



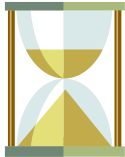
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Here's this month's edition with organizing and redesign ideas.



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FOOD FOR THOUGHT ON SCHEDULING... REMEMBER 'PARKINSON'S LAW' -- YOUR ACTIVITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WILL EXPAND OR CONTRACT TO FILL THE TIME YOU HAVE AVAILABLE.



Use Underutilized Space

One of my fave organizing products are under-the-bed boxes. They are great for using the underutilized space below your bed, and the newer boxes are easier with wheels and/or lids that can open on one side.

The main benefit is that you use space you normally might not! These boxes are great for:

- the bed linens for that bed -- sheet sets, extra blankets, etc.
- storing kids' artwork and memorabilia (one per child, with label on outside)
- out-of-season clothes and footwear
- purses, handbags and/or occasion bags
- duffel, travel or extra makeup bags
- anything that you normally store in the bedroom because you use it there

You can opt to buy bed

risers to 'lift' your bed up and create more space if needed. You can see from the example photo how much room is gained.

TIP: measure the allowable space



from the floor to the lowest point underneath the bed (some frames have rails that go lower than the rest of the bed) before you go shopping.



Another option is under-the-bed bags and organizers for

shoes.



Why do I need to get organized?

Organized people save time and money and reduce stress and frustration levels. Organizing systems help you manage everything from your personal paperwork to your professional responsibilities.

They can create order out of chaos by providing parameters on what to keep, what to toss, and how to store the material things in your life. —NAPO

Cleaning vs. Organizing

Sometimes people figure if they clean up, they'll get rid of the clutter. But there's a difference between cleaning/staying neat and organizing. Cleanliness/neatness means your space looks good short-term but can get messy again. Organization refers to keeping things in predictable places or arranging things in an orderly manner for the long term.

So you can be *organized and clean* or *organized and messy*, but I believe you can't be *entirely clean without being organized*. In general, I try for *organized and clean*. My house and personal life have a ton of

organizing systems, but at times there are toys to put away, surfaces to be wiped, a bathtub needing scrubbing, etc. These, however, are things that can be fixed quickly and are routine tasks that will have to be done over and over again in the future. *Clean is a short-term status*; as soon as you're done cleaning, time and people make the space less clean afterwards.

I've also had lots of clients who eventually become organized but still are a bit messy. The systems are in place, objects are in order, and time is managed but basically tidying up isn't a big priority. Most importantly, the harder part, organization, is set. It forms the foundation, and allows a person to focus on the pure short-term maintenance tasks like cleaning the toilet or doing laundry.



You can't clean everything if you can't find it, if it is not filed, if there are piles or random items pushed in closets or are avoiding overstuffed drawers. Your house will never be totally clean if you don't remove boxes of stuff, throw away unwanted objects or empty out your junk drawer. The clean house may look clean from all internal appearances, but the closets might be filled to the brim, the shelves have an assortment of objects, and residents can't find what they need when they want it.

Decluttering reduces the inventory you have to work with, work around, and clean. So think long-term!

Mark Your Calendar:
 "Clutter Awareness Week" begins tomorrow (3rd wk of March)

Organizing Checklists

You often find organizing tips for everyday life. Here

are some things that need attention less often but are still important, courtesy of HGTV.com.

MONTHLY

Bill Paying—Pay bills once or twice a month or set up automatic payments for recurring bills such as the mortgage, utilities and credit cards.

Paperwork — File paid bills in a filing system. Update your designated file for receipts pertaining to taxes and deductions.

Bulk Shopping — Make a bulk shopping trip. Buy household items such as paper goods, cleaning supplies and toiletries. Purchasing these standard items on a monthly basis will streamline weekly shopping.

Calendar — Review the calendar at the beginning of each month to plan for upcoming events or gift purchases.

QUARTERLY

Clothing — Sort clothing and eliminate unworn items, items that don't fit or are out of style. Store, discard or donate.

Toys — Have regular toy purging sessions with/without your children to eliminate items that are no longer age appropriate, as well as broken or unused toys.

Magazines & Catalogs — Go through catalog piles and other miscellaneous papers to determine the ones to file or to recycle.

Garage — Organize tools, gardening and seasonal items. Tidy up sheds after the season.