



IN THIS ISSUE, WE WILL DISCUSS:

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- * TIPS FOR A CARNIVOROUS CLOSET
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ORGANIZE YOUR LIFE!

COMBINING TWO HOUSEHOLDS INTO ONE

I have worked with many clients who joined households after getting engaged or walking down the aisle. As you can imagine, this is a huge undertaking. Usually one person moves into the other's house. This means the owner of the home has to make room for his or her new partner—emotionally and spatially. Emotions run wild; people are, after all, giving up huge chunks of their space. If possible, both parties should try to follow the steps below before moving in together. If there is not enough time before the move, you can still follow these steps afterward, but they may take a lot more time. Plus, there won't be as much space for sorting items into piles.

1. Sort it. Regardless of whether you sort before moving or afterward, this is a much-needed process. You should always pare down your items when moving in with another person. One of you will probably be coming from a larger home filled with too many things. Perhaps there is a storage unit as well.

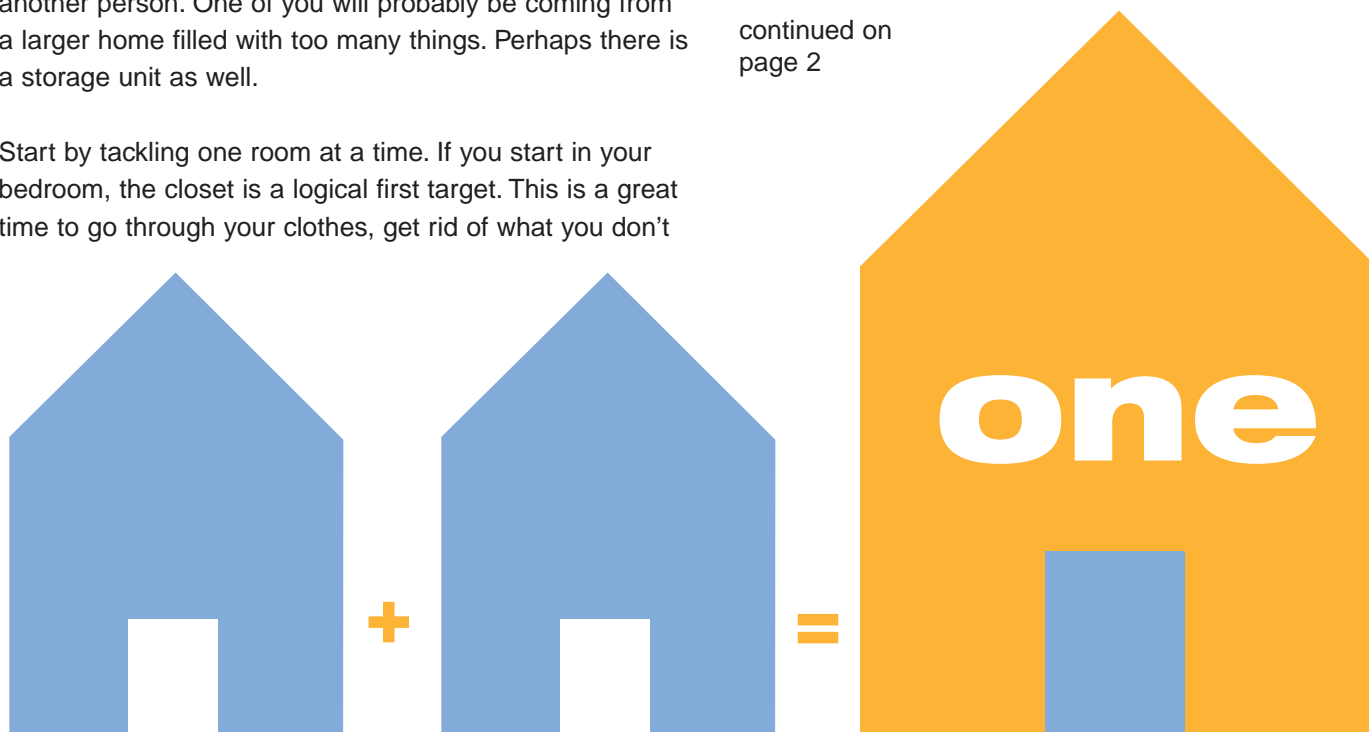
Start by tackling one room at a time. If you start in your bedroom, the closet is a logical first target. This is a great time to go through your clothes, get rid of what you don't

wear anymore and start packing the items you'll keep. If you realize that you are packing up numerous boxes of shoes, handbags, suits and so on, you may need to take a second pass.

