Katy Home Organizer's

SUMMER SPRINT

Master Closet • Master Bath

Welcome to Organizing @ Home eCourse.

I am so excited you are here!
It is truly my honor to help you get your home organized. After working with hundreds of people in their homes, I know that getting overwhelmed stops all progress. I am proud to bring you a simple solution to your clutter presented in a format designed to keep momentum, so you can keep making progress.

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organizing@home

the basics

organizing@home | the basics

In this section, I will cover the basics of the eCourse:
– How to get the most out of it
– What to expect along the way
– What you can expect from me
– How Long WIll it Take
– Video Chat information

how to get the most out of it?

1. Be Ready to Make Decisions
Getting your home ready organized will require making decisions and using a systematic approach makes doing so a lot easier. Our goal is to get your home organized without making more work for yourself later. Cramming things into closets and under beds will not be part of this program, so get ready to make decisions!

2. Take Before Photos
You might shudder at the thought, but you will thank me when you have a before and after as proof of the work you accomplished – even if it is just to yourself. Who knows, you might even send it to a friend, sister or your mother.
It's OK to brag a little – you will have earned it!

3. Schedule Time to Do the Work
You made the decision to get organized, and that will require your time, and focused time at that. Be sure to set aside a minimum of 2 hours for each segment of the course. The actual time spent will depend on your home and situation, but NOTHING will get done if you do not plan for it. Put it on your calendar!

I can't emphasize these 3 things enough. Make it a priority and make time for it!

what to expect along the way

Set realistic expectations

Depending on how much time you have and your specific circumstances, you may or may not get your home perfectly organized in the estimated time, so it's important to set realistic expectations.
This course will focus on the main spaces most people want organized:
– the entry / hallway
– living room / den
– kitchen
– master closet
Additionally, you'll get information on what organizing supplies are helpful in all these areas, when and how to use them, and where to find them. I offer an estimate on how long it might take you to get the space organized so you can plan accordingly. I also include simple steps to tame your paper dragon in a short ebook on paper management.

You may be able to complete the tasks in the time allotted or you might find it didn't make a dent. Each person comes with a unique set of circumstances. What's important is to make a commitment to yourself to do it and back that up with actions. Scheduling your work times will support this commitment.

what you can expect from me

Remember I said to be ready to make decisions? This is where I help you the most.
I will ask a lot of questions – I call them Reflective Questions – to help you make decisions that are right for you. Taking the time to answer the questions are the key to making real progress. You will be asked to journal as a way to see clearly what the problems are and how best to solve them.

Many of the questions are room specific but you will start to recognize a certain line of questioning and (hopefully) be able to elaborate the questions as needed, or apply them into other areas of the home.

Some of my tips and advice are general enough to apply to various situations because I wanted to keep it simple. Follow my tips and advice as much as you can and you *will* have a more organized home!

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how long will it take?

Plan to spend a *minimum of 2 hours* each day, and as much as 4 hours for some of the bigger areas. Longer if you have a larger space and/or more stuff. Each area has a "How long will it take?" section to give you a point of reference for how long it might take to complete the space but in the end it will totally depend on:
– how much stuff you have
– how much time you have available to organize
– physical stamina, decisiveness, and ability to stay on task
– any "undoing" that takes place in between work sessions
Hey, this is the reality of it! It's better to know this and prepare for it than to go in blind and get overwhelmed.

your assignment

– Find a notebook for journaling.
– Join the private Facebook Group
– Download the ZOOM app
– Put the ZOOM video chat times in your calendar

BE SURE TO JOIN US on our daily ZOOM video calls – check Facebook group for times, or for daily reminders and inspiration text **SPARKLY** to 57711. Summer Sprint ends July 27th.

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the process

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today's focus:

– Before you begin each day
– The systematic approach
– After we Sort & Purge, then what?
– Homework

Throughout the eCourse you will notice a repeating pattern – a systematic approach – that works no matter what area you are working in. Soon you will begin to anticipate the next step in the process.

before you begin working

1) Eat something – you will need to sustain your energy for several hours.
2) Put on your favorite music.
3) Have trash bags and a box or two (or five depending on the space).

Something you will never regret doing before starting any job is to ask your higher power for help and guidance. Just that little request to the Universe* to assist makes a big difference in how quickly solutions arise. I urge you to try it, and then trust it to be so. The Universe always has your back, you just have to invite it in.

the systematic approach

The systematic approach can be broken into 4 parts:
1) Assess & Reflect,
2) Sort & Purge,
3) Organize, and
4) Maintenance

If you get lost in the process, think about what stage you are on. Have you finished sorting, purging and categorizing? Then you probably aren't quite ready to organize. Have you thought through the reflective questions? Then you might not be finished purging. Has it been a few weeks since you organized? You might be ready for some maintenance.

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assess & reflect

No matter what space you are dealing with you are going to start with an Assessment. Assessment is an analytical view of what is going on in the space while remaining objective – be sure to stick to the facts!

Often, clients will just gloss over everything because it can be too visually overwhelming. It's important to step back and look at everything objectively.
– See things for the objects they are, not for what emotions they cause you.
– Be careful to be analytical and not critical. There is no room for judgment in this process. There isn't time for that. If you want to make meaningful progress, remain as detached as possible from whatever negative emotions you may be experiencing. Stay positive and remain objective to stay on task.

sort & purge

You're going to decide the fate of every item in each space. When people ask us where to start, we usually say:
– search for all the trash (and thus revealing all the non-trash)
– remove all the items that do not belong in the room or area (purge)

It's not important where you start, just that you start. Pick a place an go!
Anything that belongs in that room or area can be left in place (or put in a pile/box/table). Focus on things that are leaving and get it out of your way so that all that remains is what you actually want there.

As you make decisions, you will put items into basically two categories: **Keep** and **Go Away**.

As you go through each item to determine its fate, your **Keep** categories will be wide and varied. Some items will get added to similar piles of that item, other things will be the start of a new category altogether. It's common for me to start using one sized box to group items and then have to upgrade because I ran out of room, or vice-versa.

KEEP

The **Keep** category breaks down into these two sub-categories:

Keep / IN – When working with clients, I suggest limiting what stays in the a room or space to things that actually BELONG in there. Assign each space a job and, as much as possible, stick with it. That means nothing unrelated to that space. The exception would be if there is nowhere else for it to be stored and you must keep it there.
The Keep | IN category means you will KEEP it, and it lives in the room or space you're working in.

Keep / OUT – These are things that you must keep, but do not align with the purpose of the room or space. You do not need to know exactly where they will go right now, just that they will not live in the space you are working in. For today, simply put them in a box labeled **Keep / OUT** and continue on with the task at hand.

GO AWAY

Keep / IN =	this room
Keep / OUT =	other room
Go AWAY =	sell /donate /give
Go TRASH =	trash /recycle

GO / AWAY – This category are items that you no longer want but have life left in them and someone else can use them.

Sell: You may decide to sell them at a garage sale, online or at a consignment shop. When selling online, if it takes more than 2 or 3 minutes for you to post in an online garage sale site, save them all until the end of your scheduled work session. You don't want to lose momentum by continually fiddling with your phone.

Donate: When it comes to donations, my rule of thumb is, if it isn't something that you think people would pay money for in a store, then it's probably better off either in a garage sale or in the trash. It must be in sellable condition, or the donation center will throw it out. It can't be broken or be missing parts.

[**Garage Sale**: Garage sale items can be things that still have a little life left, but may not necessarily make the cut at a donation center. Many of my clients don't want to bother with a garage sale, and I understand, it can be a lot of work but it can totally pay off. It goes without saying, but I'll say it anyway, if you are going to have a garage sale, hang onto all the items that were worthy of donating or giving away! Donate and give away after the garage sale.]

Give: You have a specific person in mind already to give it to. In these instances, I suggest you snap a quick photo with your phone and text it to that person on the spot. Just say, *"Hey there! I am organizing my room and getting rid of things I no longer need. Are you interested in this ____?"* It's important you let them know you are working on an organizing project. Stating this will give them a greater sense of urgency in responding, and know it's not time to chit chat (hopefully). They may not reply on the spot, but the underlying expectation would be that you aren't hanging on to it since you are cleaning out the room. Regardless of who it is going to, be sure to give them a deadline for pick up.

