



Among the list of least-wanted heirlooms? Fancy dinnerware, dark brown furniture and sewing machines.

As society begins to reopen, we're able to see friends and family again and new replaces old – this a popular time to organise and declutter. But if you're making a list of items for your kids or grandkids to pick up you might want to establish a backup plan and remember that charity shops are open again too.

According to Elizabeth Stewart, author of "No Thanks, Mom," children of baby boomers aren't interested in upsizing as their parents downsize. If your kids tend to favour the phrase "less is more" when it comes to possessions, check out this list of 10 items they probably don't want – and learn what you can do with them.

1. BOOKS

Check biblio.com for information about your books. If it's rare or valuable, call a book antiquarian. Otherwise, ask libraries, schools or charitable organisations like Ronald McDonald House if they can use them.

2. PAPER

This includes old photos and greeting cards. Digitise family photos, but keep the prints for those that are linked to a celebrity or historical moment, Stewart suggests. There might be a market for your historical snapshots among greeting card publishers and image archive companies. Other options include your local historical museum or county archives. The Imperial War Museum or other national or local archives might be interested in any war letters and memorabilia.

3. TRUNKS, SEWING MACHINES AND FILM PROJECTORS

They're probably not valuable unless made by a renowned company. Consider donating.

4. PORCELAIN FIGURES AND DECORATIVE PLATES

Precious Moments figures may not be precious to your loved ones, but a nursing home and the residents may appreciate them. Figurines that trigger fond memories may deserve a photo shoot with a professional photographer so you or your kids can continue to enjoy them without having to dust them.

5. SILVER-PLATED OBJECTS

Unless your serving pieces and silverware are from a manufacturer along the lines of Tiffany or Cartier, consider donating them.

6. STERLING AND CRYSTAL

Many families appreciate these as heirlooms. But if your family doesn't or if you only have a partial set, check online for replacements or sites that specialise in completing and matching dinnerware sets and collections.

7. FANCY DINNERWARE

The next generation likely isn't interested in hauling out a full service for special occasions or family meals. Again, consider selling to a replacement matching service.

8. DARK BROWN FURNITURE

There's still a market, likely second-hand shops or antique lovers who may look to upcycle your pieces for the modern aesthetic. But don't expect much if you choose to sell. Stewart suggests you'll receive about a quarter of the purchase price. Mid-century pieces should fetch higher prices if you decide to sell.

9. PERSIAN RUGS

High-end pieces are still selling in high-end places, or online to right buyer. Otherwise, your best bet may be to donate them.

10. LINENS

If your children don't want the delicate textiles, see if you can find someone who repurposes hand-embroidered work into special-occasion garments, like christening gowns. Theatres and costume shops may also appreciate them.

It can be emotional to sort through a lifetime of where we've been, even when it means clearing a path for the future. Loved ones and friends might be willing to lend a more objective eye as you cull – consider setting up a video chat to show your items, share stories and hear their opinion. Make sure you're willing to return the favour, too.

If you need even more objectivity, find a professional who specialises in managing estate sales or downsizing to help you manage the task.

Remember though, if you're ever unsure before you throw, you can always get it valued by an expert.