



# 10 TIPS FOR ORGANIZING YOUR HOME BY LINDA DEPPA

## BONUS

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## 10 Tips for Organizing Your Home

Organizing your home doesn't have to be a herculean task when you follow the advice of certified professional organizer Linda Deppa. She offers 10 practical steps for developing an organizing system in your home and can be of even more service when hired for a consultation. Contact Linda at [linda@unclutterednw.com](mailto:linda@unclutterednw.com).

### 1. Determine Your Learning Style.

An effective organizing system in your home or office isn't just a matter of copying what your mom did. That might work, but only if your learning style is the same. Understanding your personality type, and learning style, leads to an organization system that actually works.

For kinesthetic learners, developing an organizing system requires they do it themselves. Other people need lists and written step by step instructions because they learn by reading. Some people have to write it down, and others just need to hear instructions if their learning style is listening. Being able to identify the learning types of the people in your house can also minimize frustration.

For example, parents organize their children's rooms and get upset when children can't maintain the room. If the room was organized the way the parent's brain works and not the child's, it's going to be an uphill battle to keep it clean. The same dynamic plays out between spouses. Often the wife will set up the kitchen and then get frustrated her husband doesn't do it the way she does it. The reason? He has a different learning style.

A good organizing professional can help you navigate personality types and learning styles to set up systems that work for your entire house.

### 2. Get on schedule.

Evaluate your organizing systems twice a year. Most people think about getting a fresh start in January when they're ready to start new routines. The beginning of the school year provides motivation for parents to purge the house of excess clutter and set up new systems for their kids. Set time aside in January and September to determine if your organization systems are still working for you. It will help you stay on schedule in your home and keep tasks from becoming too overwhelming.

### 3. Face the Challenge

Have you ever had the spare bedroom turn into the "junk room?" The room that's just collecting stuff until you figure out what to do with it? Closing the door and walking away is tempting, but doesn't get you any closer to becoming more organized. Face the challenge. Acknowledge the scope of what you



want to accomplish. Then take a step back and ask for help. A professional organizer can look at the big picture and determine next steps and help you reclaim your space.

#### 4. Start small.

Just like diets, exercise routines and financial planning you need to take small steps that start you moving in the direction of bigger goals. If the goal is to get the entire first floor of the house organized, pick a small space to start, like the hall closet. If that magnitude of that project seems too big, make it smaller by working on just the items hanging in the closet, or just one shelf in the closet. If you're sorting through a stack of paper files, commit to sorting through one inch, or even a half inch, at a time. It doesn't seem like much but small steps get you closer to your goal than you were the day before. If you want to make sure you stay on track with your organizing goals, set a timer for 15 minutes every day and stick with it for three weeks. In less than a month you'll have formed a new habit and you will be several steps closer to reaching your organizing goal.

#### 5. Set up a system.

Make the most of the time you spend organizing by setting up a system that can be used in every room of the house. Before you start cleaning and purging, set up a garbage bag and a separate bag for donations. (Blue IKEA bags work great for this purpose.) Give yourself room to make piles for where items should end up, and allow time to get them to right spot after you're done going through the entire space.

For example, if you're working on the hall closet and discover a coat that should be in your master closet and a screwdriver that should be in the garage, don't stop what you're doing to return the items to their proper place. You'll lose focus and valuable time going from room-to-room in the middle of the project. Make a series of piles and give yourself time to move the piles to their proper places at the end of the day.

You'll minimize the amount of "spider-webbing" you do walking around the house, and maximize the time spent working toward your goal.

#### 6. Use clear containers.

Out of all the organizing options on the market, clear containers provide the best bang for your buck. Here's why – it takes less time for your brain to think about what's in the container if you can see into it. If you opt for dark containers you're losing seconds, or minutes, opening the lid to look in. If your containers are going on exposed shelves, where they will be seen, consider dressing them up a bit with nice labels.



**7. A Lazy Susan isn't lazy at all.**

If you thought a Lazy Susan turntable was just for the kitchen, think again. They're great for any weird cupboard space that limits your access to items at the back and consider using them in linen closets for toiletries, under sinks for cleaning supplies and in the office to keep frequently used items close at hand.

**8. Use your garage space.**

The garage is often the space that suffers most from inefficient organizing systems. Homeowners tend to use flat surfaces to organize garage items and the sprawl that results inside causes cars to be parked outside. The solution? Think vertically. Use storage solutions that you can push against the walls in your garage. Build up, not out. You might need a ladder to reach the Christmas decorations one time a year, but you'll be protecting the investment you made in your vehicles by parking them in the garage.

**9. Move on from memories.**

Memories aren't just stored in photos, or artwork made by your kids. Take a look around your kitchen. You might be surprised how many are stored there as well. For example, are you hanging on to wedding gifts that you never use but can't bear to part with for sentimental reasons? What about things you used when your kids were little, but don't use now that they're in college? And that cooking trend that allowed you to fix it and forget it, when was the last time you used it? Go through the kitchen and reclaim the valuable real estate on your countertops and purge items you no longer use.

**10. Create cooking zones**

After you've rid the kitchen of excess clutter and stuff, make the space more functional by creating cooking zones. For example, group items you need while baking in the same space, and create an area to do your chopping. When you group like items with like items, you'll cut down on unnecessary trips back and forth through the kitchen trying to find what you need. Being better organized saves you time and helps you make the most of the space you have.

Linda Deppa is passionate about organizing and helping her clients become more efficient and relaxed in their spaces. Whether in a business setting or in a home, Linda is extremely dedicated to her clients by offering an assertive approach to any challenge while demonstrating genuine care and concern throughout the process. Linda's energetic personality is equaled with her efficiency and skill. Linda is not only certified in her craft, but she also holds leadership positions with the Seattle chapter of the National Association of Profession Organizers and has been featured on both television and radio. Visit <http://www.unclutterednw.com> for more information or contact Linda directly at 425-478-4664.

