Secrets of Getting Organized

Tackle Clutter in Every Room!
One-Hour Cures From the Pros

Shop Smarter
Choose the Best Organizing Products for You

The Best Organizing Tips for Your Personality

Real-Life Messy Makeovers
Closet, Pantry, Living Room, Bath & Home Office

Stop Paper Pileups Today!
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These organizing professionals offer tips throughout the issue.

**Meet the Pros**

These organizing professionals offer tips throughout the issue.

**Expert Advice**

**Deborah J. Cabral**
Certified Professional Organizer and Productivity and Efficiency Coach Deborah J. Cabral launched her company, The DeClutter Coach, in 2010. Growing demand has led to the creation of DC Efficiency Consulting, Organization Motivation, and Organized in 68 Seconds—all subsidiary companies under Cabral Enterprises, LLC, a certified women-owned business enterprise. As a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers and the Institute for Challenging Disorganization, Cabral lends her knowledge of professional productivity, efficiency, time management, and organization to residential and corporate clients through one-on-one consultations, community workshops, corporate training programs, a weekly television show and news segment, a monthly column, magazine articles, and TV and radio interviews. Cabral is a wife, mother of three, and community volunteer. The recipient of the 2012 U.S. Small Business Administration’s Excellence in Small Business Award and the 2013 KeyWOMEN Achieve Award, Cabral also authored *Declutter Your Life Now!* A Motivational Guide to Tackle the Clutter in All Aspects of Your Life.

**Jennifer Ford Berry**
Jenn Ford Berry is an organizational expert, best-selling author, entrepreneur, and speaker. Her books (including *Organize Now!* A Week-by-Week Guide to Simplify Your Space & Your Life, *Organize Now! Your Money, Business & Career*, and *Organize Now! 12-Month Home & Activity Planner*) have sold more than 350,000 copies worldwide. Her newest title, *Organize Now! Think & Live Clutter-Free*, was released in November 2013. Berry has been working as a professional organizer for 12 years and is the regular organizing expert on the TV show *Winging It*. Buffalo Style You can also find her on her own organizing channel of the smartphone app Intuition. Mom’s Assistant (intuitionapps.com) and teaching classes through the Organize Academy (organizeacademy.com). Berry has appeared in national magazines and newspapers, as well as on radio stations across the country. She has presented to a Learning Annex, corporations, churches, mom groups, and school districts. Berry is a graduate of Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida. She resides in Western New York where she works hands-on with clients, helping them to eliminate clutter and live their dreams.

**Kathy Jenkins**
As a certified professional organizer, certified family manager coach, and love and logic parenting facilitator and coach, Kathy Jenkins helps busy families simplify and come to order in every aspect of their lives. Jenkins and her team of organizers provide hands-on organizing support, workshops, seminars, and coaching services. Jenkins is a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO), NAPO-Golden Circle, Institute for Challenging Disorganization (ICD), and Faithful Organizers. She also serves as the leader of the NAPO Student Organizer Special Interest Group and is proud to be counted as one of the creators of the NAPO in the Schools Elementary Program. Jenkins recently achieved Level I Certificate of study in Chronic Disorganization (CD), Understanding the Needs of CD students, and ADHD. As a working mother of two school-age boys, she knows the challenges of staying organized every day. It is because of this personal perspective that she is able to relate to her clients and help them achieve the level of organization and family management they desire. Kathy Jenkins, CPO: Come to Order, Mechanicsville, Virginia; e-mail: kathy@comesorder2va.com; comesorder2va.com

**Laura Wittmann**
Laura Wittmann is a wife and mother to three kids, lives in Alberta, Canada, and is an addict of all things organizing, especially containers. She loves the high that comes with living a life of order and simplicity and is always looking for her next “fix.” She blogs regularly at I’m an Organizing Junkie and is the author of Clutter Rehab: 101 Organizing Tips and Tricks to Become an Organization Junkie and Live It! Laura Wittmann, I’m an Organizing Junkie, Alberta, Canada; e-mail: organizingjunkie@gmail.com; organizingjunkie.com

**Lorie Marrero**
Certified Professional Organizer Lorie Marrero is the best-selling author of *The Clutter Diet: The Skinny on Organizing Your Home and Taking Control of Your Life and Your Home Office Handbook*. She is also the creator of *The Clutter Diet*, an innovative online program allowing anyone to get expert help at an affordable price. Her organizing books and products are sold online and in stores nationwide. Marrero is a spokesperson for Goodwill Industries International, and she is a sought-after expert for national media. An Austin resident, she has also served as a spokesperson for many other companies including Staples, Brother, and Microsoft. Lorie Marrero, Clutter Diet, Inc., Austin; (512) 835-1400; e-mail: info@clutterdiet.com; clutterdiet.com

