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Getting Your Space Organized

Feeling disorganized?

Unsure where to start?

Are you tidy but can never find what you are looking for?

That's okay!

Being organized does not mean being tidy. Being organized means being able to find, exchange and evaluate items quickly. Organized spaces should be simple to use. Everything has its place in a quick and logical

system. Things may be added or removed using the system which often leads to less clutter build up. Every item in your home has a location which leads to a space that feels calm, open, and welcoming.

Before getting started it is important to know what "organized" looks and feels like for you.

1. Determine what organization tools you will need for your space and obtain them. Compartments, baggies, dividers, bins, shelves, tabs or files etc.
 - a. Empty the space completely while assigning your "stuff" to a DO IT, DELEGATE IT, or DITCH IT pile (The three D's).
 - b. The DO IT pile is kept and tended to, the DELEGATE IT pile is given away, or passed on to the person it belongs to. The DITCH IT pile get's thrown out or recycled.
 - c. Having trouble ditching stuff? Ask yourself the following questions:
 - Do I NEED this (now or in a year)?
 - Have I used this in the past year?
 - Does this fit anymore?
 - Is there someone who would love this more than me?
 - If I saw this in a store, would I buy it again?
 - Can I get this somewhere else if I really need it?

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2. Determine what organization tools you will need for your space and obtain them. Compartments, labels, baggies, colour codes, dividers, bins, shelves, tabs or files etc.
3. Think about how you use your things and space and this will help you determine the best way to set up your system. If you can't easily access the things you need, you will not access them or put things away due to the inconvenience. There are many ways to organize. For example by color, size, use, season, genre, topic. Find a system that works for you.
4. Give things a home near to where they are used most. This way you are more likely to remember where they are and also you will remember to use them.
5. Maintain your system by always putting things back in the "home". Aim to keep surfaces clear and beware of areas where clutter might usually form. For example: you receive a piece of mail. Don't just put it on the table. Take a few seconds and open it, DITCH the envelope and junk mail in the trash, put the bill in the DO IT pile, or just do it. If the mail is not for you, pass it on the person it belongs to or mark it "return to sender" and put back in the mail. In other words DELEGATE IT.
6. Get rid of stuff you don't need - so that you can put things you do need away and out of everyday sight. Reducing visual clutter helps to reduce mental clutter. You'll feel instantly calmer.

Tips to Consider:

- Put on some music or set an environment of calm and motivation when you are organizing. Make it fun!
- Choose a small area to focus on and go from there. Don't try to do it all at once.
- Set aside time slots beforehand. 3 small areas in 3 evenings can feel much easier than 1 big room.
- Make three piles (or use three boxes) and separate by "Do it, Delegate it, or Ditch it"
- Put things in compartments (ex. baggies or containers). Try drawer organizers for drawers that are enclosed. You can purchase them or make your own by slicing off the tops of empty plastic bottles of various sizes.
- Warehouse, office, and restaurant-supply dealers have all kinds of stronger and more functional (but less pretty) bins and shelves than home-improvement shops tend to have. They're great for when looks don't matter much, like a basement, garage, or closet.
- Check out this great website for special projects : <http://www.styleathome.com/organizing>