GO / TRASH – These are items that can no longer be used or would not sell even at a garage sale. Many items can and should be recycled.

tips for a productive work session

– Schedule time to do the work and stick with it (put it on your calendar)
– Set a timer to go off every 15 -20 minutes to A)mark the passing of time and B)helps to keep you accountable for your time. If you got stuck reminscing the alarm will pull you out of it and remind you to get back on course.
– Stay in the room you are working on until the everything has been sorted and purged OR until the timer goes off. Your time will be whittled away by "putting this away real quick". Stay put and use the box system.
– For best results, set aside a minimum of 2 hours at a time.
– Make quick decisions

then what?

The process of organizing isn't cut and dry, the steps are fluid and overlap, so know that your exact flow might be a little different than what I say here, but it's normal. You might wait until you are completely done organizing the entire room before delivering the **Keep** /**Away** items, in fact I recommend it! However there is no *perfect* way.

When you are finished sorting and purging, it is sometimes necessary to deliver any **Keep**/**Away** items simply because the space it is occupying. When you deliver the items to their destination, don't fall into the trap of having to put them away. If they are easy to put away do it, but if not simply set the items in there and deal with them later. It's important not to get side tracked on another project, but to finish the project you are on. Conserve your energy and stay focused.

then organize!

It's true the process of "organizing" is fluid and a lot of times sorting and purging evolves into organizing without even realizing it. If you haven't started organizing, then it's time to get going. Organizing and what supplies are useful will be covered later.

When you are finished completely, or for the day and you can get donations out of the house right away, do it. Drop it by your favorite charity on your way to the grocery store. If it's for a friend, make a delivery or make plans to meet for coffee and bring it them. Follow through is important here and there's no time like the present. Your project will feel "complete" when this task is completed.

your assignment

Nearly each lesson I will assign "homework". Complete any included worksheets or writing assignments as suggested. Clearing your mind by journaling helps bring focus and clarity to the situation and the worksheets are to help keep you on task.

Action Steps:
– Gather boxes, trash bags and other receptacles to prepare for your first work session so you are prepared and less likely to leave the room

Organizing is more than just moving stuff around to make it look neat,
it's about making decisions and taking action!

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supplies

organizing@home | organizing supplies

today's focus:

– Resourcefulness
– Repurposing
– In-Store Purchases
– Pinspiration

Several of us at Katy Home Organizer have been or still are stay-at-home moms. For many SAHMs that means one income and limits on spending but to get organized you need organizing supplies, they are essential! So when I was a young SAHM I learned to make use of what was around me, and I shopped garage sales too.

resourcefulness

With the multitude of organizing supplies available in stores and online, it's easy for the task to quickly become overwhelming and expensive. Thinking as a professional Organizer reduces the possibility of overbuying and increases your resourcefulness. A simple shift in the way you look at the everyday objects in your home can turn unused items into helpful tools.

Empty Boxes

Why do Organizers love boxes? Because when organizing, *containing* items is important.

When I look at a space to organize, I think "how can I compartmentalize and/or contain these items?" One of the first things I notice is whether there is adequate use of boxes, bins, or drawer dividers.

What kinds of empty box makes for good organizing supplies? Here are some everyday boxes found in all households to consider:

- Tissue boxes: Cut the top off a long box to use in a dresser to hold folded socks or scarves, use square ones as a little trash can on a desk or vanity, and they're also handy in or on a desk to collect receipts.
- Cereal boxes: Cut at an angle like a magazine holder to store notepads, folders, etc., in an office, or cut to be a shallow tray to hold pens, pencils, scissors, etc.
- Snack boxes: When cut down they work well a in desk drawer.
- Nearly any box: Checkbook boxes, cell phone boxes, jewelry gift boxes, business card boxes, shoe boxes in

various sizes meet all kinds of needs. Just imagine the box with all the ends sealed up, look at it from all angles, and think about how it will fit into different spaces or hold different items.

re-purposing

What else do you have around the house that is under-utilized? Plastic shoe-sized boxes are my favorite go-to item. Do you have any that are just holding a random assortment of non-essential items? Could the contents be purged and the box re-purposed?

Baskets

Baskets aren't just for decorations, they can be functional as well. Though they aren't the best solution for all situations, view them as containers to hold a particular type of item or category of items.

This one holds the dog collar, leash, and pet meds. When it's time to walk the dog, this client has no trouble remembering remember the leash is in the basket.

Bookshelves

Most people only think to use these for books, but they are highly versatile. I have used them to hold towels and washcloths when no linen closet was available, and in closets to hold shoes, purses, or clothing.

Do you have any under-utilized bookshelves in your home that can be re-purposed?

store purchases

Where an Organizer shops depends on the specific supplies needed for a project. At Katy Home Organizer, I have my trusted products I turn to again and again, which most often are found at the Container Store or Target.

I suggest to first use whatever you have on hand, but if you must buy, choose clear storage whenever possible so that the contents are clearly visible. It's important to see what you have.

Here is where you can find the best prices for certain go-to items:

Clear is Better!

As an organizer I know clear is better. If you are one of those "out of sight – out of mind" kind of people, clear is preferred. But clear doesn't have to be ugly. Clear can be calming. It may not be cute and that's OK. Sometimes cute can be a distraction, it can obscure, and it can be inefficient.

my favorites

This next section are my tried and true containers that I use over and over and over and over. Most can be found locally, either at the Container Store or Target and for these containers only, I'm including dimensions to help you plan.

For all of the containers I share my opinion about them, what I like and don't like to help you make an educated choice or re-think about things you might already own. No dimensions are included because there are so many similar styles to choose from.

The first items are from the Container Store. *I love* ❤ the Container Store and for the record I do not make ANY money by endorsing the Container Store! I just really trust and believe this product. Most people think the Container Store has expensive products, but these boxes are competitively priced and are of superior quality.

the Our Clear Storage Boxes™

What I like about them:
- They have the most vertical sides I've found. These are the most rectangular and sturdiest small to mid-sized clear containers you will find, and I've looked! Cheap clear boxes at the dollar store are fine if you've got them, but once you try these, you'll never go back. The vertical sides and minimal lip use space efficiently.
- They are super clear! SO easy to see through.
- Several sized boxes available that seem to be just the right size again and again.

XS - Accessory Box™ 6 ½ x 7½ x 3 5/8
S - Our Shoe Box™ 7 ½ x 13 x 4 ¼
M - Mens' Shoe Box™ 10 1/8 x 14 ¾ x 5 5/8
TALL - Our Tall Shoe Box™ 7 ½ x 13 x 8 ¼
L - Sweater Box™ 13 1/8 x 15 5/8 x 6 ¾
XL - Deep Sweater Box™ 13 1/8 x 15 5/8 x 13 ¼

What I don't like:
- Nothing, they are perfect for nearly everything!

There are a few Dollar Store finds I have used, but they are flimsy, and because the labels are hard to remove it's hard to see through the plastic, plus they are not always available. HOWEVER, there are times when their functionality wins me over! Like when I really need it to fit in a standard size upper cabinet.

Sterilite Purple Latch

My next favorite containers are made by Sterilite, and I buy them at my local Target. If you don't have a Target around, you can order them online.

What I like about them:
- Nice vertical sides and angular corners with little wasted space around the latches
- sturdy clear latching lids stay on
- good for indoor or garage storage

What I don't like:
- Nothing, they are perfect for 98% of household needs

Organizers Note:
When deciding between the Sterilite 27qt and the Container Store XL box, I prefer the XL box.
Why?
The XL box is much clearer, I like the shape better and it's not as bulky. However, when contents are heavier, I need a sturdier box, or require a lid that locks down, I'll use the 27qt.

Honorable Mention:
The Hefty Storage Bin is an honorable mention. Available at Target and Lowes, I love the latching lids. Because I sometimes have a hard time finding the Sterilite 27qt. purple latch, and I LOVE that size, I will buy the Hefty 32qt gray latch.

27qt = 12.75 " H x 11.12 " W x 17.0 " L
66qt= 13 1/4 " H x 16 3/8 " W x 23 5/8" L
32qt= 6 1/2" H x 16 3/8" W x 23 5/8" L
Hefty =14 1/2 " H x 16 7/8 " W x 12.0 " L

27qt

66qt

32qt

Hefty Storage Bin

32qt

bookshelves

When extra storage was needed I've added simple bookshelves in many client closets, and I have a few from IKEA in my own closets. It always makes me chuckle when I suggest a bookshelf to someone as a solution and they light up like it's the most brilliant idea ever. Many of the best ideas are the simplest.

Here are a few different shelving units from Target and IKEA that I have bought for a variety of jobs.

TARGET website photos shown

TARGET Room Essentials Brand Tall & Short Bookcases

What I like:
- Cheap, easy to put together, and readily available at any Target.
- Shelves are adjustable.