If you are sorting after the move, you probably have at least 20 boxes of clothes. This is still a great opportunity for paring down—plus, you'll already have the boxes for the cast-offs!

With every room you finish, even the closet, make it a point to get rid of five boxes immediately. Otherwise, they may mix in with other items in the room, accidentally get unpacked, or stay behind in the garage. (Be sure to re-label your discard boxes so this doesn't happen.) You won't believe how good it feels to let go of all that stuff!

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COMBINING TWO HOUSEHOLDS INTO ONE

2. Sell it. Some of your discards may be worth something. For example, designer clothes, purses, briefcases and wallets. Do you have any rare books? What about figurines, or electronic equipment? Check out http://www.i-soldit.com/your_store.asp, a site that will sell your items for you on eBay for a minimum percentage. Making money is always a great incentive to let go of more stuff!

3. Donate. Another great way to liquidate your excesses is to give your stuff to people who can really use it. Here are a few of the many great places you can donate: Jubilee women's center, National council of Jewish women Seattle, section shalom bayit, Share house, and Dress for success.

4. Throw it out. If you can't donate or sell your stuff, you will have to recycle it. But be responsible about what you are throwing away. Make sure you recycle computer equipment with the right specialty stores. Old, stained furniture that has no hope of reupholstering can go. Take anything that is beyond repair to the dump and get it out of your new house! To be sure you are disposing of it properly, visit the Web site: <http://www.metrokc.gov/dnpr/swd/wdidw/index.asp>

5. Pack it up. If you are still packing and have yet to move in, keep sorting and paring down to the bitter end. Remember: Less is more. As you pack, make sure you and your new housemate agree about where each item is going. This is a really important step, because you may be bringing duplicate dishes, pots or pans into your new home. If you both decide to keep your dishes and discard the ones already in the house, make sure you label your boxes by content and intended destination. Try to pack likes with likes as much as possible.

6. Communicate. Make sure your partner makes room for you. Already living in the house doesn't exempt him or her from paring down belongings as well. Remember, the more space your partner makes for you in your new home, the easier the transition will be.

I cannot stress enough the importance of communicating what you are bringing into the home. This is as true with a house that is new to both of you as it is if one of you moves in with the other.

7. Measure. As you decide what to keep, measure it to make sure it will fit in the new cabinets. This goes for everything, even dishes. This might seem over the top, but if the new kitchen cabinets are too shallow for your dishes, that's one less box to pack. Below is a list of other items to measure:

- doorways
- furniture
- cabinets
- closets

8. Storage. Once you move everything in, reexamine your storage solutions. For example, you may suddenly have two sets of dishes, one you can use for dinner parties, and the other for every day use. You'll need a shelf separator to maximize the space in your kitchen cabinets. There also may be more holiday decorations or tools to store properly in the garage. You may need another shelving unit. After unpacking, take stock of what still has no home or doesn't have an ideal storage spot and figure out a solution like the examples above.

9. Closet design. After you move your clothes into the bedroom, consider the design of the closet. You may need to reconfigure it, especially if there is no system, just a wooden bar that's sagging in the middle. Look at your clothing and determine what kind of closet would work best for you and your partner. For example, do you both fold clothes, or hang them? Does one of you hang more than fold? If so, fill one half of the closet with shelves and double-up the hanging bars on the other half. Just make sure that all your clothes fit into whatever design you choose! However, if your clothes don't fit the closet before you redesign it, I would suggest two things: Toss out more clothes, and get a dresser.

10. Pre-plan. Before you move in, plan the layout of each room with your partner. There will be fewer discrepancies later. This will also help you feel less overwhelmed by the whole process. Create a realistic to-do list to make yourself feel like you are in control of the situation. If possible, give yourself at least a month so you aren't rushing around frantically. Delegate some tasks, such as the actual moving in, packing and setting up of stuff. Finally and most importantly, remember that at the end of the day, it's all just stuff!

