

# Household Organization

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*The 80/20 rule says that we only use about 20 percent of what we own, and the other 80 percent just takes up space.*

Organizing your home starts with decluttering and simplifying. Clutter is a result of poor buying decisions, lack of time and organization skills, and simply having too much stuff. The 80/20 rule says that we only use about 20 percent of what we own, and the other 80 percent just takes up space. Some of the best organizing tips will not work if you do not simplify your life by decluttering and commit to staying organized. This lesson will offer some tips for getting organized and staying organized.



## Getting Started

Start the organization process by using the four-box method. Obtain three large boxes and a large trash can. Label each box “Put Away,” “Give Away/Sell” and “Storage.” Items that you want to toss, obviously go in the trash can. Start with one room and take these boxes and trash can into the room and begin with one area of clutter.

After you declutter each section of the room, take time to put items away that you want to keep. Put the box of items to give away in the back of your car and set a date for selling the items you want to sell. Take trash items out quickly so you don’t have time to second guess yourself.

## Easy/Inexpensive Tips to Get Organized and Stay Organized

- Everything should have a home – a space where it belongs.
- Use labels – anything that is being stored in a box or container should be labeled on all sides.
- Put a trash can in every room in the house. Find nice decorative trash cans for your living room.
- OCI–OGO (one comes in – one goes out) rule. When you buy something new, toss out something old.

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- Store sheet sets in under-bed storage containers in the room where they will be used.
- Place a box in the back of your car for items to give to charity. If you keep it in your house, it will never get there.
- Tape an envelope on the refrigerator or near the phone for pizza and food delivery coupons.
- Keep a toy basket in rooms for quick clean ups – even pets should have a toy basket.
- Photocopy recipes you use and love, and place them in a three-ring binder. Get rid of space-hogging cookbooks.
- Use vacuum-sealed storage bags to create more space.
- Buy a tote for your car to keep items like umbrellas, bottled water, pillow, paper towels, plastic bags, blankets, jackets, tissues, maps, etc. This also helps eliminate unnecessary purchases when away from home.
- Stop at the waste basket every day on your way in from checking the mail. Immediately throw away junk mail. Have an accordion file system on your counter or desk for bills, receipts and coupons. Keep this in an easy-to-access location. Purchase a shredder and place it near the same waste basket. Be sure to shred anything containing confidential information!
- Use an over-the-door shoe organizer to store items from a junk drawer. Have a pocket for screws, scissors, nails, cell phone cords, paper clips, batteries, flashlights, tape, glue, etc. Hang it on the inside of your pantry door or a closet.
- Use a suspension rod under sinks to hang cleaning products, water bottles, etc. to create more space for other items.
- Fold clothes and fill in the drawer horizontally to create more space and make it easier to spot that perfect shirt!

## Plans to Stay Organized

Once you've organized, create a plan to prevent disorganization from happening again.

- Commit 10 minutes a day to putting things where they belong.
- Don't go on a shopping spree for organizing products until you know what you need.

- Have a storage and disposal plan – decide where you will donate your items, when you will have that yard sale, and take the charity boxes directly from your house to your car. Once the sale is over, what will you do with the leftover items?
- Create clutter-free zones in your home. Clear these spaces every day to ensure that they remain clutter free.
- Communicate your organization system with others – All of your work to organize will be for nothing if you don't let others know your plan.

Pinterest is full of great “do-it-yourself” organization ideas, including printable pages that will help you get organized and stay organized. Go to [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com), or do a web search for more great organization ideas!

## Sources

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