

ORGANIZATION MATTERS



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Here's this month's edition with organizing and redesign ideas.

Hope you enjoy, and Happy Summer!

Storing Product Guides & Warranties

Keeping paperwork from household appliances, technology and products can create quite a pile and an organizing conundrum. Where do you put it all? Here are 2 schools of thought:

1. *Keep with the item.* Thus the warranty and user manual for the refrigerator get hung up on the back of the fridge, for example.
2. *Keep all together in one place.* This way, you keep all the paperwork in one spot to reference when needed.

Unfortunately, some products you buy come with a lot more stuff than others (think: computers with all the discs and user guides). It is not like you are filing a few sheets of paper. You also don't access or refer to product paperwork equally -- I am more apt to reference the paperwork that came with our dryer only when I have a problem, but I seem to need to program the phone a lot.

When weighing the pros and cons for the 2 options listed above, I feel it is more organized to have a centralized spot for all warranties, guides and manuals. You can use a plastic lidded tub or similar container that has enough space. If you want to make pockets or use accordion folders to hold specific categories of items, it



makes it easier to find what you need (i.e. "Audio/Visual", "Kitchen"). If there are multiple guides or discs for one product, rubberband together.

Store the container in a place on the main level of your home but not in prime real estate -- maybe a higher shelf or a location that's hidden but reachable. After all, the likelihood you'll want to access the paperwork lessens after you install/set up/buy the item.

Kitchen Organizing Tips (edited from HGTV)

- *Get a handle on excess plastic grocery or shopping bags with an inexpensive bag holder. Available as cabinet mounted or freestanding units, these holders contain bags while making them easy to access. Place the plastic bag holder next to the garbage can for extra convenience. When the holder becomes full, recycle or use as cushioning for shipping boxes.*
- *Get more mileage out of your kitchen cabinets with some creative dishware rearranging. For ex., stemware glasses can be stored by placing every other glass upside down. To begin, pull all your dishes out of your cabinets to see what you have to work with. The most frequently used items should be on the bottom shelves of a cabinet that's most convenient. Consider rearranging the cabinet's interior shelves to accommodate your different size dishes. Or move once-in-awhile dishes to the basement.*
- *A crowded utensil drawer, while remaining unseen most of the time, is still a crowded drawer. If digging in an overloaded drawer for a potato masher is more work than mashing the potatoes, it's time to invest in a compartmentalized organizer. Drawer organizers come in a variety of sizes and materials. Try expandable, fine mesh containers — easy to*

fit and easy to clean. Resist the urge to pile everything back into the drawer. Instead, make sure you can clearly see and reach everything without having to dig.



• *Cabinets and drawers can get full of mismatched plastic containers and lids. Invest in something like GladWare's Containers with Interlocking Lids. Different size lids snap together, and each container nests inside another, giving you more cabinet space.*

• *A baking zone in the kitchen is ideal for the cookie dough enthusiast and allows you to take quick inventory of your baking needs. Devote a counter and upper or bottom cabinet to the following: cookie sheets and loaf pans; a kitchen mitt or hot pads; and flour, sugar and other baking necessities in plastic containers. If your mixer is stylish, leave it out on the counter; otherwise stash it with the mixing bowls.*

• *Take time to reassess all of your food storage in cabinets and pantries. Start with the obvious: purge all expired foods. Next, sweep through your canned goods for extras you can donate (i.e. food pantry, food drive). Depending on the space, you may want to use a lazy Susan for*



spices and sauces or standalone wire shelf helps to increase storage. Try grouping food by category or by time of day (breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks).

• *Recipes have a tendency to*

overrun a kitchen. Tackle your recipes by tossing any you haven't used in ages. The size of your recipe cards can determine which system you should use. Index cards work well in a labeled recipe box or a small photo album. Full sheet recipes do well in a 3-ring binder. If you prefer room to grow, choose the binder and tape your index cards to larger sheets of paper. Create dividers and organize recipes either by dish type.

Guidelines to Accessorizing:

Less is better than more...a few well chosen pieces can do wonders.



Use large scale art and accessories instead of lots of small items.

Classic accessories stand the test of time. Themed rooms can seem silly and outdated quickly.

Collections should be grouped together, not spread throughout a room.

Varying heights brings excitement & visual interest to a space.

Hang artwork at eye level for the average person (about 5'7").

When hanging artwork above an anchoring piece of furniture, artwork should be hung 6-10" above it.

Create balance through symmetrical displays or "visual weight" groupings.

