

ORGANIZE YOUR LIFE!



IN THIS ISSUE, WE WILL DISCUSS:

8 WAYS TO PREP FOR SPRING!
ORGANIZING A TOY ROOM ON A BUDGET
COMMUNICATION
PRIORITIZING



WELCOME SPRING!!!

8 WAYS TO PREP FOR SPRING!

1. Dry clean your fall/winter coats and sweaters

Keep them in the plastic bags to protect them from moths and other bugs that love proteinaceous fibers. Be sure to take your comforter to the cleaners as well – it is due for a cleaning!



2. Switch your wardrobe from fall/winter to spring/summer!

Take your now dry cleaned sweaters, wool pants, and other heavier clothes and put them into plastic tubs. Bring out your shorts, tee-shirts and summer pjs! This will allow you more room in your closet. It is also a great time to get the dust bunnies that were under your hung clothes!

3. Take all of your winter sports equipment and get it repaired

Do your skis need waxing? How is the binding doing? Do you have a place for them in your garage? If not, it may be time to reorganize your garage, or get used of dusty, unused equipment. And if something needs replacing for next year, now is a good time to find sales or secondhand gear!

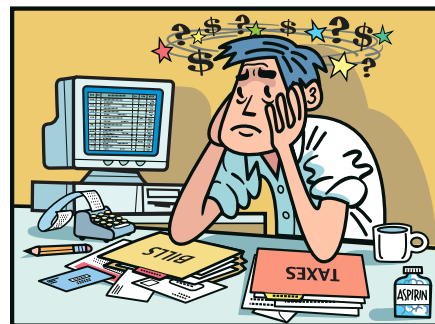
4. Weed your yard

Yes your yard can look cluttered with weeds! It is a great way to get sunshine-supplied vitamin D. Plus, you won't be embarrassed to have your friends over for that spring barbecue you have been planning.

5. Clean out your car and have it detailed

This is a great thing to do. You will be amazed what you find, old gum and cough drops, Kleenex, receipts you may need for tax purposes, business cards, the bottle of wine you were supposed to take to a friend's dinner, and finally items you intended to donate, but never got around to it. Having your car detailed is a nice indulgence too; it comes back looking as good as new, and the treatment adds life to your car's paint job.

6. File your taxes!



The tax deadline for getting your taxes mailed and completed is **April 15th!** Be sure to send in your taxes or file an extension.

This year you can shred old tax returns from 1998 or before – unless you are non-for-profit.

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8 WAYS TO PREP FOR SPRING & FALL!

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7. Wipe out all of your cupboards

You will need to empty your cupboards first – a perfect time to get rid of what you don't use! Don't keep mismatched glasses and plates – if that is all you have splurge for a dish set from Ikea. Vacuum out the cabinet and replace the paper lining on the bottom with something clean.



8. Go through your bathroom drawers & medicine cabinet

I guarantee there are dated materials in there. Get rid of the old meds and pharmacological items to make room for the stuff that's now sitting on your counter tops. You can create three bins:

- The first one should be for medicines, both prescription and non-prescription. Remember to check if it's expired!
- The second one should be for first aid, including antiseptic, band aids, Neosporin, and rubbing alcohol.
- The third one is for major injury treatment– like ace bandages, ankle wraps, air casts and metal finger protectors.

This helps you get everything where you need it. The bins can be stored in drawers or under the sink, but the contents won't be destroyed if there's a leak!

ORGANIZING A TOY ROOM ON A BUDGET

Recently I finished organizing a toy room. I had a blast and discovered fantastic ways to organize inexpensively. First of all, instead of purchasing new bins and buckets look around your house and pantry. The large plastic bears that house animal crackers are a great tool for organizing small items, such as Legos, puzzle pieces, alphabet magnets, and crayons. If you have more than one, teddy bears could be the theme of the toy room.

Ikea has really great toy storage as well. They carry mesh bags that are collapsible: <http://tinyurl.com/4zfwz> – perfect for outdoor balls, stuffed animals or dress up clothes. Ikea's wooden drawers: <http://tinyurl.com/6pe64> are a great way to organize smaller items, such as Barbie's hair brushes and shoes, or minuscule army men. In Good Things for Organizing (Good Things with Martha Stewart Living), she took the wooden drawers from Ikea and spray painted them with chalk board spray paint: <http://tinyurl.com/6z4fc>. She wrote the contents in chalk. This is a brilliant way to organize toys, especially since children outgrow toys. This is a time saver; you don't have to remake labels. All you need

is an eraser, and a piece of chalk! A great way to organize their craft supplies is with Ikea's inexpensive tubs – they come in all sizes and shapes and range in price starting at \$2.99 for three small lidded ones: <http://tinyurl.com/63zxs>

The small lidded bins are great for paint brushes, pens, and pencils.

There is also a great bench – for action figures:

<http://tinyurl.com/3kfuj>

As well as a small table that holds items:

<http://tinyurl.com/69xzm>

Another great storage container for small items is either zip lock storage containers or baby wipes. I suggest removing the stickers and putting the container through the dishwasher first!



