

Minimalist Fun: The 100 Things Challenge

Could you cut your personal possessions down to 100 things?

Last week, in my [Haiku Productivity](#) post, I mentioned blogger Dave Bruno's [100 thing challenge](#). It's actually a challenge that I've seen in years past on other forums (see the rucksack guy's [101 things](#) - with [photos](#)), but Dave's version is that he's trying to cut his personal possessions down to 100 items.



Photo by [Zach Klein](#)

Things not included:

- Stuff that's shared between him and other family members.
- Non-personal stuff, like dishes, cleaning supplies, etc.
- Books.
- Tools.
- Collections count as one item.

I thought I'd give the challenge a try, as it's an extension of Haiku Productivity — which has one rule: limit everything you do. If you limit your personal items, you are forced to choose. I don't think this will be that difficult for me, as I don't have a ton of personal items, but it is greatly appealing to the minimalist in me.

It's supposed to be fun! Join me if you'd like. Let's give ourselves a month (you can give yourself longer if you like), starting today (Sept. 19). Is the number 100 an arbitrary number? Of course it is! You could just as easily chosen 78, 94, 126, or the more magical 42. But it's a nice round number, and the actual number isn't as important as the exercise of trying to limit your possessions.

Why go through the challenge?

A few reasons:

1. To help you declutter your home.
2. To make you realize what's necessary, and what you love, and what you don't need.
3. To free yourself of the burden of possessions.
4. For fun.
5. To force you to stick to the limit, even if you get new things.

If you have a minimalist streak in you, you might want to give it a try. If you're really minimalist, you might even want to go below 100 — perhaps 50.

Some suggestions

This challenge might actually raise a lot of questions, such as whether you count this item or that, or whether you count a bunch of things as one item or not, or whether this item is considered “personal” or not. My answer: decide for yourself. This isn’t a competition, and it’s not a way to show off. It’s just for fun, and it’ll be different for each of us.

That said, here are a few suggestions:

- **First, take inventory.** I’m going to start my inventory below. You can’t do this if you don’t know how much to keep.
- **Next, mark the must-keep stuff.** There are certain things you *know* you’re going to keep. Your Nolan Ryan rookie card. Your autographed *Cat’s Cradle*. Your ipod. Mark those with a star, count how many those are, to see how many you have left.
- **Then, the borderline stuff.** What is stuff you might want to keep, but you’re not sure yet? Mark them with a circle or something, and see where your count is. If you’re over 100, you have some cutting to do. Cut until you get down to 100.
- **Get rid of the rest.** Everything you’re not going to keep, you should get rid of. You have some options: donate it to charity; find someone who wants it; list it on Freecycle; throw it away; sell it on eBay or Craigslist; hold a garage sale. You could end up making some good cash on this. However you do it, get rid of it.
- **If 100 is too easy for you, choose a lower number.** You may already be a minimalist. If you only have to get rid of 10 items to get down to 100, you might want to do something more challenging — say 70 or 50 (or 42).
- **Decide how to count things.** It’s really up to you. Do you count baseball cards individually? Probably not — count them as one collection. How about a computer system? Your ipod and assorted gear? A good rule-of-thumb you might use: if everything goes in one case, count it as one item. If it’s all separate, count it as multiple items.

My inventory

Here’s what I’ve inventoried that I want to keep so far:

1. Keys
2. ID & debit card clipped together
3. wedding ring
4. Moleskine notebook
5. unopened Moleskine notebook (for when the first one’s finished)
6. bike
7. helmet
8. running shoes
9. sandals
10. flip flops
11. Doc Martens
12. jeans
13. jeans
14. jeans
15. slacks
16. slacks
17. slacks
18. long-sleeve shirt
19. long-sleeve shirt
20. long-sleeve shirt
21. shirt
22. shirt
23. shirt

24. shirt
25. shirt
26. shirt
27. shirt
28. shirt
29. shirt
30. shirt
31. shirt
32. shirt
33. shirt
34. t-shirt
35. t-shirt
36. t-shirt
37. t-shirt
38. t-shirt
39. belt
40. razor
41. shaving cream
42. toothbrush

Stuff I'm getting rid of includes:

- slacks
- t-shirts
- shirts
- ties

I'm not done with my inventory, although I think I don't have too much left. I hope to finish it within the next week, so when I do, I'll do a post. Email me (zenhabits at the gmail) if you'd like to participate and would like me to include you in the follow-up post.

Author: Leo Babauta

Copied from: <http://zenhabits.net/2007/09/minimalist-fun-the-100-things-challenge/>

Article downloaded from page eio.com