

# Spring ahead, fall back on organization

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Organizational Flair

Ahhh! Spring is here! Can you smell it in the air? Spring is a time for new growth. Do you have any room to grow? Or are you surrounded by too much clutter?

Do you try to “spring ahead” with spring cleaning and organization but inevitably “fall back” into the same rut?

Let’s face it: life is stressful, and being disorganized leads to more stress, whether it’s about finding your keys, missing or being late for appointments, tripping over laundry on your way to bed or not being able to clean because there is too much clutter.

We can all use some help, so here are some simple tips to help you get started on your spring cleaning and organization:

Everyone loves to do laundry, right? Well, maybe not. But here are a few tips to make your life easier: Don’t try to do 20 loads of laundry at once, or even four.

Wouldn’t it be better to complete one or two loads of laundry — including washing, drying, folding and putting away — than having four or five laundry baskets of clean clothes staring at you, dusty and forgotten?

Try to avoid having your clothes sit in a crumpled state. This creates more work, as they are harder to fold and require more ironing.

Don’t start to wash another load of laundry until one is done, or set a limit of two loads of laundry at a time. Whatever guidelines work for you, just set some.

Sometimes preparing to wash the laundry can take longer than actually doing it. Sorting a couple of items at a time is a lot less time consuming than doing it all at once, especially for multiple loads of laundry.

Try finding a location in your home to set up two or three hampers (or whatever type of container fits in the area you have) to facilitate the sorting process according to your criteria. For example, towels, lights and darks.

Place them together in the same location and label them if you have to. Enlist the help of your family so whenever an item is dirty, it gets placed in the appropriate bin right away.

Then, when it comes time to do the laundry you can measure the detergent, pour it in the machine and pull the clothing from the correct bin — no sorting necessary!

Folding laundry can be less of a chore, too. Try to apply the same strategy to folding as you do to sorting. Pile like items and each individual’s clothing together in one area. This makes the distribution and process of putting clothes away much more efficient.

Try to multitask. You can be productive and watch television at the same time. Make it a family event if you sit down to watch TV in the evening — this way no one person bears the burden and it creates good habits for your children.

Even small children can help match socks or fold facecloths.

Finally, don’t let lone socks or other items leave the laundry area. If they got separated, they are more likely to be reunited with their mate if they do not end up in the wrong drawer. Designate a collection bag for those items.

We all know the saying “Everything but the kitchen sink”

But instead of cleaning

everything else first, try starting with the kitchen sink. When you are feeling overwhelmed and frustrated by your clutter and disorganization, clean out your kitchen sink.

Yep, that’s right. Wash and put away all of your dirty dishes, or put them in the dishwasher, then wipe down the inside of your sink and the surrounding countertop.

Next, try tackling that junk drawer.

First, remove all of the items from the drawer. Throw out all the trash and set aside what doesn’t belong, to be put in its proper place when you are done.

Now you can sort the remaining items into categories like writing instruments, rubber bands, batteries, etc.

Find a drawer organizer or divider. These can be very inexpensive in those

large superstores and you can purchase all different types of configurations based on what you need.

Label the compartments and put each item in its place. This will help keep the drawer organized because you (and others) will be less tempted to just throw things where they don’t belong.

Lastly, you must maintain it. Make it part of your monthly cleaning and organizing.

It may seem like one small junk drawer, but the same concepts for organizing apply to all areas of your life.

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The Jacksonville Writers’ Association held a Friday and Sunday event with donations to the Jacksonville group. The group raised \$5,000 to support the Melton Kinsey, a firefighter for the City of Jacksonville, who was killed in a fire at the Sam’s Club parking lot. The Jacksonville Club patron, via Barone, fill her for MDA. Barone firefighter Michael worked to collect

photos by Jennifer Moore



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