

SOLVED IT!

AN UNORGANIZED HOME CAN LEAD TO A CHAOTIC LIFE. LET THESE TIPS FROM THE PROS HELP YOU TACKLE HOME ORGANIZATION DILEMMAS AND WHIP YOUR HOUSE—AND DAYS—INTO SHAPE!

COOKBOOK COLOR-SORTING AT ITS FINEST!

ASSIGN A TYPE OF ITEM TO EACH SHELF.

“I’M JUST TOO BUSY TO GET ORGANIZED.”

“The reality is, you don’t have time not to get organized,” says Atlanta-based professional organizer Carolyn Rogers. “When a space isn’t organized, you lose valuable time searching.” But how to actually carve out time for organization?

Jeanie Engelbach, founder of Apartment Jeanie in New York, recommends putting it on your calendar, as you would any other appointment. She also suggests allotting an hour for a single drawer and a full day for an entire room. “If possible, complete the organization all at once, so you don’t make a fresh mess each time,” she says.

SWAP OUT AN ISLAND BARSTOOL FOR A LOW BOOK LEDGE.

MEET THE EXPERTS



Amy Vance
Eco Modern Concierge
Houston
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Carolyn Rogers
The Neat Nerd
Atlanta
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Jeanie Engelbach
Apartment Jeanie
New York
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"I'M ALWAYS LEAVING THINGS AT HOME."

"Remember, your entryway is also an 'exit way,'" says Amy Vance, owner of the organizing firm Eco Modern Concierge in Houston. Vance encourages clients to set up their front door "drop zone" for both comings and goings. In addition to having devoted areas for keys, purse and phone, she also recommends dedicating a section to items you need to take with you the next time you head out the door. No more forgetting to mail that birthday card, for example.

ADD SOME QUIRK WITH UNEXPECTED STORAGE "HOOKS."

A PAPERWEIGHT IS A VISUAL REMINDER OF PIECES YOU NEED TO TAKE WITH YOU.



"MY BEDROOM ISN'T RESTFUL AND RELAXING."

Since guests won't necessarily see it—and we're often just plain tired by the time we get there—bedrooms are often one of the messiest spots in a house. "Too many of my clients have used their nightstands as hamper," says Engelbach, who often sees bedrooms become closet overflow zones. To ensure your sleeping quarters are actually restful, place a hamper in the room so dirty clothes have an appointed place. Engelbach also recommends a "Rule of 3" for your nightstand. "Establishing strict rules about what comes in your room and how many items you have bedside will go a long way in creating order," she explains.

FLOATING "TABLES" FREE UP FLOORS.

JUST RIGHT FOR HIDING BOOKS AND MAGAZINES.



UTILIZE THE CABINET TRIMWORK!

“MOM, WHERE’S MY HOCKEY UNIFORM?”

Assign each family member their own basket in the laundry area for clean laundry ready to be put away, says Vance, who finds this system prevents pileups on the sofa or stairs and makes it clear where things are. “This is one room where it’s critical all family members maintain the systems,” she adds. To help everyone stay on track, she encourages label use: “Clearly marked bins will alleviate confusion.”

STORE DETERGENTS IN EASY-TO-IDENTIFY BINS.

LAUNDRY DETERGENT

REMOVE CABINET DOORS FOR INSTANT OPEN SHELVING.

“I’M DROWNING IN KIDS’ ARTWORK!”

“Remember, if everything is special, then nothing is special,” says Rogers. She applies the mantra to paperwork, especially the many masterpieces kids tote home from school. Plan to save one per month and recycle the rest, so you have a manageable record of the year. When it comes to other paper pileups—receipts, bills, invitations—you can take a similar approach. “Keep a garbage bin right by the door so you can toss out as much as possible as soon as you walk in the door,” says Rogers. Since junk mail has a way of hanging around and causing visual clutter, she also recommends taking the time to remove yourself from unwanted mailing lists.

PUT OFFICE SUPPLIES IN LITTLE DESKTOP DRAWERS.