COMMUNICATION

Usually, I am a person that likes to get things done immediately. I don't like to procrastinate. When a task needs to be done I am on it... well, most of the time.

Last week, I realized I needed a new razor blade to scrape the burned bits off of our glass stove top. I bought a box of razor blades, but later that week when I went to find them, they'd gone missing. It turns out that my husband had put away the groceries, and I had no idea where he put them. Because we are both busy I didn't get around to asking him to show me where he stored them for four days! When I finally got my act together, I had a flash of empathy for many of my clients. One of their most common problems is exactly this: they want to accomplish something, but they can't because they don't know where a critical thing is. And as I discovered, the missing item is often not missing to everyone... someone knows where it is!

How do you keep your stuff from getting in the way of your work? Here's five simple tips.

1

Communicate, communicate, communicate

Work together as a household to decide where to put things. When you get something new, take a minute to tell the other adults in the household where you're putting it. Also, be sure not to put away someone else's things unless you know for sure where they expect them to be. Don't assume that everyone puts their shoes in the closet... in fact, if you want to hide my husband's shoes where he'll never find them, the closet is your best bet.

2

Make a master list

For long-term storage items, like files, create a file that lists where everything is. This can be an Excel spreadsheet, or just a sheet of paper. That way, in the event of an unexpected emergency, you can find things. I once had a client whose husband became deathly ill. She had to find his last will and testament and had absolutely no idea where it was. Fortunately, he recovered and was able to tell her where it was. If his health became worse, this could have become a serious problem!

3

Use labels on shelves

I know this sounds a little nerdy, but you can actually use very stylish labels. They don't have to be on the outside of a cupboard. This is a great tool for grocery shopping. Then one of you can put the groceries away and know where they go! This is especially helpful for the visual person or the chronically disorganized. It is also a great way to have the kids help out!

4

Check before purchasing

If you are out shopping and you see the brand new set of dishes, or a new drill you have to have, you go ahead and buy them right? WRONG! If you are not with your spouse/partner, you should check first. If you don't, you may well wind up with a double of whatever it is you're looking at, when you discover there's already one around the house. Also, remember you are sharing the space. Maybe you really don't have room for it. Perhaps your partner has another brand in mind that would fit better in the space you have? The bottom line is, you don't know until you ask!

5

Don't accept free gifts

I have heard constant complaints from clients and friends that their spouse/partner accepts freebies from friends and family, which fills up all their available storage space. Again, always talk about it first! I had one client who accepted a large kitchen appliance without talking with his wife first. As a result they had no room for it in the kitchen and until they met me it stayed collecting dust on the floor of the kitchen (it was later donated).



PRIORITIZING

How does one know what to prioritize and what to put on the back burner? When you first get a task, it always seems like it's urgent. Old tasks always seem to be able to wait a little longer. And fun things always seem to come before boring ones! For this reason, it's important to think about prioritizing as an exercise by itself—sit down and think about how your to-do items need to get done. Don't just pick things off the list hoping they'll get done in the right order.

First of all, sit down for a few minutes every morning and figure out what needs immediate attention and what is less important. Keep in mind that this means that your priorities will change daily. For example, if you are working on a project due in May but your employer needs something done ASAP the project will have to be put on hold.

This also applies to your personal life. If you have dinner plans with friends and your child gets ill, your priority will move from the dinner party to nursing your child back to health.

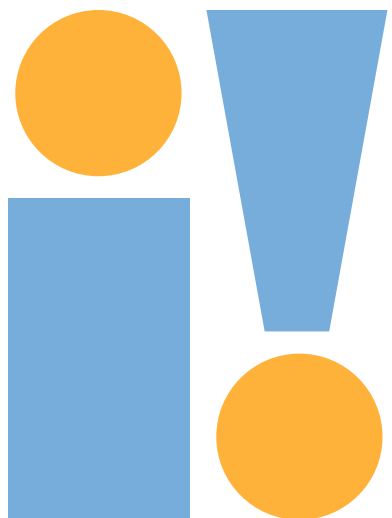
Taking this into account, plan your day accordingly. For example, if you have a presentation due at 12pm tomorrow, work on that right away. Meanwhile, less pertinent phone calls can wait. The key is to look at

your to do list every day, as well as your projects you are working on. Be realistic and only pick five things to do that day and place a number by them one being the most important, and five being the least. That way if you don't get around to number five, you can move that to your next day. Keep in mind it is ok and normal to have more than five things to do, but these are the ones that are the most pertinent. (For example, you will still have to do laundry, make dinner, shower, exercise, and spend time with your kids and so on).

Here is an example:

- 4 Call Arizona for job enquiry
- 3 Send resume to Carolina
- 5 Call library regarding book on hold
- 2 Edit resume
- 1 Write standard cover letter

Keep doing this every evening or the beginning of each day and before you know it you will have mastered prioritizing!



PersonWORKS

