



Here's this month's edition with organizing and re-design ideas.



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"Good order is the foundation of all good things" - Edmund Burke

Just Say No to Junk Drawers

A word on junk drawers...NO. None. Zip.

And now I'll tell you why. When you have spaces that hold no specific function, the items contained within have no specific identity. *There are no parameters or rules for what goes in or what doesn't.* Because there is the possibility that anything *could be* in there, you have to check that spot if you're looking for something and cannot find it.



"No", you say, "their common element is that they're junk!" Just like I advise clients not to label things 'miscellaneous' -- it is just another way not to organize something. You are not allowed to organize items by their disorganization!

But, what do you do with

that drawer in your kitchen or bin in your basement that is full of odds and ends?

1. *Dump it out.* Take everything out so it is all visible and the drawer is empty.
2. Take a look at the clean, empty drawer/bin. Can you imagine something else that could go in there that you have always wanted storage for? Ok, back to the stuff.
3. First, throw away anything you want/need to toss.
4. Look at what's left. Any duplicates that you can get rid of?
5. Look at what's left. Group like items together -- i.e. tools together, office supplies together, etc.
6. Look at the groups. How many need to stay in that room or accessible on that floor? Is there a similar group elsewhere that they can join?
7. If you have decided that the remaining items must return to the original drawer/bin (review #2), get a drawer divider or organizer that corrals the items.
8. Change the name from 'junk' drawer to one that better suits the now-organized space, such as 'utility' drawer or 'office supplies'.

~ The only difference between a mob and a trained army is organization. ~
Calvin Coolidge

Real Simple published 99 low-cost organizing ideas, and I went through and transcribed ones that piqued my interest here:

- Rather than a pricey spice rack, label the tops of spice jars and place them in a drawer to easily find what you're looking for.



- Add a hierarchy system to e-mail folders by using an * in front of each label for most used

folders and a Z for those used least.

- Stuff plastic grocery bags inside an empty tissue box for compact storage and easy retrieval.

- Mark the contents of plastic food-storage containers with a dry-erase pen. The "labels" will come off when you wash the items.

- Instead of filling a pretty sham with a pillow stuffer, stow linen sets or pajamas inside

- Waterproof Recycling Bags make it a cinch to divvy up recyclables. The handles let them be carted to the curb easily.



- Install a wire cooling rack on the garage wall, attach hooks to it, and hang tools.

Personal Priorities & Time Management

While having a conversation with a friend about how we spend our time, I realized something about **organizing our priorities**. We were talking about whether she would attend a family event that she wasn't sure about. I said "you either feel obligated to go, or you want to go". If you figure that

out, you'll know the answer as to if you 'should' go or not.

We all face times when we feel like we 'have' to do something -- our mother encourages it and makes us feel guilty, peer pressure prevails and we give in, or our internal dialogue urges us that we can't *not* do it. But then we think: why do something out of obligation or something someone else is saying I should do? Aren't I an adult who can make her own decisions?

It seems there comes a time when you don't care about doing what



you feel obligated to, you just want to go to events that you want to go to. It's *your* life! You don't have to accept every invitation or gathering.

Secondly, if something is important to us, we'll make time for it. For ex., reading is something I really enjoy. I have 2 kids, a business, a house, et al, but I still read all the time. Another person may use time to exercise, cook or shop; we will ultimately make time to do what is important.

If you are not making time for what you want to do, you are essentially making time for other things or other people...it's up to you.

