

# the Source

Stage your home. If you've heard this phrase, you're not alone. It is the newest buzzword in real estate circles to describe cleaning up and organizing your home for sale. No longer can you simply put a sign on the front lawn advertising your home.

In a sluggish real estate market, people have to work harder at selling their home or be stuck with two mortgages. Experts say that staging is all about showcasing your home, not your personality or likes and dislikes. If there is personal memorabilia or clutter in the home or if the home is dirty, it is harder to sell. Collections don't sell a home. Open space does.

While you can hire a professional stager or professional organizer to get your home in tip-top shape, you can do it yourself and save a few bucks by following these tips:

**Clean.** Among the first things experts suggest is to clean the home thoroughly. That means a deep clean that includes cleaning ceiling fans and light fixtures.

**Open Traffic Patterns.** Make sure the living room looks open with easy traffic patterns that allow people to move around. Reposition furniture or remove extra furniture to maximize space. Limit the room to one function. Take the computer out of the living room as well as anything else that would not normally be in the living room.

**Clear Countertops.** Clear kitchen countertops of everything except a fresh flower arrangement. If you are selling your home, store the coffeemaker, knives, toaster and any other paraphernalia in the cabinets when showing your home.

**Eliminate Gels, Lotions and Potions.** Baths should be clean and hygienic. Put away excess product in the shower or bath. Clean out the medicine chest and cabinet

## SETTING THE STAGE

Tips for organizing your home for sale



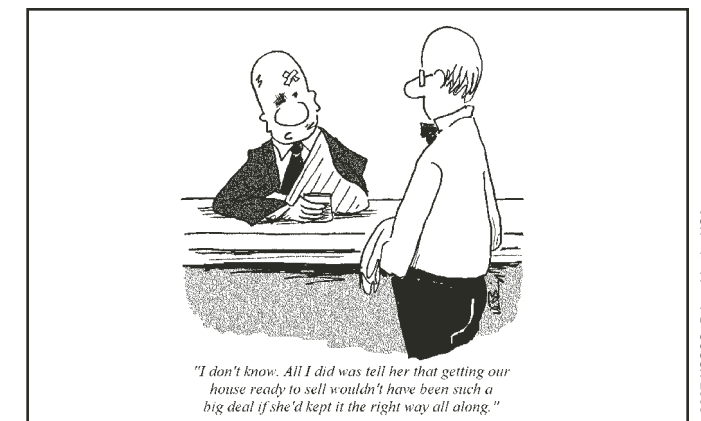
under the sink. Keep counters clear. Update the fixtures if necessary to maximize the appeal.

**When in Doubt, Throw it Out.** Weed through closets and toss any clothes that you don't wear and store those that are out of season. The goal is to have your closets look roomy.

**Reduce Clutter.** Clear off the nightstand in the bedroom and rid home offices of desktop clutter. Make sure the two-car garage can comfortably accommodate two cars. Basements are all about showing off bonus storage. Contain things in plastic bins. Even if the contents are not organized, it will look organized.

Whether or not you are selling your home, it benefits all homeowners to follow these tips. For many homeowners who are looking to sell, once they spiff up their home, they fall in love with it all over again and don't want to leave.

For more help getting organized, visit the National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO) at [www.napo.net/get\\_organized](http://www.napo.net/get_organized) for a list of professional organizers that can be searched by zip code.



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Your Source for Information  
About Business Products

## FACT CHECK

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Organization Products
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Anyone Organized
- *Helpful Tips*  
Organize Your Mobile Storage

### HELPFUL TIPS...

## Organize Your Mobile Storage, Too.

Do the contents of your grade schooler's backpack resemble something that should only be approached with a pair of tongs and protective gear? Your office and your home may be organized, but what about your kids?

As kids take on more responsibility and schools step up the number of assignments, you can help ensure your child's success by keeping their backpack as cleared as your desk.

#### Here are eight tips:

1. Make time to discuss getting organized over a snack together. It is more informal, and you're likely to get their full attention.
2. What works for your child? Do they prefer a

folder or a binder? Get their input on how they prefer to be organized.

3. Enlist your child's help. Base the organization on your child's preferences; not yours.

4. Come up with a plan. How many classes do they have? Do they require a binder or folder for each? Does everything need to be brought to school every day? The answers to these questions will help you devise a workable plan.

5. Don't criticize. It is hard to keep a slouchy, unstructured backpack organized, so don't be too critical.

6. Clean out the backpack regularly. Do emphasize a regular clean out. Every Friday is usually a good time to purge anything that isn't essential.

7. Keep a family calendar. Post tests and school activities on a large calendar in the kitchen that also may include family gatherings and birthdays. This keeps school united with family activities and provides a big picture of the latest happenings.