What I don't like:
- It's cheap, but what do you expect for a $20-$30 price point? Although totally functional for an adult, I would not put this in a kids space. It's just not as sturdy as I'd like for use in a kids space.
- I generally only nestle these in closets because I feel they less likely to tip over when tucked into a tight space. These are not the strongest, but they are an affordable solution if function is your only concern.

TARGET 6 or 8 cube storage

What I like:
- Again, easily available at any Target, as are the Closetmaid Brand found at Lowes and Home Depot.
- Low price point ($35-$50).

What I don't like:
- Finding storage bins that fit that are clear is a challenge. If clients already have them, I will utilize the collapsible canvas bins sold along side the cube storage. Occasionally I can find a clear box at Target that works, but it's hit and miss. When I find a consistent solution, I will add it to this page.

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IKEA website photos shown

IKEA KALLAX bookcase

What I like:
- 15" cube storage space
- The cubes are the perfect size for the Container Stores' Our Clear Storage Sweater Box and Deep Sweater Box!
- Position horizontally or vertically
- Sturdy
- Optional drawers or cabinet fronts available.

What I don't like:
- Nothing, I love them!

IKEA Billy Bookcase Short and Tall

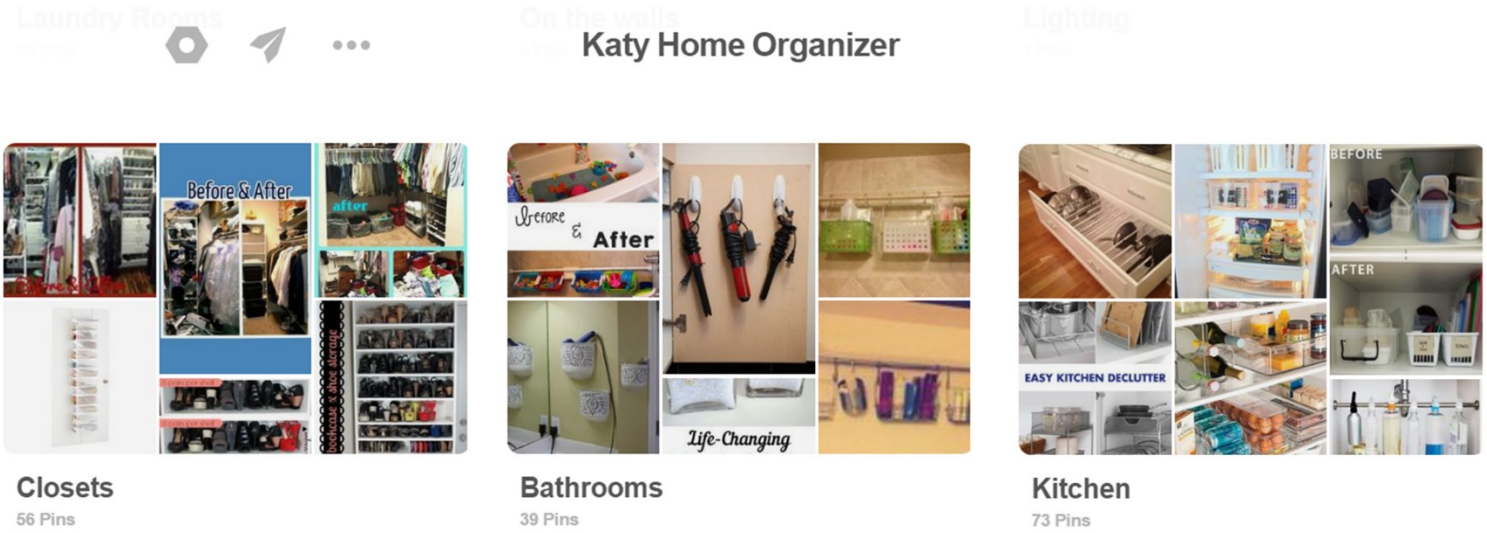
What I Like:
- Easy to put together
- Sturdy – IKEA is pretty reliable if you put it together correctly. Everything I've ever bought has lasted many year and through several moves.
- The shelves in a Billy are 11" deep, 1.6" deeper than the Target bookshelf.
- Shelves are adjustable.

What I don't like:
- Nothing! It is a predictable and reliable purchase. If only IKEA wasn't a mad house to shop in!*

IKEA website photos shown

pinspiration

Pinterest makes it easy to find ideas for organizing every nook and cranny in your house. In fact, there's so much creativity and inspiration on Pinterest, I set a timer so I don't get lost for hours! Check out solutions for the areas of your home you plan to organize, and pick and choose what you like to fit your personal style and budget constraints.Did you know? I have a Pinterest page full of creative organizing solutions? If you haven't already seen it please take a look. But set your timer or you might get lost for a few hours!



What do you like?

I'd love to see what tickles your fancy! Please share your discoveries in our Facebook Group. Having trouble linking a pin to the group page? Click the photo for directions on how to post it from a computer.

Follow this quick guide to post your favorite pin in our Facebook Group.

your assignment

Go on a hunt throughout your home and use the checklist to track what you have that might be repurposed. Look at things with a new perspective.

– Use the following Checklist to help keep track what you have on hand and what you think you might need.
– Use this worksheet to create your Action Plan.

BE SURE TO JOIN US on our daily ZOOM video calls – check Facebook group for times, or for daily reminders and inspiration text **SPARKLY** to 57711.

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worksheets

organizing@home | action plan worksheet

Area: _____

What are my top 3 goals today:

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

What are the steps to accomplishing GOAL #1.

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

What are the steps to accomplishing GOAL #2.

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

What are the steps to accomplishing GOAL #3.

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

What might get in my way today and what actions can I take to avoid them?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What is my big reason WHY? Why am I doing this? What is a big payoff I will experience?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How can I celebrate when I am finished?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Where can I take my donations? _____

Now, go do it! 😉

organizing@home | supply checklist

DIY items on hand (how many)

_____ empty cell phone box _____ empty shoe boxes _____ rectangular or square baskets _____tissue box

_____ other _____

_____ other _____

_____ other _____

Re-purposed items (how many / what kind)

_____ clear containers _____

_____ bookshelf _____

_____ storage bins _____

_____ other _____

_____ other _____

_____ other _____

What do you think you need to buy? (how many / what kind/size)

_____clear containers _____

_____ bookshelf _____

_____ storage bins _____

_____

_____

_____

Kitchen Organizing Supplies

_____Clear containers _____

_____ cabinet shelves _____

_____ lid rack(s) _____

_____ multi-level organizer(s) _____

_____ lazy susan(s) _____

_____ 4 sort divider _____

_____ other _____

_____ other _____

_____ other _____

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master closet

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today's focus

– Assessing Your Closet
• Dry Cleaning & Wire Hangers
• Hangers
• Suitcases & Travel Bags
• Purses & Cosmetics Bags
• Mysterious Boxes

– Sort, Purge & Organize
• Clothing
• Dresses
• Suits
• Outerwear

– The Hanger Zone
– Reflective Questions
– Donations

– Organizing Supplies
• Shoes
• Belts & Ties
• Sweaters
• Scares
• Purses
• Sun Glasses
• Jewelry
• Dressers

welcome!

Our focus is the master closet, but most of what I share here is applicable to other clothing closets as well. Like all spaces that we've addressed in the past we'll start by assessing the situation. It's important to do so with a fresh pair of eyes, trying to see it as if you've never seen it before.

We're doing things a little backwards today. Before I send you out shopping for organizing supplies, I want you to sort and purge. Understanding your supply needs will be easier AFTER you have purged, grouped like items together, and determined what is staying in the closet.

Grab some white trash bags for donations,
black bags for trash, and some boxes for items that go away.

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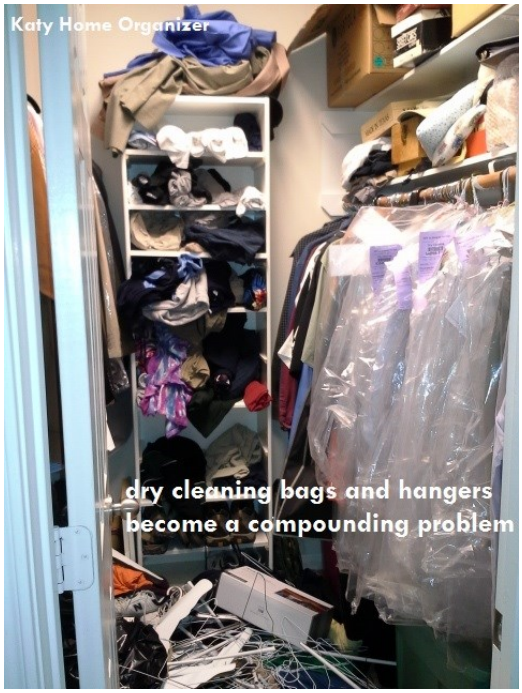
assessing your closet



Do you feel like you're running out of room? Often there are hidden obstacles in your closet you're not even aware. Let's step into your closet and go on a scavenger hunt…

Wire Hangers and Dry Cleaning Bags

If you dry clean your clothes you most certainly have more hangers then you need. It's like they multiply while you are sleeping; and because they are so skinny they easily accumulate without you even realizing it. And don't get me started on the dry cleaning bags. I am positive there are empty hangers in there too.

