

PersonWORKS

IN THIS NEWS LETTER, WE WILL DISCUSS...

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- 5 ways to get your kids organized

Tip Of The Month

If you live in Seattle, you may not have a garage or a large back yard. If you have a deck, however, there is precious space being wasted underneath that could be used for storage. Here is a very simple do-it-yourself project to create a storage space underneath your deck that can be completed within a few hours with the help of a buddy or spouse.

All you need is the following;

- Corrugated plastic roofing:
<http://tiny.cc/tpcmN>
- Brackets or wood for spacers
- "Fabral" 1" woodfast w/w oxy screws
- Drill
- Saw to cut the roofing

At Home Depot they provide wooden spacers or metal brackets which you can screw to the bottom of the deck joists; you can then screw the plastic roofing to the spacers. These spacers vary in thickness and have the same curvy profile as the sheet. Use 2" x 2" x (however many feet wide your deck is) wood to create a slant so that the roof can drain properly. Just be sure to use spacers to keep water from collecting against the joists.

The middle spacer should be thin and each one next to it should be a bit bigger creating a pitch for the water to run off to each side. This roof is clear but I have seen it in other colors. Use screws with rubber washers to avoid leaks and silicon inside any seams:
<http://tinyurl.com/ogI25b>

If you decide you don't want to do it yourself, here is the website for a company that can do it for you: <http://www.underdeck.com/>



Estate Management — taking care of things after a loved one has passed away

Losing someone you love is incredibly difficult; having to go through that person's belongings can be one of the hardest things of all. Perhaps surprisingly, it can also be a wonderful experience – it all depends on how you approach the task at hand. I know a great lady that lost her mom – a woman who was a very flashy dresser – so she and her sister decided to sort her closet by trying on each item as a way of celebrating her life. They decided to keep a few items and the rest went to a charitable organization. While the experience was definitely bittersweet, it was much less painful than it could have been. Below is a list of organizing steps to help you through this process.

Step 1

Determine what is being kept and what is going to family members. Then pick items designated for donation or to be put on Craig's list. This is the hardest step, not only having to go through your loved ones' items after they are gone, but also not knowing what to do with all of their treasured belongings; it really can bring all the grief home. Be sure that you have someone with you when you are going through this process.

Step 2

Mark all items that are going to family. If possible, pack them up and send them to the family members with a quick personal note. For photos, I suggest the following: scan the individual photographs, and send them out to all family members. Give the originals to the eldest member of the surviving family. If they were photos given as gifts, ask the gift givers if they would like the photos back, if not they can be given to someone else in the family, or as a last resort, thrown away.

Step 3

Pack up what is being kept. Be sure to make an inventory of the boxes so that you can keep track of items; this way, when you are ready to unpack them you won't have to go through the initial painful process. It will, instead, be like opening memories of that loved one – still sad, but hopefully less so.

Step 4

Have someone else take away the donations and other items. I have worked with many people who have lost loved ones, and taking those special items to a charitable organization was often terribly painful. Instead, have these boxes picked up or ask a friend to deliver them for you. If you aren't ready to let go of the items right away, pack the items and mark the boxes carefully. Tread lightly here; you don't want to end up with a household full of boxes that you are never able to get rid of and these boxes of cherished items can accumulate over time.

Step 5

List items to donate or sell on Craigslist and people can come and pick them up directly. This is particularly helpful when there is furniture that needs to go. (If it isn't expensive furniture, list it for free, it will go within the day.)

There are also situations that are too confusing, painful, or just plain overwhelming. If that is the case, having someone outside the circle of loved ones, like a professional, might bring a much needed sense of objectivity and relief.



How to Organize Your Kid's Artwork

When your kid brings home his or her very first piece of artwork, it is really special, even if it isn't accompanied by, "I made this just for you". So our tendency is to keep every single thing our children make, regardless of what it is. The reality is, if we kept every single piece of artwork, we would need a warehouse! Below are some guidelines for how to store some of the artwork, but not end up in debt from paying a monthly bill for a storage facility.

STORING

Portfolio case

<http://tinyurl.com/yaaohyy>

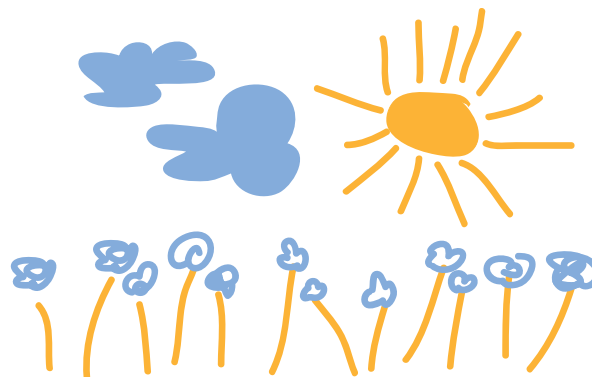
or

<http://tiny.cc/zyn7a>

or

Acid free boxes for each child

<http://www.organize.com/scrapbookboxg.html>



Pick your favorites

Create an art show wall

Photograph it

Scan it all

However you decide to store and keep your child's artwork, use one of the above suggestions and you will be on your way to a less cluttered home.

5 Ways to Get Your Kids Organized

Having kids is the most wonderful thing that happens in your life. It also changes your life completely. Not only routines, but your house itself! That's why keeping on top of it from the get go is so important. Below is a list of ways to get and keep your kids organized.

1. INVOLVE YOUR KIDS

- Have them go through their belongings with you
- Have them help to decide where they want to donate things, or if they want to sell their lovingly used items at a garage sale.

2. LABEL THINGS CLEARLY

- Label makers are great for this.

3. USE KID FRIENDLY BINS

- <http://tinyurl.com/yk5xuxw>
- Don't use storage system with sharp edges while children are 3 or under, they could injure themselves, instead use plastic bins. A major plus is that you can also see what is inside.

4. IF YOUR CHILDREN ARE SCHOOL AGE, OBSERVE HOW THEY CLEAN UP AT SCHOOL.

For example, my friend's child's preschool sings a song during clean-up time to make it fun. Try this at home, perhaps using a different song, since you are in a different place!

5. MAKE SURE CHILDREN'S CLOSET RODS ARE AT THEIR HEIGHT;

for example, make sure they can reach their hanging clothes. Otherwise, they will stand on their tiptoes and pull down all of their clothes trying to get dressed in the morning. A great place to get a closet organizer that suits your child's needs is at: <http://tinyurl.com/ykxz5ox>.

Just remember to involve your kids and have fun with it. Also kids will be kids and embrace that!