8. If your purse or briefcase needs some straightening out, see tips #1 through #7 above.

# 7

## Seven of the best organization products



It's fall and the crisp air has got you motivated to clean up and get organized. The problem is, once you purge everything, what are some of the products that will help you get things back in order and keep them that way?

Here's a list of some of the top organizing products for every room in your life:

### 1. Garage Hooks

The key to any organization is to use the vertical space; so as much as possible, get things up on the wall. This means buying racks that are specially made to hold shovels, rakes and the like, as well as the gadgets found in hardware stores that will hold bikes on the wall and a multitude of other paraphernalia all of us store in the garage or basement.

### 2. Box Bottom Hanging Files

If your hanging folders are bulging with paper, consider using a box-bottom hanging folder. They have flat bottoms (cardboard at the bottom keeps them flat) and come in 1-inch, 2-inch and larger widths. Using these prevents folders and papers from overflowing the top of their hanging folder.

### 3. Drawer Dividers

Yes, we all need junk drawers, but they don't have to look that way. Keep your junk drawer, sock and underwear, and desk drawers, looking neat with drawer dividers. There are two different types

of drawer dividers. One is an 'Expand-a-Drawer,' which is a one-piece item that expands to fit most kitchen-sized drawers. The other type comes in individual combinations of three-inch sizes. Drawer organizers with compartments make it easy to stash paper clips, rubber bands and the like in a tidy, self-contained area.

### 4. Bins

When you hear the word bin, you think of the large plastic tubs that can store seasonal decorations. Those are great to keep the basement and closets organized. In fact, they can be purchased in colors specially geared to the season for easy identification. But don't let your imagination stop there. There are leather-covered bins and linen-covered bins that come in a variety of colors and are ideal for keeping magazines tidy on a coffee table or even for storing folded shirts in a closet. Plastic bins are equally as good for storing potatoes and onions in the pantry as they are for storing CDs and DVDs in the office. When it comes to bins, they may be among the handiest organizational products out there.

### 5. Shredders

If you're in the middle of purging, consider using a shredder to protect your identity and minimize the paper that ends up in a landfill. If your needs are

minimal, a small portable shredder may do the trick. If you need to shred volumes on a daily basis, go for the larger, high-capacity machines.

### 6. Calendar/PDA (Personal Digital Assistant)

To keep track of appointments, birthdays, and everyday tasks, a calendar or PDA is a must. Or, if you prefer to hand-write your reminders, get an appointment calendar that gives you the space you need. Choose from versions that show a day, week or month at a time. Many also come with address pages so that you can keep your contact information right with your calendar.

### 7. Label Maker

Label a bin and for some mystical reason it tends to be used for what it was intended for. Somehow a label makes everything official, from a new set of file folders to boxes storing old photographs. Make it a practice to label everything from the get-go. When you start a new file, put an official label on it instead of handwriting one. It will look neater and soon, you'll want everything in your life to be labeled.

**Ready-Tab® Extra-Capacity Hanging Folders**  
Pre-attached clear tabs makes files organization easy. Pressboard reinforcement makes folders strong enough for thick documents, presentations, catalogs or manuals. Letter size. Assorted colors—four each of red, orange, yellow, green and blue. 20 folders per box. **ESS-42700**

**Black-and-White Photo Wall Calendar**  
Get organized with this calendar featuring a distinctive black-and-white photo on each month. One month per page; full-year reference calendar on each page. Unruled daily blocks. Wirebound with hanger and full chipboard back. Page size 15-1/2" x 12". **HOD-3634**

**The Office Showcase**  
**SUPPLIES TO GET ANYONE ORGANIZED**

**Stow-Away® Crate**  
Stow extra files and papers out-of-sight with this lightweight, yet extremely durable crate. Two solid rubber wheels. Telescoping handle lets unit compact to fit under seats or overhead. 1.2 cu. ft. capacity. 16-1/2" w x 3-1/2" d x 18" h folded. Black. **SAF-4054BL**

**Scenic Weekly/Monthly Planner**  
Know what you're doing on any day with this 12 month (Jan.-Dec.) planner. Weekly: one week per two-page spread; monthly: one month per two-page spread with monthly tabs. Full-color scenic images with a different full-color image each week/month. Telephone/address pages and space for notes. Page size 8-1/4" x 10". Blue. **AAG-G700-17**

**Model PS-77Cs Confetti-Cut Shredder**  
Get rid of unneeded papers with this shredder that shreds up to 12 sheets at 11 feet per minute into 5/32" x 1 1/2" confetti particles. Shreds staples, paper clips, CDs/DVDs and credit cards. 9" paper entry. Safe Sense™ technology stops shredding when touched. Auto start/stop. Overload protection. Manual reverse mode. 7-gallon wastebin capacity. 15" w x 11-1/4" d x 20-1/4" h. **FEL-3217701**

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