To avoid this compounding problem you gotta remove the dry cleaning bags when you bring the clothes into your closet. If you regularly have dry cleaning, having a place to put the dry cleaning until it's "processed" is a good idea. Maybe a hook on the back of the door or the first spot on the rod as you walk into the closet. Then when you have two minutes, pull off the bags and all the paper, and hang the clothes in their appropriate space. If you like to switch out hangers, now's a good time.

Do you return the hangers to the dry cleaner? If you switch out your hangers, wrap them up using one of the empty bags, and you're done. Stick in the bottom of the dry cleaning bag for the next time you're ready to drop it all off. If you accumulate them as you use them, pick a spot on the rod as you wear the clothes. Then before you head to the dry cleaner next time, stick them in the dry cleaning bag.

Empty hangers

It isn't just wire hangers that multiply in your closet. Regular hangers are just as sneaky. It's obvious why, what's not so obvious is that they are there.

Developing the habit of regularly pulling out the empty hangers serves more than just collecting hangers; it's a visual cue that it's time to do laundry. Every time you get dressed or even every couple of days, pull out the empty hangers to get them out from amongst the clothes. It's a good habit with fringe benefits. Read my blog on Why your closet needs a hanger zone.

Suitcases & Travel Bags

Look in the corners of your closet – under and behind the clothes. I've been into many a closet that was stuffed with travel bags and suitcases. It didn't seem like there would be so many squished in there at first glance, but there were. This has happened time and time again, so it's worth noting here. In most cases about half were donated.

Purses & Cosmetics Bags

Do you buy makeup at a department store? Then chances are you receive a makeup bag every time you buy something new. That "gift with purchase" is just too tempting. Well, those often end up on the floor of closets (if not crammed into your bathroom cabinet).

I've met lots of women that looove purses, and collect them, but forget to get rid of the worn-out purses, or the ones whose style no longer appeals to them. You'll be looking through your purse collection to make sure that everything you have is worthy of your wallet and keys. ☺

Mystery Boxes

Look at the upper shelves of your closet. What's up there? What's in the cardboard box anyway? If you don't know, it's time to take a look.

What do I usually see in those boxes? Well, most of the time they are empty!

I am big on taking things out of cardboard and putting them in a clear box. First because cardboard is bug food, and secondly, when things are in clear boxes you can easily see what is in there. For me, there is no point in owning things that no longer serve you. If it's something that is meant for regular use, then it needs to seen so it can serve that function. Mementos and keepsakes should be kept in a clear box too. They will be better preserved that way.

As you go through those mysterious boxes, remember that just because they are in your closet doesn't mean that is where they should stay. Unless there is no where else to put it, your closet should serve to hold your clothes and shoes first, then other stuff.

sort, purge & organize

Donating

To save you time after you are done organizing, *before you begin* organizing, read the following advice regarding donations.

As a rule of thumb if you don't think an article of clothing is worth reselling at a garage sale, it should be thrown away. No one is going to want to buy it and most donation centers won't sell it.

Be sure everything you donate is clean. Donation centers don't wash clothing before it's put it out for sale. If it's visibly dirty throw it away.

The exceptions

the Salvation Army: Anything that can be sold will be sent to their thrift stores. Clothes that aren't garage sale worthy will be considered cloth and sold in large

"lots" to other countries. Think of it as cloth recycling and can include sheets, blankets, etc. It all still needs to be washed, because ***yuk***! Don't make other people touch your dirty clothes.

H&M Stores: They have a clothing recycling program similar to the Salvation Army. Nothing will be re-sold, only recycled, so if you want your clothes to get back into circulation, better take it to a charity. In return they will give you a coupon that never expires to you can use in their store.

Please take the time to sort your clothes into bags that can be resold and bags that are "cloth".

Clothing

Beginning at one end of the closet, work your way through looking at each article of clothing. You'll be making a conscious decision about every item you have. Some will be easy, some not so much, but for everything I want you to consider how it makes you feel when you wear it. Do you like how it fits? Do you like the color against your skin? When you put it on, does it make you feel good inside? Do you feel pretty, or do you feel like a slouch?

Your answer should always be "I feel good when I wear this" – period.

As women we spend so much time thinking about how we look. Whether you admit it or not, we are programmed to. All the more reason we should only have clothes that make us happy! We should only wear clothes that make us happy. Wearing clothes that makes us happy, makes us happy! We walk different, we are more confident, we radiate a positive energy. This is a good way to live!

Now I realize that this may be a new concept to you, and you may have a closet full of clothes that do not make you happy. Statistically we only wear 20% of what's in our closets anyhow. That means the other 80% we aren't wearing. Why is that?

I think it's better to have a smaller wardrobe full of things I love, than a full wardrobe that makes it hard for me to see what I really like. A wardrobe full of things I'm not in love with make getting dressed take longer.

About 3 years ago I read the book The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up. There's nothing like hearing your message spoken through someone else's mouth to motivate you. It had been awhile since I had done a good purge, and that book motivated me to go through all my clothes once again. I got rid of about 25% of what I owned and since then have purged even more. Now, I can't say that 100% of my clothes I love to wear, but I I would say it's more like 85%. That's pretty good! That means that 85% of the time when I reach into my closet I'm going to choose something that I like to wear, and that makes me feel good. Now getting the right combination of clothing maybe the next challenge, but that's another course!

For now, sort through your clothes being as honest as possible. Work to keep only those that make you feel great!

Keep only what you l❤ve

tops

Group by Like Kind
At some point you will begin to grouping like items, for most it just happens naturally.

If your clothes are particularly scrambled, the following method works well for unscrambling and grouping: Start by searching for all the white t-shirts. Poke through to find every white shirt and pull it out. Doesn't matter if it's a t-shirt or a blouse, just pull it out and group them together on the rod. I usually choose a color that stands out, so if you have a lot of red shirts start with red, then go to the next color that stands out. You can go in color order if you like, but it doesn't matter – whatever gets the job done. Continue on until you have sorted all of the shirts and they are grouped by color.

Repeat with dresses, skirts and pants.

Colorize

When it comes to organizing, there is a color hierarchy. In general, I like to organize in a particular order, but it also depends on how much of what color there is, and how well the colors transition from one to the next. Do what feels most natural to you, after all you have to keep it up.

My order is: white, beige, brown, yellow, orange, red, pink, green, blue, purple, black – or something similar. I like to start with white and end with black. Sometimes I change the order of the colors in between, it just depends on what customers have.

Tops = tank tops, camis, strapless tops, t-shirts, polo shirts, button-up shirts, blouses, or anything you would wear "on top" under jackets, sweaters or coats

Sub-dividing Tops

Sleeveless, short sleeve, and long sleeves and the basic breakdown of tops. As a rule of thumb, if you have 3 to 4 feet or less dedicated to your tops, I suggest you group by COLOR FIRST, then by style. That means all of your white shirts are together, and within that collection will be: sleeveless, then short sleeves, then long sleeves. Repeat with the next color in your color hierarchy.

If you have more than 4 feet of tops, STYLE is your FIRST category, and within that will be the color hierarchy. So for example, if you have 30 strapless tops you will colorize beginning with white, then beige, brown, yellow, orange… all the way to black. Next will begin short sleeved tops in color order, then all the long sleeved tops in color order.

I usually hang tops on the upper rod and pants on the lower, and that works well. I have swithed around to the opposite having pants on the upper bar. If you have a shelf just above the lower rod, hanging the pants on the upper rod creates a little space to store things on the shelf and still see what's there. It typically doesn't look very neat, but it is functional.

bottoms

Pants

Pants are a little easier to organize and sub-divide. The right order is the order in which you wear them the most. If you wear jeans most of the time, you'll start with jeans, then khakis, then dress pants (or whatever the right order is for you. Keep your jeans grouped together, keep your khaki's grouped together, etc.