**Barbara Reich**
Barbara Reich is a professional organizer and author of the book *Secrets of an Organized Mom*. Known for creating solutions that are as aesthetically appealing as they are practical, Reich transforms each space from the inside out. Whether they are powerful executives or busy mothers, clients appreciate Reich’s unassuming confidentiality and eye for design. Reich has appeared on the Today Show, Inside Edition, Fox News, and *New York 1 and has been featured in The New York Times, New York Post, Real Simple, InStyle, Family Circle, Better Homes and Gardens*, and *The Oprah Magazine*. Reich is the founder of Organizing Junkie and is the author of a virtual personal organization training center that offers classes, workshops, and other resources for businesses and individuals. Barbara Reich, FAEBSU Credits, Consultant, New York City; e-mail: breich@organizingjunkie.com; organizingjunkie.com

**Andrew Mellen**
Andrew Mellen is an organizational expert, public speaker, and the best-selling author of *Unstuff Your Life!* Mellen has addressed audiences at TEDx, Sustainable Silicon Valley, and more. Corporate clients include Time, Inc., NetApps, Genentech, Singapore Tourism Board, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Media appearances include The New York Times; *O, The Oprah Magazine; America Now, The Lisa Oz Show, The Nate Berkus Show, Oprah & Friends; Martha Stewart Living Today, ABC, NBC, and CBS; CW; *HGTV, DIY Network, LiveWell Network, KnowMoreTV, Fine Living, Better TV, Ladies Home Journal, Woman’s Day, Family Circle, USA Today; CG, InStyle, and NPR*. Mellen maintains a private practice working with clients including Fortune 100 companies, nonprofits, CEOs, award-winning filmmakers and authors, and overwhelmed parents. In 2013, Mellen founded Unstuff U, a virtual personal organization training center that offers classes, workshops, and other resources for businesses and individuals.

Andrew Mellen, Andrew Mellen, Inc., New York City; e-mail: andrew@andrewmellen.com; andrewmellen.com
what’s your organizing personality?

Get to know yourself and discover surefire strategies to eliminate clutter once and for all.

Clutter is personal. Those pesky piles that linger around your home are piles that you (or someone in your family) created. The way you feel when you stumble over shoes dumped by the back door or attempt to work at your messy desk is just as personal. Argh!

Although your disorganization is personal, it is not unique. In fact, your clutter-creating habits likely fall into one of four distinct organizing personalities: Tidy, Social, Visual, and Multitasking.

“When we first visit a new client’s home, we’re paying attention to their personalities and preferences as much as their clutter,” says Deborah J. Cabral, professional organizer and founder of The DeClutter Coach. She and her team have a wealth of clutter-busting strategies they can share, but some great techniques simply don’t work for some people.

Success looks a little different for each organizing type, as does the way you get there. But the big goal is always to “have a home where you can find what you need with minimal effort,” Cabral says.

A professional organizer can help you pinpoint your personality, or begin the process yourself by reading through the four profiles on pages 10–13. When you find one that resonates with you, dig deeper to learn techniques to overcome your most common obstacles and stay motivated. Don’t worry if you find yourself connecting with more than one type. Most people are a combo of two types or have a primary and secondary type.

“You’re a mix of characteristics, and you’ll be most successful with a mix of solutions,” Cabral says. Don’t forget to consider the other personalities that share your home. Spouses and partners are often different types. Children are not only frequently different from their parents, but they’re also still developing psychologically, which means that for a month a kid might be one type, then suddenly transition to another.

Whatever the types in your life, Cabral cautions about labeling family members. “No one type is messier than another; they’re just different,” she says. The key is to recognize your types, acknowledge your differences, and circle back to that big goal: A home where you can find what you need with minimal effort is one where no one has to change personalities and everyone takes a step to the middle.

FOR RESOURCES, SEE PAGE 108.

Written by Brian Kramer & Deborah J. Cabral
Produced by Brian Kramer
Photographed by Jay Wilde
CHARACTERISTICS
- Passionate about heirlooms, collections, and mementos.
- Happiest when surrounded by personal items.
- Sentimental and personable.
- Feel emotionally connected to items.
- Even if you’ve never used it, you truly believe you’ll need the item someday.

IDEAL ORGANIZING PLAN
- Work with someone you trust to guide you through decisions until you gain confidence. Skip logical debates.

RELATIONSHIP TO CLUTTER
You see clutter as your best friend. Your many personal items have special stories and meanings, which makes you feel safe and comfortable.

ROADBLOCK:
Indecision. Gently force yourself to make choices by classifying items as friends, acquaintances, and stranger. Give prime storage to friends and let go of strangers.

FAST FIRST PROJECTS
- Organize photos or other memorabilia in an album or scrapbook. Rather than chronologically, display by theme, such as vacations, holidays, events, or pets.
- Take digital pictures of yourself with your mementos. Then give away or donate the items.
- Pass three items onto family members or friends.

HOW TO STAY MOTIVATED
- Remind yourself frequently that memories are not in physical objects but in your heart and mind.
- Have someone you trust ask the hard questions such as “Have you ever worn this?” and “When was the last time you used this?”
- Start with small stakes. Declutter a less-important closet or dresser rather than your messiest space.

