



The Organizing Authority®

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GET A JUMP ON SPRING —ESCAPE FROM THE CLUTCHES OF CLUTTER & ORGANIZE YOUR HOME AND OFFICE

MT. LAUREL, N.J. — Americans have a lot of stuff. Whether at home or in the office, we often keep papers, clothes and other items we don't like, need or use. This spring, the National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO) is offering tips on organizing your home and office so you can combat clutter!

Why Get Organized in Spring?

- **Spring is a hot time for real estate.** According to realtors, now is the ideal time to sell a home because families wanting to move before the school year begins often start looking in the spring. But beware; potential buyers do not want to tunnel through the clutter clogging your hallways, closets and garage just to view your home. Homes that are organized and clutter-free sell much faster.
- **Tax season is here.** No matter how much you dread filing your taxes, you know that to ensure you get the best refund possible and prevent surprise visits from the IRS, you must keep your paperwork in order. If you were not so careful in the past, now is the time to start planning for next year.
- **Why not?** The payoffs are great — increased productivity and an improved sense of well-being and more control of your life. Organized people save time and money and avoid stress and frustration.

Reap the Benefits of Being Organized

A February 2008 NAPO consumer study found that 55 percent of the respondents would save upwards of 16 minutes to one hour a day if they were more organized. That translates into anywhere from two to 15 days a year being wasted!

“Getting organized is something that people know is beneficial, not just because of the obvious—saving time and money—but it really helps you save so much energy too,” said NAPO President Standolyn Robertson. “I can't tell you how many people say they feel like a weight was lifted off of them when they finally got organized. They have more energy and feel more positive. Now who couldn't benefit from that?”

Robertson suggests getting a jump-start on getting organized as days get longer and the weather gets warmer. Spend some time designing the systems you need to keep your home and office in order, and then reward yourself with more time and energy to get together with friends and play with your kids and pets outdoors.

Secrets in the Bedroom....

So, now that you have decided to get started, the question remains ... where to begin. NAPO's recent study found that the top three disorganized rooms in the house, in successive order, are the bedroom, garage and home office/den. For married individuals, the garage was the most unorganized, while unmarried respondents cited the bedroom as the number one spot for clutter.

Here are some tips for organizing these rooms:

Bedroom Tips:

- Give away items that are still in good condition but you no longer need, to local charities, friends, family, and others in need.
- Decide what you want at your fingertips and what can be hidden away in containers under the bed, on top shelves, or in drawers.
- Closets are one of the major places to store clutter in your bedroom. Go through your closet regularly, and pull out everything you have not worn in the last year. Clothes tend not to improve with age.
- Hang like items together—group shirts together, pants together, dresses, etc.

Garage Tips:

- Determine how you wish to use the space. Is it a workshop? Is it a storage center? Is it a sporting goods center? Is it both? Design a floor plan and stick to it!
- Get rid of things that don't work!
- Sort, purge, and then decide the proper storage containers or fixtures for the treasures that you must keep. Clearly label both the tops and the sides of the containers.
- Consider floor-to-ceiling possibilities for shelving, racks, stackable drawers, hooks and pegboards, and don't forget the rafters.

Home Office/Den Tips:

- Keep only supplies you need on a daily basis on your desktop.
- Create a paper flow system for your incoming documents.
- Use your in box only for items that haven't yet been reviewed.
- Avoid looking at documents and placing them back on the desk. Make a decision about each document and follow through with it.
- Create a filing system for your electronic documents that mirrors the one you have for paper. Sort, file, and purge electronic information regularly.
- Keep the most recent papers in the front of the file. Whenever you open it, the current information will be on top.

Other organizing tips are available at www.napo.net/public/tips.html. Please credit NAPO if you reprint any tips.

Don't Do It Alone: Consider Hiring a Professional Organizer

If getting organized is something you are serious about, you might want to consider hiring an expert. A professional organizer enhances the lives of clients by designing systems and processes using organizing principles and through transferring organizing skills. Professional organizers help individuals and businesses take control of their surroundings, their time, their paper and their systems for life.

To locate one of NAPO's professional organizers in your area, you can use NAPO's free online automated referral network, searchable by ZIP code and organizing specialty at: www.association-office.com/napo/referral/index.cfm.

About NAPO: The premier national association dedicated to the field of organizing, the National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO) is The Organizing Authority®. Formed in 1985 as a not-for-profit professional association, NAPO is dedicated to serving its members through education, networking, industry resources, and promoting the profession to the public. NAPO's mission is to develop, lead, and promote professional organizers and the organizing industry. For more information, visit www.napo.net.

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Editor's Note: To interview a spokesperson from NAPO, contact Alison Dickman at (215) 884-6499.