To keep the pants zone looking neat, hang pants consistently the same direction and use hangers that match. See video.

If hanging them over the hanger is your preferred method, I recommend using either a dry cleaning hanger (believe it or not) or spending the money on the felted hangers. The reason I like these options is because pants won't side off, and they are sturdy. Pants on inexpensive plastic hangers slide around, stretch the hanger out of shape and just look messy.

Some people prefer to hang their pants long, and don't like the crease that can develop when folding them over. Most pants will not develop a crease unless they hang for a really long time without being worn. Another complaint I have heard is dust collects on the top of the fold; which is also attributed to hanging for too long without being worn. Which beckons me to say, why are you keeping them if you never wear them? Just sayin'.

Sometimes it's the limitation of the closet that makes it necessary to hang pants long. That's understandable. Do what you need to do to work with the space you have, but as long as we are re-evaluating everything, revisit why you do what you do. If the last house you lived in had mostly long hanging space and your new closet doesn't, it might be time to change the way you hang your clothes, or get rid of some.

However, some fabrics just wrinkle easily and do better hanging long, and make sense hanging with the dresses. If you prefer to hang them long, I like clip hangers rather than wooden trouser hangers. See video.

Skirts and Shorts

If you like to hang your shorts, keep them grouped together and not mixed in with your skirts. Keeping them separate makes it easier to find them. Colorize as you would your shirts. To keep skirts and shorts looking neat, I prefer clipping hangers. By aligning the garment with the edge of the hanger on the out-facing side, pull the waistband taut to the next clip, and then allow the in-facing side to flap free it will cause all of the skirts and shorts to all line up. See video for examples, this is a concept better understood visually.

Men's Jeans

If your man is tall enough and can easily reach the shelf above the hanging clothes, consider folding his jeans on that shelf. Usually the long hanging closet rod has a shelf that is easily accessible for men. Be sure to sort and purge first as a stack can turn into a tower quickly. Aim to limit each stack to 5 pairs; 8 at the most with his favorites on top. More than that and it's either time to purge or split into more stacks.

To keep jeans visible and accessible, clothes should not hang low enough to touch them.

dresses

It goes without saying (but I need to say it) that dresses should hang on the bar that doesn't have another bar underneath it, usually referred to a long hanging bar. Sort as you would tops using the same parameters. Most women I've worked with wear mostly tops and bottoms, but there are a few that looove dresses! I secretly wish I were one because dresses are just so comfortable. If you are a dress lover, you might be short on long hanging space. If you are, there is a glimmer of hope for more room.

You may already be occupying an upper rod which causes your dresses to fold over the lower rod. Did you know that some of those rods are removeable? Yep. Check if yours is and yank that puppy out. I typically store my spare rods in a corner or pushed up against the wall under the lower hanging clothes.

Even if your rod isn't easily removable, sometimes they are held on with just a screw. Look at the underside of your rod where the bracket is holding it. That is where a screw is added to hold it in place.

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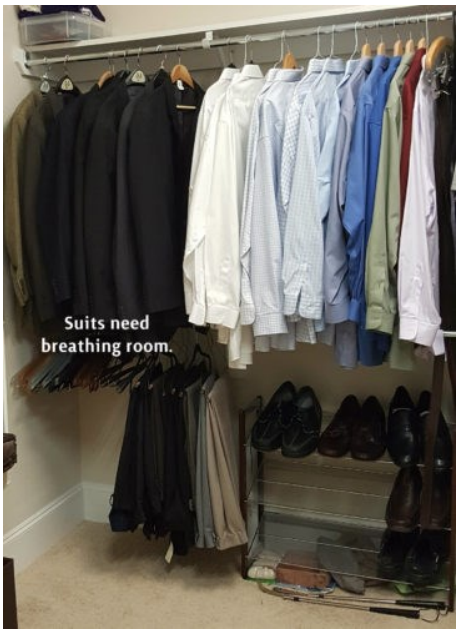
suits

In my opinion suits need breathing room. Suit coats aren't cleaned nearly as often as the coordinating pants or skirts, so a little elbow room helps them air out. If you are a regular suit wearer, or your husband is, you probably know this. If you are a younger generation, or your parents didn't wear suits, or you didn't pay any attention to what they did with their suits, you might not realize how important hanging a suit properly is for the life of the suit.



I'm not a big fan of the wooden suit hangers, unless it is holding a suit. Wooden suit hangers are excellent for their intended purpose but if you don't own any wooden suit hangers, but you own suits – how did that happen? No worries, you can make what you've got work, but take the time to be sure:

A) The hanger is strong enough for the suit. If all you have are plastic tube hangers, use two of them.

B) Be sure the suit is hanging straight and any buttons are buttoned closed. The hanger should be even across the shoulders. This makes a difference in how the fabric stretches, and ultimately how it lays across the human shoulders.

C) Dress pants of skirts should be hung with the suit unless the suit coat is rarely worn but the bottom piece is worn frequently. Use a hanger that will hold onto the piece. I don't like the cheap slippery tube hangers, especially for suit pants. Suits aren't cheap, spend $4 on a package of clip hangers at Target or $10 for a few of the felted hangers. Be sure the pants /skirt is hung neatly. See "bottoms" for tips on how to do that.

A well taken care of suit looks better on a man. Chances are the suit is worn in a professional environment where this look is important to the career. Go that extra mile to hang the suit properly.

a word about hangers

Here's one way to hang dress pants, the other is to use a hang that grips the fabric, like these Huggable Hangers. These hangers keep pants from slipping off. They work great for jackets, blouses, dresses, sweaters, etc. For crew neck shirts or narrow necklines, try using plastic hangers that slide easily into the shirt.

Choose one color only to keep a uniform and clean look.

outerwear

Outerwear are sweat shirts, hoodies, sweaters, jackets, and coats. Anything you wear over your clothes. Most of what I understand and recommend is geared towards warm-weather climates. Having never lived where is snows, I only have my imagination and common sense to draw from, but no practical advice. So if you live in a cold weather climate, take what makes sense to you and leave the rest. You've been fore warned!

Cardigan Sweaters, Lightweight Sweaters & Jackets

I've seen many a sweater hung in the closet with a shirt still inside it. It always makes me chuckle a little, wondering if they were in a big hurry or were feeling lazy or wanted to keep those two items together for another day.

I recommend separating the two, putting the shirt back in with the tops and allowing the sweater to go solo with the other sweaters. In a sense, you gain another shirt and another sweater to wear by splitting them up.

All of my sweaters and sweatshirts hang on felted hangers. This allows me to easily hang them up without having to zip or button them to keep them on the hanger. I love wearing sweaters and sweatshirts and really wear them

year-round. My threshold of tolerance for temperatures is very narrow (74-76), and our downstairs is tiled, making it cold downstairs, so sweatshirts and sweaters are my friends. I have several and wear them all in a sort of rotation. I wear one, leave it somewhere like the car, or in my office and then I'll wear another one. I am forever collecting my sweaters and hanging them back up. ☺

All outerwear lives together in one closet, except heavy winter coats which live in my office closet. Lightweight raincoats, casual jackets, sweaters and zip up sweatshirts live together. Lightweight sweaters that are mostly worn as shirts can be kept with long sleeved shirts.

Heavy Coats

Many clients I have met keep their heavy coats in a guest closet or hall closet. I think it makes sense, here in east Texas it doesn't make sense to give up everyday closet space to coats that are rarely worn.

If you live where it's cold more often, store those coats in a more accessible closet. If you live in a warm climate and you have the room in your main closet, put them there. If not, put them in a guest closet. If you really are short on space, use a space bag to shrink them down further.

Closet Dressers

Does your closet have a built-in dresser? You are so lucky!

In my city in east Texas we have so much new construction and many of the larger nicer homes have closet with built in dressers. I don't have a dresser built in to my closet, but I have an extra dresser that we decided to use in our closet for bathing suits, winter hats and gloves, and other misc items. In our main bedroom we each have a regular dresser where we store the usual socks, underwear, pajamas, t-shirts and shorts.

If you have a room for an additional dresser in your closet, add one they are quite useful!

Deep sweater bins

Deep sweater bins are excellent for storing sweaters (hence their name). You can stack up to 8 sweaters, 5 if they are thick. They are the perfect shape and size, and if you toss in a few cedar boards or balls you can keep the bugs away that like to eat sweaters. They also stack nicely, and are the perfect item to store on the upper shelves in your closet when it's summer. During the winter and you can switch out your short sleeve or sleeveless clothing for your sweaters.

everything else

Clothes aren't the only thing that need to be purged, sorted and categorized in a closet. Continue with your hunt taking the time to search all the nooks and crannies where you are bound to find that missing shoe, dusty purses full of change and lipstick, wadded up scarves, old tote bags from 1980, and random old cardboard boxes stuffed in the corners and under clothes.