OPTIMAL ORGANIZING TOOLS
- Repurposed vintage items or family heirlooms
- Photo-safe, acid-free frames, albums, boxes, and folders
- Decorative storage, such as painted or fabric-covered boxes
- Digital camera

SHOPPING TIP:
Respect the items you choose to keep by purchasing appropriate-size organizers and containers that are made of durable materials.

CHARACTERISTICS
- Need to have a place for everything and everything in its place.
- Super Mom—or at least other parents think so.
- Often have immaculate homes, along with a few dirty, little secrets.
- Thrive on structure, order, details, and efficiency.
- Manage multiple projects and deadlines well.

IDEAL ORGANIZING PLAN
- Listen to others’ ideas and draft your own best plan. Include bullets or check boxes so you can mark off completed items.

RELATIONSHIP TO CLUTTER
Your clutter is often situational. A specific unexpected event, such as a promotion or a personal trauma, results in too much on your plate.

ROADBLOCK:
Perfectionism. Aim for a home that’s good, comfortable, and efficient. Getting everything in its place is achievable, but allow yourself a little dust.

FAST FIRST PROJECTS
- Go through files; make them effective and efficient.
- Sort all pantry goods, placing oldest items in front. Establish a weekly plan for shopping and meal prep.
- Rotate seasonal clothing in one person’s closet, assessing whether items need to be donated, repaired, or replaced.

HOW TO STAY MOTIVATED
- Write down specific goals. Tidy people have to know exactly what they want to do with a space if they’re going to succeed.
- Break big projects into bits. Identify what you want to do with a closet, then each shelf, and finally every bin.
- Assign target due dates. You can always revise them, but you must have a goal to work toward.

OPTIMAL ORGANIZING TOOLS
- Daily planner and official to-do list (either hand-written or digital)
- Dry-erase memo board and family calendar
- Targeted digital apps
- Drawer and shelf dividers and sorters

SHOPPING TIP:
- Use targeted digital apps to help you stay organized and motivated.

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- Take digital pictures of yourself with your mementos. Then give away or donate the items.
- Pass three items onto family members or friends.

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SHOPPING TIP:
Respect the items you choose to keep by purchasing appropriate-size organizers and containers that are made of durable materials.
**CHARACTERISTICS**

- Imaginative and creative.
- Keep everything in sight because “out of sight is out of mind.”
- Work on many projects simultaneously but might struggle to complete them.
- Like surroundings that are beautiful, stimulating, and comfortable.
- Struggle to maintain complex systems and plans.

**IDEAL ORGANIZING PLAN**
Skip written plans. Find finished images that speak to you and replicate them in your own life.

**RELATIONSHIP TO CLUTTER**
You’re generally detached from the abundant items around you. You don’t consider your abundant items to be clutter; they’re just a fact of your life.

**FAST FIRST PROJECTS**
- Clear kitchen countertops or another flat surface in a public space. Hang a “No Clutter Zone” sign as a reminder.
- Reorganize one frequently used shelf, bath vanity, or nightstand. Pick something you can start and complete in one session.
- Identify the first thing you see when you wake up or enter your home. Declutter this area and use it as a daily reminder of success.

**SHOPPING TIP:** Flex your creative muscles before shopping by giving new organizing responsibilities to items you already have on hand. Make sure you can clearly see what you store in any repurposed container.

**OPTIMAL ORGANIZING TOOLS**
- Clear plastic or glass containers
- Bulletin boards
- Open shelves and lidless bins
- Color-coded labels and folders

**HOW TO STAY MOTIVATED**
- Since seeing is believing, look at before-and-after pictures of others’ projects. Snap your own progress pics to build confidence.
- Create real-world or electronic vision boards with images and notes for each big project.

**SHOPPING TIP:** Always opt for the simplest and easiest version of any tool you’re interested in. A single, well-placed hook for keys is better than an elaborate memo board with lots of features.

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**CHARACTERISTICS**

- Hardworking and busy all day—but you can’t recall what you accomplished.
- Tend to procrastinate and lose track of time.
- Would rather be doing something you enjoy.
- Overwhelmed by stuff or commitments.
- Pay a lot of late and overdraft fees.

**IDEAL ORGANIZING PLAN**
Keep the plan quick and easy, noting specific start and end times for each task or project.

**RELATIONSHIP TO CLUTTER**
You view clutter as the enemy, but you’re moving fast and don’t have time or energy to deal with it. Besides, you have lots of other things you’d rather do.

**FAST FIRST PROJECTS**
- Identify your most stress-inducing space and work there first.
- Pick something you’re interested in. Like to cook? Work on the utensil drawer tonight.
- Streamline to a single personal schedule and single family schedule. Either paper or electronic is fine, but you must choose.

**HOW TO STAY MOTIVATED**
- Have an accountability partner to verify that you completed a task or project.
- Set up specific rewards, including little things for finishing tasks and bigger ones for completed projects.

**SHOPPING TIP:** Always opt for the simplest and easiest version of any tool you’re interested in. A single, well-placed hook for keys is better than an elaborate memo board with lots of features.