

Five steps to get organized at home

Most of us were not born organized, but thankfully organization is a skill and can be learned. With any organizing system, the key is to keep it simple. The easier it is to use, the more likely you are to use it!

While this method works for many areas, it works especially well for a playroom.

1. **Reduce** – Toss or donate what you don't need, want or use. Get at least 3 sorting boxes, a recycle bin and a big garbage can! Label the boxes – donate, move and store. *Donate* is for charities or friends; *move* is for things that belong in another room and *store* is for items you're not sure about or don't use very often. Put the *store* box into temporary storage and label with a "discard by" date (e.g. in one year). Pull items from the box as needed and in a year get rid of the unopened box.
2. **Contain** – When everything has a home, it's much easier to put things away. Use boxes to group like items and use sticky notes as temporary labels. As you are putting items into the box, list them on the sticky notes. Before you shop for containers, measure the size of each grouping (plus 20% for growth) and determine where the container will actually go. For toys, see-through containers work best and you may want to purchase shelving (it is easier to pull containers on and off shelves when they are not stacked).
3. **Label** – Knowing where to put everything makes it much easier to find things and put them away. Use the sticky notes from Step 2 to prepare labels for your containers (hand-written or computer). Write the main category in BIG letters and list each item in smaller letters. Children respond well to visual clues, so you may want to have them draw / cut out pictures for their toy boxes (e.g. Dolls/dress up/crafts).
4. **Review and revise** – Use your new setup for a few days. Is it easy to use? If it isn't working, change it to better meet your needs. You'll know when you have it right because it will feel right, and then keeping it that way will just come naturally.
5. **Repeat regularly!** Staying organized is an ongoing activity, not a final destination. When a container is full, it's time to reduce again! Constantly re-evaluate your belongings, and if they no longer fit into your life, they need to leave home!

by Elaine Jermy, *Organized Evolution*
www.organizedevolution.com

Want to get organized? Get a FREE Idea Kit packed with simple tips to help you get organized at the Organized Evolution website.



MORE TIME - LESS STRESS

© Elaine Jermy 2003