Do you have a shelf that sits above the lower clothing rod? Reach on in and feel around. It's an easy area to overlook, but I have found ridiculous amounts of junk crammed there. Last year's Christmas gifts to your mom, that new necklace you bought that you swore your daughter stole…it's like the black hole of the closet. You might even find old mismatched socks in there – I hear it's where the dryer spits them out. For obvious reasons, I like to keep this shelf clear. Not only because it turns into the black hole, but because it allows your clothes to move freely and easily.

To address Everything Else normally found in the closet let's do so while discussing organizing supplies, just be sure to go through every inch of your closet if you really want to do a thorough job of organizing it.

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prime real estate & compartmentalization

Remember, accessibility and visibility are key components to an organized closet. How often you need to access anything will determine the placement. Consider for a moment what your prime real estate is. What is the easiest part of the closet to get to and reach? What will take the least amount of time to grab what you need and go? That is your prime real estate. When you are determining where to place your everyday clothes, it makes the most sense to put them in your prime real estate area.

Dividing your closet into compartments creates additional clarity so you can find what you are looking for easily. The brackets that hold the rod create a natural divider and it's helpful if you can get your clothes to fit within the confines, (but it doesn't always work out that way). You can create visual cues to help define one section from the next, like hanging your scarves, belts or ties in between sections. Because those things look different, they create a visual gap between blocks of clothes.

The section on closet organizing supplies gives you some good examples of how to organize your closet. As do the before and after photos provided at the end.

reflective questions

I love asking you questions to prompt the REAL answers. These are no-nonsense practical questions that just make you think. Which is one of the hardest things to do. I'm not knocking ya, I have others around me to walk me through my own problem areas in life (it's just not about organizing, haha.) These are the legit, to the bone questions that when answered tell you what to do with that "thing".

- These questions can be asked about clothing, shoes, purses, belts, etc.
- When was the last time you wore it? Or used it?
- How does it make you feel (keep only what you love!)

- Is there guilt associated with it? 'Is it in wearable / useable condition?
- Does it need repairs? If it does how much will it cost? When will you take it to be fixed? (Give yourself a short deadline 1-2 weeks).)
- How many of the same items do you already own? Which one(s) are your favorites and which ones can go away?

Seriously, as I type these out I think, "These are too basic to share; surely they must have thought of this already." But when I walk my clients through these questions, it's like a lightbulb goes on and they suddenly become awar of their thought patterns. That's when change happens! You can't change something you are not aware of.

organizing supplies

Just like in the kitchen, there are organizing supplies that will help you in the closet. The following are my tried-and-true supplies I like to bring into closets when organizing them.

Shoe storage

Let's talk shoes! I have been too many homes that have attempted to use an over-the-door shoe organizer. Sometimes those will work, but most of the time I don't like them. What I do like instead are these shoe organizers:

Shoe cubbies

Shoe cubbies work great for women's shoes. Each cubby holds one pair when you position them heel-to-toe. 2 1/2" heels will fit, 3" heels will be snug.

Available from the Home Depot or Target they are made of laminate mdf. The quality is comparable of the two, however the number of shoes you can fit will depend on which one you buy. Room essentials from Target at $30 has 15 cubbies whereas ClosetMaid from Home Depot at $50 has 25 cubbies. Both can be stacked or turned sideways.

What I like about cubbies is they use space efficiently and can be combined with shoe shelves. Not every person is a good candidate for shoe cubbies though. Shoe cubbies require patience in order to position the shoes so they fit. You can't just shove them in, unless they are flip-flops or sandals. You must position them to get two shoes to fit in one slot. If you have a small closet and need to fit a lot of shoes so they are easy to access, and don't want them all piled up, and shoe cubby is an excellent solution.

Shoe Shelves

If you are not a good candidate for the shoe cubby, then you'll want to consider shoe shelves.

Shoe Shelves come in 24" and 31" in width, they stack on top of one another and can be combined with the 24" shoe cubby if needed. You can comfortably fit 3 pair of women's shoes size 7 on a 24" shelf. A size 8 will work but wider shoes will be a little tight. A 31" shelf typically will allow for 4 pair of women's shoes, or 3 pair of men's shoes. I like that you can toss a pair of shoes in easily, and that it's easy to see what shoes you have.

Home Depot 24" - $10 • 31" - $13

Hanging Shoe Bag

Typically sold with 10 slots, a hanging shoe bag attaches to the clothing rod with velcro. You can easily fit at least 10 pairs of shoes. When storing multiple pairs of flip flops, sandals, or flats in one slot, store them soul to soul so as to not get the top of the shoes dirty. If you wear heels over 3", this is an excellent solution because the sides are flexible. Angle shoes and position them heel to toe.

The bag is slender, measuring about 5" wide.

Target $20 - $30

Belt Storage

The Belt Loop

Container Store $4

If you have a lot of belts and limited space, this giant loop is my favorite. It is a little tricky to use, but once you get the hang of it, it's easy. I use it myself. Hooks on the wall would be my first choice, but if you have multiple belts and no wall space to hang them, this is a very efficient way of storing belts. See my video for how to use it.

Hanging Belt Hooks

Container Store $10

If you don't have space on your wall to hang hooks, and the loop is too challenging, this is a good option. It's functions like a wall hook but hangs on the bar. Each hook holds 2-3 belts.

To make belts easily accessible, I recommend storing them either at the end of the rod or in between to categories, like between the pants and sweaters, or between dresses and coats.

Command Hooks

Command hooks are great as a belt hook. You can place them anywhere and they're easy to use.

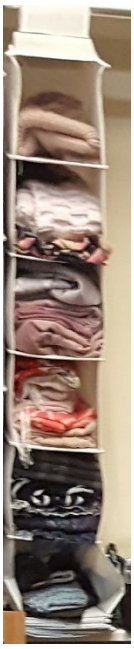
Target, Amazon, etc. $6

Wall Mounted

I like this wall mounted belt hook because the hooks are deep enough for 2 or 3 belts. Mounting it to the wall makes it easier to access a belt. If I had the wall space, this is what I'd do!

Container Store $15

Scarf Storage



Target/Amazon $8

Scarf hangers

if you like to wear scarves as an accessory, you probably have a lot of scars. A good way to hang scarves that are thin is by using this Thai holder. If you have bulky scarves a better system is to use this hanger with loops. Slip your scarf through the hole, or folded in half then slept through the whole. The Hanger will get stick and the puppy but that's okay. Their scarves that's how they are. An alternate method of storing scarves would be the hanging shoe bag.

Canvas Shoe Hanger

You can also easily store gloves scarves and hats in a hanging shoe bag.

Target $12

Container Store $10

Purse Hook

Have you seen this nifty little gizmo? I'm not one for gadgets, but this is an exception.

If you have enough hanging space, this hook is an awesome way to hang your purses and tote bags. Prior to finding this doo-dad I just twisted wire hangers into the shape I wanted to achieve the same result.

If you have a hanging bar that is waaaaay up there, storing purses and totes are a good use of that space AS LONG AS you have the ability to reach them. Either a step stool that is permanently stored in the closet or an extended hook.

Container Store $15

Purse Box

Instead of a purse hook try a shallow box, like the (L) sweater bin. Being careful not to overfill the bin – this is how purses get lost. If you can't see it you are less likely to remember you have it.

If you have more to hold, try the 66qt. bin from Sterilite. This is the absolute largest you should go, and limit it to large purses, and put the smaller ones in their own box.

Target $8

Container Store $6

Sun Glasses

If you like to buy designer sunglasses and change them from time to time, you might have them stored in your closet. I have had many clients who do. To keep them from getting scratched, store them in their case. If you have multiple pairs, store them in a container to keep them protected. If you are going to set them out and have a decorative box, you can use that if you won't forget where they are! These are some good looking options from amazon.

Found at Amazon

glasses tray $20-$25

glasses display box $20

clear glasses holder $20

accessory box $2

You can If you have space in a drawer to store your sunglasses, you will still want to put them in something. Most often when working with clients I will go ahead and use a (XS) or (S) clear box, if there isn't something to re-purpose. My advice to you is to *use something you already have*. Excellent contenders are shoe boxes, especially skinny ones that low heeled shoes or flats come in; kids shoe boxes are great too. Place the shoe box into the drawer experimenting with direction, but I usually will position them "up and down" rather than "left to right". Usually more fit that way and it doesn't block the back of the drawer.

