

ORGANIZING & CLEANING SEMINAR[®]

by Kimberly Bignon, Professional Organizer

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NIV)

How we utilize our time reveals our priorities. A balanced life of order results in personal peace, a functional family, a growing career, and opportunity.

“Organizing is what you do before you do something, so that when you do it, it’s not all mixed up.” Christopher Robin, from Winnie the Pooh

The God of order. God used order to create the world, day by day. When He finished his plan, He pronounced that *it is good*. He used planning in Noah’s adventure and told Moses to take inventory of his resources before he began the journey. The Scripture tells us plainly that order is a characteristic of our God and one that He has planned for your life as well.

New opportunities can be lost because of a lack of focus, because we miss dates, or because we can’t find information that we once had. To allow God to be the Provider He longs to be in your life, inventory your resources, plan, and organize clutter. Then you will know what it is that you need and what you have that can be better utilized.

Organizing is as simple as **S.P.A.C.E.**

Sort
Purge
Assign a Home
Contain
Equalize (or maintain)

Sorting. This step in the process of organizing is the “big mess” step. Sort everything room to room and closet to closet to really see what you have! Putting like things together will help you chase down multiples. **Think:** How many _____ do I really need?

Purge. If you are busting at the seams in your clothes closet or your child toy boxes, it’s time to get rid of some of stuff! Everything goes into three boxes or areas in each room:

- Throw away
- Give away or sell
- Keep

Assign. The third step in the process of organizing is assigning a home to everything. Decide where things should live by asking:

1. How often do I use it?
2. Where it is used most often (Does a child need to reach it? Do I need to see it?)
3. Space Availability (Do I need to make a space for it?)
4. Who uses this?

Contain. Once you have sorted and purged, you will end up with baskets, plastic boxes, shoeboxes and other useful storage containers. Use existing supplies before embarking on a container shopping trip to avoid adding more “stuff” to your home. Ask yourself:

1. What kind of container do I need for this item?
2. What size do I need?
3. How many do I need?

Equalize. The final step in organizing is the maintenance process. Once you have sorted it, thrown it out or assigned a home, contained it specifically and functionally, you keep it under control by revisiting your processes on a quarterly basis.

Always include your children in the order of your home. Children love structure, and they need to feel ownership of your home. Rather than arguing over cleaning up their rooms, instill the habit of order through example. Remember that chaos, clutter or order that your children learn to live in and live by is the order, chaos or clutter that they will take into the world with them as they grow up. Show them the value of order.

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

To add order to your life, trust God with the needs of your life. Ask for encouragement and wisdom and make changes in your habits and schedules to create time you need.

ROOM-BY-ROOM CLEANING STEPS

Some of these are daily steps and others weekly. Do what works for your schedule, but remember that regular cleaning touch ups up save a lot of time and effort. Involve your children in as many tasks as possible. This instills pride in the home and teaches responsibility. You can print out the list and assign names/days to the tasks.

Bedroom:

- Make your bed every morning. A rumpled bed makes even a clean room look messy.
- Pick up all clothing. Clean stuff gets folded or hung, dirty stuff in the hamper.
- Put away jewelry, hand lotion and other items on the nightstand.
- Check the floor. Vacuum or dry mop high-traffic area as needed.

Bathroom:

- Wipe the sink basin clean after you've used it.
- Buff water spots from mirror and faucet.
- Wipe the toilet seat and rim with disinfecting spray. (see below)
- Sprinkle Comet w/bleach inside the bowl and use a toilet brush to scrub weekly.
- Spray the shower, tub and shower door/curtain with homemade shower spray.
- Replace any makeup-stained towels or washcloths with clean ones.
- Check the floor. Sweep or dust mop as needed.

Kitchen:

- Empty the dishwasher if it's full.
- Empty the sink of any dirty dishes, and give the sink a quick scrub.
- Get your kitchen sponge wet and microwave it for 2 minutes.
- Spray and wipe down counters and appliance fronts.
- Corral any clutter into a neat pile to deal with later in the day.
- Use a damp cloth to wipe up any splatters on the floor.
- Toss the dirty dishtowel in the wash, and put out a clean one.
- Give the floor a quick sweep.

Living and/or Family Room:

- Straighten all pillows and blankets on the sofa.
- Neaten magazines, books, games and DVDs that are sitting out.
- Wipe away any obvious crumbs and fingerprints from table tops.
- Check the floor. Use a carpet sweeper, broom, or vacuum for messes.

Homemade Cleaning Solutions You Can Make with Dollar Store Ingredients:

- For fiberglass, tile and glass showers: Combine 1 part white vinegar, 3 parts water in spray bottle. Shake and use daily to prevent stains; weekly to scrub clean.
- For marble and natural stone shower: 1 part rubbing alcohol, 3 parts water
- For shower mold: 3 parts hydrogen peroxide, 1 part water. Hydrogen peroxide degrades quickly when exposed to light. To keep that from happening, mix it directly in the hydrogen peroxide bottle then screw a spray nozzle on and you're good to go.