

# The Top 10 Best Organizing Tips

Here are 10 of our favorite organizing tips at *Absolutely Organized*. They work!

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## **Keep it where you use it.**

Clutter occurs when items accumulate in the places people use them, but where there is no designated place to store them in that area. For example, if you like to listen to CDs while you cook, keep your CDs in a rack in your kitchen near your CD player. This will avoid the otherwise inevitable "pile" of CDs on the counter.

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## **Keep similar items together.**

We waste both space and time looking for things when they are put away randomly. Define specific areas for specific types of items. For example, in the garage you might have specific areas for lawn and garden supplies, automotive supplies, sports equipment, and tools.

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## **Sort your mail every day.**

Look at each piece of mail and decide what is the next thing you need to do with it. Remember the acronym **RAFT** to help you sort your paperwork: **R**efer it to someone else, **A**ct on it, **F**ile it, or **T**rash it. Take care of the R's, F's, and T's immediately. Schedule time in your planner to do the A's.

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## **Use only one calendar or planner.**

Write *all* appointments and to-do lists in it. Keep it with you at all times. If you also keep a family wall calendar at home, schedule time every week to coordinate calendars.

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## **"Think Stewardship".**

Part of our responsibility to the things we own is to know when it is time to let them go. If you don't wear it, use it, or love it, then it is time to pass it on. There are many charitable organizations that can use your unneeded clothing and household items. Your things and papers that have served you well, but are no longer of use to anyone, deserve a proper burial at the recycling center or landfill.

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## **Get things off of the floor.**

Your room or storage area will appear to be (and actually will be) much more organized if you don't have items lying on the floor. If you must use the floor because there simply isn't enough shelf or closet space, place the items in labeled containers.

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## **Don't buy containers until you know what items they need to contain.**

We're fortunate to be living at a time when storage containers in all shapes and sizes are readily available. Unfortunately, many people make the mistake of buying these nice, new containers before they know what they intend to put in them, or where they will put the containers when they are full. They frequently end up with a pile of empty containers next to their existing piles of clutter.

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## **Keep a Master Task List.**

Using a spiral notebook, a paper-based calendar/planner, a computerized list, or a PDA (such as a Palm Pilot), keep one (and *only* one) master task list. This will be your listing of everything you think of that you need to do. You may want to divide it into sections for Personal and Business tasks, or you may combine them into the same section. This will be your "menu" of tasks from which you will choose how to spend your time each day. Avoid making notes on small slips of paper. Write *everything* requiring action on your part in your Master Task List.

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## **Plan each day the night before.**

Before you leave the office, or before you go to bed, look at your Master Task List and make a separate Daily List of the tasks you plan to accomplish tomorrow. Then rank them by order of importance. Tomorrow, begin the day by working on your #1 priority, then #2, etc. Don't worry if you don't get to complete all of the tasks on your Daily List. You will have at least accomplished the most important tasks. Cross the task off of your Master Task List only after you have completed it.

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## **Strive for a balanced life.**

Decide which people and activities are of most value to you. Write down those categories (such as Family, Work, Sports/Leisure, Home, Volunteering, and Self-Care). Over the course of a week, be sure to allow for time in each of your important categories.

*Absolutely Organized* has lots more tips, techniques and proven processes to help you organize your home, your business and your life. Just contact us at [info@absolutely-organized.com](mailto:info@absolutely-organized.com) or call us at 410.329.3300.