Jewelry

If you like to store your jewelry in the closet, do you have a reliable method to keep things from tangling? There are MANY organizing products there's bound to be one that meets your needs. Personally, I store my jewelry in a simple jewelry tray with small compartments. It works well for me because I always wear small earrings.

If you have a lot of jewelry, you are going to need something larger. What will be the best match will greatly depend on your current habits. For instance, if you like to wear necklaces and are already using a necklace tree, then it's not a stretch for you to hang hooks on the wall or purchase an additional necklace tree. However, if you aren't used to interacting with necklaces in this way, you might purchase something to lay your necklaces in that will keep them untangled.

Because I have always had a jewelry box, I know it will be more difficult to transition to a new style jewelry holder (and I've tried) so I stick with what I am familiar with. I recommend you do the same – stick with what is familiar.

Jewelry boxes, stands, armoires, racks, etc. are not found regularly at any particular store. You might run across one at Bed, Bath & Beyond, Target, World Market, Walmart, or at other shops, but the best selection is on Amazon. All these examples of jewelry storage were found at Amazon.

Command Hooks $7

jewelry trays $10-$30

jewelry armoire $80-$100

necklace tree $20

jewelry box $30

wall mount jewelry holder and shelf $20

Avoid this Jewelry Organizer

I hate to put down organizing products because I can appreciate the thought that goes into so many of them, however in my line of work, some things just do not work for the customers I help. This type of jewelry organizer would be one of them. Nearly every client I have helped who had one of these was unable to incorporate it into a routine that worked and was sustainable. I think there are many factors as to why, which I won't go into, and they don't matter anyway! In short, avoid these.

If you have one and it is working, give yourself a pat on the back! If you have one and it isn't working, don't feel bad – they are just not everyone's solution!

your assignment

Your next actions:

- Be sure to take a few moments to mentally prepare yourself.
- Set the intention that you are going to kick some major closet ass today!
  Intentions are HUGE for getting results.
  Approaching with a half-hearted attitude will bring you half results.
- Follow advice given in "The Process" on how to proceed systematically!

Where to begin?

1. If your closets has a lot of trash, start there. It'll be much easier to sort and purge your clothes once the trash is out (that is most likely in the form of empty shopping bags, dry cleaning bags, and random papers).
2. After that, or if trash isn't your issue, just start at one end of the closet and work your way around. You've got this! You can do it!!

BE SURE TO JOIN US on our daily ZOOM video calls – check Facebook group for times, or for daily reminders and inspiration text **SPARKLY** to 57711

organizing@home

master bathroom

organizing@home | the master bathroom

today's focus

- Assess
  - Vacant spaces
- Sort, Purge
  - Plastic Bags
  - Group like items
  - Toss the unwanted
- Organizing Supplies
  - Containers
- Organize & Zone
- Maintenance

Grab a black bag for trash, several trays for sorting baskets, and a box or two for items that could be given away. It's time to begin!

assessing the bathroom

Organizing the Master Bathroom, or your main bathroom, is a smaller version of organizing any other space. The procedure is the same – assess the space, sort and purge, then organize setting it up into zones, compartmentalizing, and maintenance.

Bathroom cabinets are notorious for having lots of wasted space. Why? Because it is difficult to utilize the vertical space if you haven't been shown how it can be used. In the organizing section I will cover different products you can use to make the most of this space and later I'll explain the benefits of regular maintenance and how easy it is to work maintenance into your regular routine.

How long will it take? You should totally be able to complete this job in one afternoon unless you have been hoarding things for years, then it might take more than one day.

sort & purge

Plastic grocery bags are hands down the most often found item in *any* house. It's like they breed when we aren't looking. They aren't very noticeable either but they are experts at camouflaging whatever you are looking for; *especially* what you have bought. I've seen many bathrooms with plastic bags stuffed inside the cabinets and drawers. If this is you, don't feel bad. Today is a new day and you are making changes!

Group

Remove any bagged items and begin sorting them into groups of like kind. Keep your categories general at first – haircare, facial care, oral care, etc. and as you progress, if necessary, shift into grouping more specifically (styling products, shampoo, styling tools, etc). This is where you discover you have too much of a certain type of product, or find expired products. Be sure to pull out every item from each cabinet and drawer.

Toss the unwanted

Remember all the times you purchased a product but didn't like it but held onto I case you might use it later? It happens to everyone. Today's the day to get real and decide if you will ever use it. *It's ok if the answer is no!*.

You might think, "…but I spent so much money on these products!" – and you're not alone. Many clients have expressed their disappointment in "wasting" money on products they didn't use. How could you have known you wouldn't like it if you hadn't tried it? You couldn't. So don't be hard on yourself. You didn't waste your money. Think of it as a trial run.

What about the "gift with purchase" that seemed so cool to get? After all, the makeup you purchased was kinda pricey, and at least you got a free gift. Right? Yep. It's time to get rid of those too – well at least the ones you won't use.

reflective questions

Here's a series of Reflective Questions to ask yourself to help get through this decision-making mine field.

Cosmetics / Beauty Products

- How long have I had it? If it's been more than 2 years you aren't going to use it.
- Is it expired? See chart for guidance
- Do you like how it looks on you?
- Do you like how it feels on your skin or hair?
- Was it a gift that you are keeping even though you don't like it?
- Do you have a friend or family member who might enjoy it?

Health Products (mechanical or medicinal)
- Does it work as advertised?
- Does it do what you expect it to?
- Do you like the smell?
- Do you like how it feels on your skin?
- Is it awkward to use?
- Are there any unwanted side effects?
- Is it expired?
- Do you have more than you'll ever use?

If you aren't going to keep it and it still has life left in it, let's try to find it a new home. The easiest is to ask a friend if she wants it. Take a quick pic and text it to her. Only unused cosmetics, beauty or health products are acceptable for donation. Appliances that are still in working order with all its parts, can be donated. Check your local woman's shelter for drop off times and acceptable items.

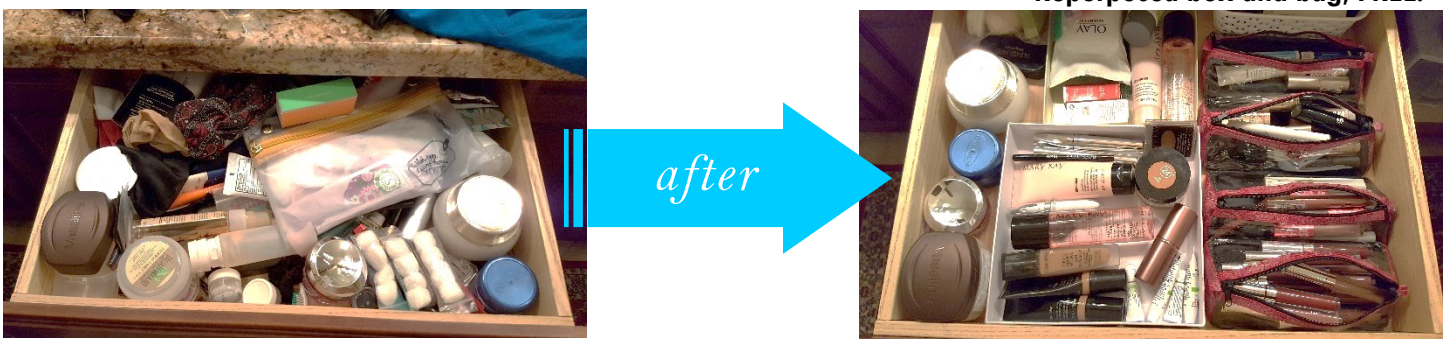
organizing supplies

Compartmentalization is key!

drawers

Office drawers, kitchen drawers and bathroom drawers all need compartmentalization. With so many little items in a drawer, it's essential to break up the space so you can see everything you have – or at least have half a chance at finding it! Take a look at these bathroom drawer solutions.

Repurposed box and bag, FREE!



In the drawer above, we used what the client already had in her bathroom. It's amazing how useful box lids are. I never toss out boxes, or anything else that can be useful, until the job is over and often use them in bathroom or desk drawers. Addition to box lids we used parts of a travel bag my client no longer used. This solution won't work for everyone, but was perfect for my client.

Acrylic Drawer Organizers

I like to use these drawer organizers in bathroom drawers because of the different sized sections. They seem to work well in the bathroom for makeup, pins, bands, and other small items. I usually get them at Target but they're also at Walmart. They come in a **3 compartment** tray and a **6 compartment tray**. Depending on how you arrange all types of drawer organizers, you can create **additional pockets of space** which can be useful.

