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Introduction

Staying organized both in your home life and work life can sometimes be a challenge. If you work from home or just have a small home office, it's very important to make sure your work space is properly maintained and you can find everything easily. Too much clutter can make life much more difficult, and important tasks and papers can get lost in the shuffle.

With proper organization, you can easily find the things you are looking for as well as feel like your personal life and work space are neat and clean. Even your computer should be properly organized, so items in various folders and on your desktop are quickly and easily accessed.

Keeping Your Desk Neat

Your desk is where you do most of your professional work and a lot of thinking, so it's important that it stay neat and clean. Using pen holders and post it note holders can keep loose items in one stationary place. Paper clips are often a problem, so use a small cup or other plastic container to keep binder clips, paper clips, and rubber bands. Many computer desks now have organizer drawers that have different compartments designed to hold small objects. You can also purchase small desk organizers to put inside your desk drawer if the furniture you have does not have one.

Paper can often become a huge problem when you have a desk. That's why it is extremely important to have some kind of system in place for papers so they don't get mixed up. You should use desk organizers that stack so you have several different categorized places to put your papers. Incoming and outgoing mail should be separated. Current projects should have their own stack, while completed projects should be filed away. A filing cabinet is an excellent way to keep all of your files and important papers organized while still being neatly put away.

Each week, go through the items on your desk and determine what papers can be thrown away or recycled, and put them in a shred or recycle box. If you let items pile up too quickly, important things can be abandoned, while unimportant things just add to the clutter. Make it a point to weekly clean your desk is a smart way to keep them organized.

Most of us have too many pens and pencils floating around. Think about it: do you really need 25 pens hanging around your desk? Throw away some of the old pens you don't use, and just keep one or two good ones handy. Or, put away the remaining pens and only bring them out to use when one runs out of ink. Use your computer-based calendar or PDA to keep track of appointments instead of using a traditional desk calendar. This keeps everything organized

and you don't have to have the extra paper hanging on the wall or sitting on your desk.

Make Sure That Bathroom is in Order

Bathrooms tend to get messy rather quickly. The bathroom should be a sanctuary where we go to bathe and relax, but in today's busy world it can be hard to keep it neat and organized. Towels often get tossed about, toiletries scatter, and other accoutrements get thrown about. There are plenty of great accessories you can purchase to keep your bathroom nice and tidy.

Of course towel bars or towel racks should be a given, but if you don't have any, now is the time to install them. It's an easy way to hang

towels while they still look neat. Most people use the towels on the rack simply for drying hands. For those towels you use to dry off after a bath or shower, simply install a wall hook somewhere that is in reach but still out of the way. This will help you to easily access the towel when getting out of the shower and give you a place to put it back as well.

Every day necessities like toilet paper can easily be store either in a cabinet under the sink, or in canister-like containers designed to specifically hold toilet paper rolls. Cleaning supplies should be locked away from children, or put in the bathroom cabinet if there are no children around. Cleaning supplies that lay out and about are unattractive.

You can also purchase something called an étagère, which is a cabinet that goes above the toilet. This is designed to provide extra space for those things you need to get to but don't want to be in sight. Cotton balls and q-tips can be stored in a small, attractive jar or other container on the bathroom counter by the sink. Cosmetics should be put in the bathroom drawer. You can purchase small drawer organizers to help keep little things like mascara and eye shadow in order.

Baskets are a great accessory for bathrooms. They provide a stylish place to hold extra soaps and washcloths, and look chic at the same time. Consider throwing out any old makeup you no longer use, and downsize your cosmetic items like lotions and body washes. The less clutter you have in the bathroom, the cleaner it will be. Try to tidy up the bathroom every day. This way, clutter does not build up and your bathroom won't start to feel cramped.

How to Keep Your Storage Room From Being Cluttered

Almost everyone has one room where they keep outdoor objects like paint, household chemicals, garden tools, and other larger items. These rooms are useful for putting aside items that you don't use often. Christmas decorations, extra linens, and other things also tend to get placed in storage rooms, and eventually these rooms look like a garage sale that went completely wrong.

It is always a good idea to make sure your storage room stays organized, so you are able to find things easily. For example, if that hornet's nest forms outside on the front porch, you want to be able to find the bug spray fast! Using a few simple products and making a

few quick changes can mean the difference between a nightmare room and a neat, clean storage room.

First and foremost, household cleaners and chemicals should be safely locked away. Children and pets may get into these items, which can cause illness or injury. Be sure to purchase some kind of lockable cabinet that is also corrosive proof. You want to make sure these things stay safely away from little hands.

Organize the cabinet into categories like cleaning items, lawn and garden items, and household repair items such as caulk or wood glue. Label each cabinet if you choose so you can easily open the one you need faster. Small, tidy plastic drawers are another great way to keep little things like nails and screws in order. The coffee can of old days no longer has to be used. Instead, these handy little plastic drawers look much nicer and make it easier to find that flat head screw you've been searching for.

Install hooks or a pegboard on the wall of your storage room. These hooks can be used to hang anything from rakes and shovels to various tools. You will be amazed at how handy a few hooks can be in a storage room, plus they help to keep things off the floor and prevent injury. Buy large plastic bins and organize anything extra by type.

Christmas decorations should go in one box, while Halloween decorations should go in another, etc. Then label each box. Inexpensive shelving can also be installed instead of hanging hooks, so you can place everything on the shelves. The key to keeping a nice and neat storage room is avoiding having everything end up on the floor.

