

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

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 . I also post selected Everies at irregular intervals on my blog 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:

■ ■ ■

[Central pages of book not available in this Table of Contents excerpt.]

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, 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 3rd 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.

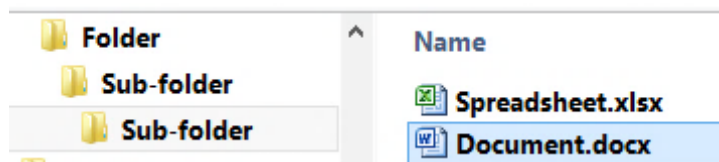
file (in computing use)

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

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 .

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

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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 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 st one.
5	Break that 1 st 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

