

## How to get started

From professional organizer Tamah Vega ([Amareeliving.com](http://Amareeliving.com))

**1** Make a "vision board" depicting what you want from the purge; perhaps more freedom, control or tranquility. This can be as simple as assembling a collage of inspiring photos or magazine cutouts. Once you have a vision for the next stage of your life, it's easier to figure out what you can do without. Plus, you can return to the vision board for inspiration along the way.

**2** Set up a "staging area" where you can sort and store items you plan to recycle, donate or sell.

**3** Draw up a timeline and make appointments with yourself: If you write "call the storage facility" on your calendar, you're more likely to actually make the call.

**4** Figure out how much support you'll need from friends, family or professionals. If you want your best friend to drop by a few times to offer opinions, this is a good time to ask her.

**5** Start with the obvious: Always hated that yellow coat? Make it the first thing to go.



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falling apart in the house. You can't visit every room every day, and things happen."

She fell in love with a bright, airy, 2,200-square-foot, mid-century ranch house in nearby Lenox: "It's a big, glass box. It just is light."

The new house, undergoing renovations she is documenting in a year-long series for *House Beautiful*, was a huge departure for her, and a clarifying one. Again and again, she would look at one of her beloved antiques and say: "That is so not right for (the new) house."

The first step in the paring-down process was to set up storage for her, her daughter, and her "still-business-partner-and-soon-to-be-ex-husband" and to set aside what each clearly wanted to keep. Then came the sorting.

"Going though every drawer, every single thing in your house — in your life — is very confronting, which is not bad," Selke said. "You have to face every poor

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— Annie Selke, above



purchase you ever made." She hired a professional organizer, Judy Moss, who helped her develop a systematic plan of attack. A few items did make it from the old house to the new, among them an antique bachelor's chest and the de Gournay wallpaper mural, which Selke had split into a triptych and framed.

The entire paring-down process took three months and culminated in an estate sale in August, while Selke was

away.

"I came back to a very empty house, and that was the hardest day," she said. "It was like: 'Oh! OK. Now I'm going to cry.' But you know, it wasn't so much the stuff, it was that it was ... the end of an (era)."

Overall, she says, she recommends the experience, which has left her feeling less burdened, more aware of her purchases and more in control of her environment.

"I haven't looked back. The old house — I've driven in (the driveway) to show it to people, and I don't have a pang."

[nschoenberg@tribune.com](mailto:nschoenberg@tribune.com)

## Designophile

# Bromstad on color

Got color questions?

Just in time for spring redecorating season, interior designer David Bromstad, host of HGTV's "Color Splash," will be making an in-store appearance at Colori, an eco-friendly paint boutique in Wicker Park, to talk about the hippest trends in color and answer design questions from the audience.

Two 90-minute sessions will take place at 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. March 20 at Colori, 2243 W. North Ave. The event is free, but space is limited to 120 seats. Register online for a seat ([colorrichicago.com](http://colorrichicago.com)), or register in-store and get \$5 off one gallon of Mythic Paint, which is Bromstad's paint line.

Meantime, for a sneak peek, we asked Bromstad to offer some advice for the winter weary hoping to add a splash of spring color to their homes.

### His color pick

"My favorite color to add a touch of spring to any room is definitely lime green, such as Mythic Paint's Florentine Flash," Bromstad says. "It symbolizes growth. It's fresh and energizing just like spring. It transcends seasons. You can simply add this color to any room by adding pillows, rugs, lamps, vases, artwork and most certainly by painting."

### His quick-fix idea

Deciding to paint doesn't have to be a huge commitment of time or labor, Bromstad says. His prescription?

The accent wall. "Accent walls are the quickest and fastest way to bring drama and impact without the pains of painting the entire room."

### His personal DIY

Bromstad, known for the paintings he creates on "Color Splash" says he's planning something similar for his own home. "For my next project at my home in Miami, I am going to paint two large pieces of art for my living room. The artwork will be bold, colorful and abstract."

— Alexia Elejalde-Ruiz, *Tribune Newspapers*



David Bromstad, above, says a splash of lime green, left, can give a fresh and energizing springlike blast to a room.