Make Your Kitchen Chef-Worthy

Kitchens are where most people spend a lot of time. Whether you're cooking for yourself or having a dinner party, the kitchen is often the center of the home. A dirty, disorganized kitchen does not make for a happy cook. Pots and pans as well as bake-ware tend to get thrown under cabinets and eventually you have a cookware avalanche whenever you go to find that long forgotten brownie pan. Over the head pot racks are great for people with higher kitchen ceilings.

These are designed to hang your pots and pans by hooks and keep them all in one place. If you do not have room for a pot rack, you can always add hooks to the wall or in the pantry, where pots and pans can be temporarily stored until you're ready to cook with them. Bake

ware like brownie and bread pans can be kept in a separate area either on pantry shelves, or in bottom cabinets, but be sure to keep them organized.

Small kitchen appliances tend to clutter up the counter tops. This can be a bit tricky. The best way to keep this problem at bay is to only "display" those items you use frequently such as the coffee maker and toaster or toaster oven. Microwaves that have a built in hood fan are an excellent way to reduce clutter on the counters. Install one over the oven and you've saved yourself several cubic feet of counter space.

Using canisters for things like sugar, coffee, tea, and flour is a good way to avoid a mess and a nice way to easily locate these commonly used items. Modern, stylish canisters look beautiful in any kitchen. Keep in mind that things like pasta and rice can actually expire and should be thrown away at regular intervals. Pay attention to the sell-by date of your food. If it's expired, toss it out.

People tend to keep things like bake mixes and noodles around for ages until they go to cook them, and then realize they're not good any longer. Clean out your refrigerator regularly as well. Check the date of condiments like salad dressings, relish, and ketchup. Throw out foods that have gone bad. It's a good rule of thumb to do a weekly or even bi-weekly check of the fridge and clean it out often. Do not stock up on anything you probably will not eat within a month or so.

Recipes are another common reason for kitchen clutter. Think about it: how many cookbooks do you truly need? Downsize your cookbooks or tear out your favorite recipes and copy them onto small index cards. A nice, compact recipe organizer is a neat way to keep everything together and in one place. Catalog them alphabetically for quick reference and you will be able to easily find that recipe for your mother's apple pie.

A good rule of thumb when organizing the kitchen is to keep each type or category of item together. For instance, keep all glasses in one area of the cabinets, all bowls in another, and salad and dinner plates stay together as well. Use drawer dividers to keep your forks and spoons separated properly. Large utensils like spatulas and big spoons can be kept together in a large container, usually called a utensil crock. By grouping all of your kitchen tools, you can find things fast when it's time to bake, roast, fry, broil, or sauté.

Ensure Any Event Runs Smoothly

Much like your home, planning events can become overwhelming, and often things get into disarray. Properly planning and organizing any event will make it run smoother and it will be a lot more fun for you and your guests. First, decide on a location. This is the building block to any event. Once you've found the ideal location, book it for a specific date and time. Locking in the time and place is the best way to get your event moving.

Everything else will be focused on details such as a theme to the event, the event's name, and attendees. Come up with a list of people to invite to the event. If it is a business event, will you be charging a reservation or admission fee? What kinds of foods will be

served? Will it be catered or will you be preparing the food yourself? Write down an essential list of questions before you schedule any event. This way, you will cover all bases as far in advance as humanly possible.

Compile a list of attendees you want to invite to the event. Then, ask each one to please RSVP so you can get a good head count. Set a due date that everyone must RSVP by so you can be sure of who is coming and who is not. This helps to get an idea of how much space is needed as well as food and silverware.

Next, come up with a menu. Will the food be elegant or simple? Will it be buffet style or a sit down dinner? Is alcohol going to be served? If so, you will also need to find out about potential city licenses to serve it. Decorations are another important part of the event. Banners and signs are good for business events, but you can also add your own personal touch with table toppers, balloons, and other fun themed décor.

Before any event can take place, there needs to be some kind of schedule put in place. Decide if you're going to have speakers attending, and if so, designate different time slots for each one. If awards are to be presented, give that time a specific time slot as well.

Live entertainment like bands should be scheduled to perform last when everyone is relaxed and the formalities have ended.

Type up and print out a schedule and have one for each place setting at the table. You can also mail out schedules in advance of the event so everyone knows what to expect. Make a few larger schedules, and post them around the venue where the event is taking place so people have a quick reference. Anyone can plan an event but it takes true organizational skills to make sure that it goes over smoothly.

Conclusion

No matter where you live or what you do, organization is important. Whether it's your master bathroom, a small country kitchen, or a storage shed, being properly organized can mean the difference between an easy day and a complicated one.

Being able to easily find things when you need them can save you a lot of time and a lot of frustration. In addition, a well organized office or home looks much nicer and helps you to keep your home clean. When it comes to events either personal or professional, organization can come in handy there, too. Proper planning and having everything in its place is a surefire way to make sure the event is a true success.

Simple organization will make life much easier for everyone. Make weekly cleanups and purge items you do not use or need a priority. You will be amazed at how little time it takes, yet how much time it actually saves. Staying neat and clean can also help relieve stress and eliminate that overwhelming feeling when you come home to a cluttered house. By having a place for everything and everything in its place, you'll be amazed at how much easier your life can be.