TIPS FOR A CARNIVOROUS CLOSET

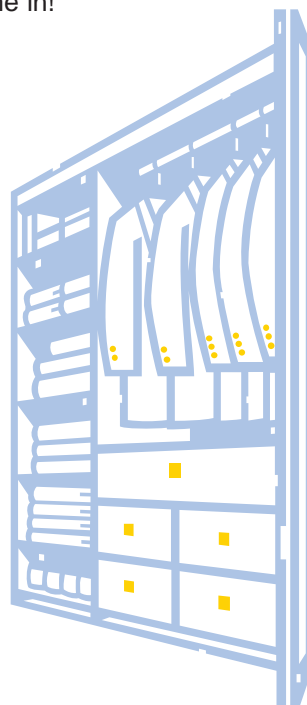
A client of mine was lamenting the disorganized ways of her teenage son. I asked her for an example. She said, "Even the easiest thing, like organizing his shirts and pants in the closet by color, he ignores." I had never thought of that, putting red clothes together, then green, then black. But while this is a great idea for some, it may not work for others.

I asked her son how he used his closet on a day-to-day basis. Basically he said, "I have my favorite clothes, and the rest I don't wear. I can never find the ones I like, so I throw the clothes I don't want to wear on the floor. When my mom asks me to clean my room, I toss the clothes that were on the floor into the dirty hamper. My mom ends up coming in and putting my clothes away for me, and the same cycle starts again." I suggested we start by getting rid of the clothes he doesn't like. Of course, there were some disdained items that we had to keep for special events, such as weddings. But after weeding out the rest, we agreed upon a new closet design.

The closet design was fairly simple: We knew he would never really fold his clothes neatly, so we settled on clothes bins. One side had shelves for his bins, while the other was reserved for his hanging

clothes. Since he doesn't have many dress clothes, we minimized that space, leaving more room for the shelves.

Sometimes all you need to do is talk out the organization problem to find a solution. With a teenager, you may need to have an outside source come in!



ATTEND A CLASS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON WOMEN'S CENTER

Managing Your Time: \$35

Instructor: Leslie Straka

PRO-01-063

Wednesday, July 12; 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Time spent in this class will repay itself every day for the rest of your life, as you learn the secrets of managing your time effectively. This class stresses goal setting, prioritization, paper management, and the miraculous art of delegation. When you're finished, you'll have the tools to reclaim two and a half hours of precious time each week. Just imagine what you'll be able to do!

Location: Johnson Annex, Rm 110

Conquering Paper: \$35

Instructor: Leslie Straka

PRO-02-063

Wednesday, July 19; 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Do you pile instead of file? Are you sick of your coworkers commenting on your disorganized desk? Have you tried one or more organizational systems that didn't work? This life-changing class will help you learn to create your own filing system that will conquer paper problems once and for all. The class focuses on proven methods for improving your space and your productivity. Instead of teaching strict rules, it empowers you to build the system that will work best for you. When you use the skills you develop in this class, you'll find that you're better at your job, you have more free time, and your stress level is lower.

Location: Johnson Annex, Rm 110

CLASSES FILL UP QUICKLY! CALL 206.685.1090 TO REGISTER.



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ANSWERS TO OFFICE WOES

Dear Leslie,

Both my offices have piles of paper several inches thick. I want to put things away, but a) whenever I come into my office, I always have other tasks, and b) I know I won't be able to figure out what to do with everything. In fact, I asked my husband if one of these days, he could help me when I'm stuck by suggesting places to put my papers. Both offices are embarrassingly pathetic. Please help me by bringing me some order.

First of all, I think it is a fantastic idea to have your husband make suggestions on how to organize your office. However, he needs to have the following qualities to make it work: Nonjudgmental, organizing abilities, and patience. If he has all of these qualities, you are in great shape.

Secondly, neither you, nor your office, is pathetic. You are not alone with the paper problem. Many people have problems with paper. Usually when people stack piles of paper on the desk, they think visually. The reason paper stays put is because they fear they won't ever find it again if they put it away. I suggest setting up a system that supports your visual style. Here are some great products:

- Pendeflex easy view filing kit:
<http://tinyurl.com/f3te9>
- magnetic bulletin board:
<http://tinyurl.com/ebbu4>
- Large calendar
- Binders
- Checklists—printed largely
- Desk blotters
- Desktop file holders
- Color-coded calendars—this can be done with Outlook

So next time you move on to your next task, you'll have several safe, visually memorable places to put your piles of paper.