Target, $3-$5 each

Interlocking Drawer Inserts

These are tried and true drawer organizers that I mostly use in the kitchen, but have used many times in the bathroom. They're a little more pricey ranging $3 to $5 each insert. Sometimes found at Walmart or At Home, I now order them online at USPlastics.com. What it costs to ship an order is about what I would pay retail at the Container Store, and I don't have to drive there.

Container Store, $3 - $5 each

No Drawers?

If you don't have any drawers in your bathroom and you need some, here's a way to create them. I have used a 3 Drawer Organizer for a long time, they've been in my bathroom for about 20 years! They really work great, and if you need a drawer organizer, the 3 compartment clear acrylic tray fit perfectly.

Target, $12 each

Target, $3 each

Container Store, $2 each

Deep Drawers

Do you have deep drawers? A lot of newer homes do; but how to use them effectively? The tendency is to stand the products up making use of the vertical height, by as soon as you shut the drawer, everything falls over! It's hard to keep it neat.

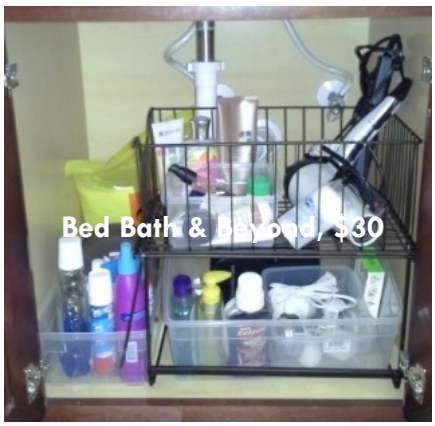
My solution is to group like items together and store them in a bin or box. This keeps everything in place, *and standing up*, and makes things easier to find. It works with anything tall. In these photos I use a (S) box but when there are fewer items to group, and you don't want them to fall over, I'll use the (XS) box. For mouthwash or similar bottles, I will use a (TALL) box to keep them from them falling over.

In the example below, the deep drawer was used for all her scarves (she has just a few), and again we used clear travel bags she wasn't using to group by color. We also used an empty product box for the clips.

COMPARTMENTALIZING and GROUPING are what help sustain an organized drawer.

bathroom cabinets

Compartmentalization underneath the sink can be confusing if you've never done it before. How to break up that vast space. In this photo, a lot of vertical space is wasted, and everything is bunched together. It would require a bit of rummaging to find what you're looking for. The solution is a device that creates two levels allowing you to spread out and categorize.



By creating specific zones within the space you know exactly where to look for and find things. Compartmentalizing things just makes it easier to find things. Even if your items are loosely grouped, it will still help you find what you want.

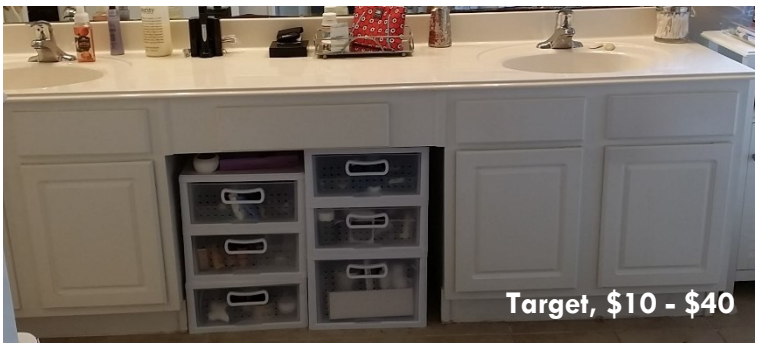
When looking for a device like these be careful what you select isn't too small. There are a lot out there that are too small to do an adequate job – at least in the sized home I find in Texas.

These metal units from the Container Store is the more expensive option, but it looks nice don't you think? You can select the size drawer you want to suit your needs. I often add (S) clear boxes to these units to group and compartmentalize.

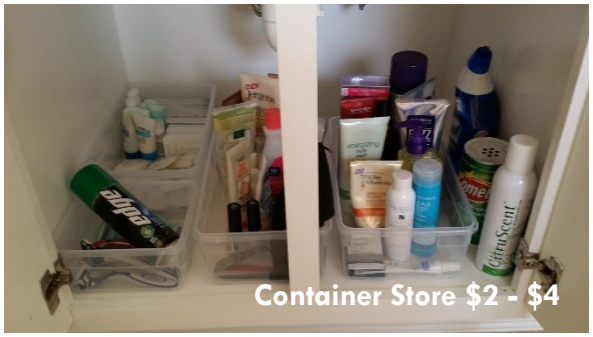
If you need the extra space outside your cabinets, you can always add either the metal units from the container store, or these plastic drawers. Again, utilizing the (S) plastic bins (or other sizes) will help break up the space.

Just a thought…

If you have as much cabinet space as shown below AND you need extra space…It's time to get rid of some stuff. Just sayin' you might have more than you need. (in fact I guarantee it)



Lastly, if you are on a budget, you can always simply use the clear boxes to divide everything up. It doesn't look as nice, but it is effective!



one more tip

Check for the expiration date and then tear off the tops off all medications. It's easy to see when you are running low, it's easy to reach in a get what you need and you'll never reach into an empty box again!

Always keep them in the same order and you will quickly learn what the box is without having to pull out the box.

make it accessible and easy

When organizing your bathroom it's important to think through your habits. What you use when you are getting read in the morning should be easily accessible and within your prime real estate - the area around you at arm's length or 1-2 feet beyond. Test it out by pretending that you are getting ready in the morning, or practice getting and putting away something if you aren't sure of how it's positioned. It's amazing what a difference it will make if you turn something 90°.

By creating different zones (drawers, bins, shelves, etc) that serve a specific job – teeth, nails, hair accessories, hair styling, etc – you will not only find things easily, but return them easily. Labeling is helpful as well, at least until you are familiar with where everything is.

your assignment

Print out an Action Plan worksheet and Supply Checklist to help get you prepare. Then jump right in!

BE SURE TO JOIN US on our daily ZOOM video calls – check Facebook group for times, or for daily reminders and inspiration text **SPARKLY** to 57711

Now, go out there and get it done! 😊

organizing@home

maintenance

maintenance

Staying Organized

today's focus

- Regularly Declutter
- Monitor
- Modify
- C3 & Zoom

regularly declutter

It might seem obvious to include regularly declutter as part of Maintenance but it must be mentioned. Even though we totally wish they would, things just don't put themselves away. Just like the weekly chores we had to do when we were little, decluttering is a weekly event - or it should be. Regularly sweeping through the house to gather up stray items and put them away where they belong is how to stay on top of the clutter problem. By regularly decluttering you will be able to keep tabs on the situation.

monitor

In order to really know if your system is working it must be monitored. Monitoring is simply observing and making a mental note of what you see. If it seems cumbersome to pull things out of the cabinet or you notice that your family has gotten even worse about putting their shoes away, it's time to re-assess the situation.

Ask yourself reflective questions, ask your family reflective questions, to get to the root issue - and sometimes it's not what we think.

modify

When there is clarity about what isn't working and why, then it can be modified. Try a new arrangement or set up, and play with it for a bit. Walk by it, interact with it, turn it, move it. The solution is often just a tweak away. Don't be discouraged if you don't get it right the first time, give it some time to gel and if it doesn't work keep trying. And don't be dismayed if it doesn't look like the picture on Pinterest, those are momentary snapshots in someone else's home. It's unfair and unrealistic to compare your life to the mystery occupant of that photo.

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ask Questions

If your situation just isn't working out and you can't figure out why, ask us. You can contact us through the Facebook Group page or the Katy Home Organizer Facebook page. We'll be happy to help.

c3 video chats

By signing up for the SUMMER SPRINT you have access to the Clutter to Clarity Club [C3]. They are Real-Time LIVE Video chats during which you can ask me for suggestions and advice about your most bothersome areas. THESE ARE NOT PRE-RECORDED THEY ARE LIVE! Join me via smartphone or computer for your chance to get that special attention you need while learning from others as well.

And if you need me to see your space, I can! That's what I love about ZOOM. I can asses and evaluate your situation in real time.

If you have any questions, comments or thoughts, reach out in the Facebook group AND

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ZOOM → https://zoom.us/j/9775243413

FACEBOOK GROUP → www.facebook.com/groups/simpleorganizing

Until next time…

Have a super sparkly day!

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