

Organizing Your Home Contents

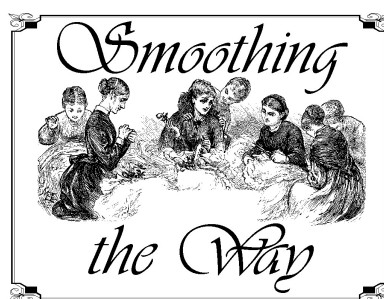
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Recorded Webinars

Organizing Your Home, Part 1

Organizing Your Home, Part 2



training, support, and encouragement
for home schooling parents

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Organizing Your Home

I. First Step – De-clutter

- A. Clutter is anything that takes more *from* us than it gives *to* us in practical use and enjoyment.
- B. 80% of what we use comes from 20% of what we own.
- C. Clutter gets in the way of spending time with family.
- D. Clutter makes cleaning time less efficient.
- E. Count the cost of each possession
 - 1. cost in time
 - 2. cost in space
 - 3. cost in money
- F. We don't need things to be happy – fewer *is* better.
 - 1. fewer toys promote more creativity
 - 2. fewer clothes mean less clothes care
- G. De-clutter one room or closet at a time
 - 1. four boxes
 - a. trash
 - b. giveaway (charity)
 - c. sorting (work on it later)
 - d. emotional withdrawal (hard to part with items – tape it up and six months later you will find you don't miss it)
 - 2. work with a friend who will challenge you
 - 3. empty room; put back only that which is needed
- H. After de-cluttering, organize
 - 1. high use items in most accessible place
 - 2. low use items in out-of-the-way place
 - 3. after de-cluttering as much as possible, choose storage tools
 - 4. leave nothing on floor

II. Second Step – Develop a Plan

- A. A household system functions so school can be the priority. Getting behind means housework becomes the priority by default.
- B. Basic tips –
 - 1. always put things back
 - 2. don't go out leaving a messy house
 - 3. 10-minute pick-up times throughout the day
- C. Get the children involved
 - 1. chore chart listing each child's jobs
 - 2. checklist for each room detailing jobs to be completed

III. Third Step – Follow Through!

- A. Habits are formed in 21 days – Do not return to previous state of disorder
- B. Plan catch-up days throughout the year

IV. Resources

- A. *Hidden Art of Homemaking*, Edith Schaeffer
- B. *The Messies Manual* and *Messies No More*, Sandra Felton
- C. *The Family Manager*, Kathy Peel
- D. *Side-tracked Home Executives*, Pam Young & Peggy Jones
- E. *Sink Reflections*, Marla Cilley
- F. *Clutter's Last Stand* and *Is There Life After Housework?*, Don Aslett
- G. *Looking Well to the Ways of Your Household (Practical Help for the Domestically Challenged)*, Mary Carney
- H. *401 Ways to Get Your Kids to Work at Home*, Bonnie Runyan McCullough
- I. *Choreganizers: The Visual Way to Organize Household Chores*, Jennifer Steward
- J. *Emilie's Creative Home Organizer* and other books by Emilie Barnes
- K. *The Overload Syndrome: Learning to Live within Your Limits*, Richard A. Swenson
- L. *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives*, Richard A. Swenson

WEBSITES

FLY Lady

<http://www.flylady.net>

Sites to help you declutter

<http://www.freefromclutter.com>

Household planning charts

<http://donnayoung.org/household>

Chore charts

<http://www.tipztime.com/chorecharts/freechorecharts.html>

Children and Chores

Start teaching your children at a young age to value and respect their property and home.
Giving children chores and responsibilities shows love and value:

- ☆ Thank you for taking out the trash, you are such an important part of the family!
- ☆ What a great job you did picking up your room; I am so glad you love our home enough to keep it looking nice!

Teach your child to pick up after each activity.

- ☆ Use the “when and then” method. “When you pick up your toys, then we will play dress-up.”
- ☆ Be consistent in your approach, remembering habits take time to develop.

Do not do anything for your child that he/she can do for himself. Get your child involved in the process by allowing them to choose the chores they feel they can do.

☆ AGES 2-3

put away playthings
wipe spills
clear dishes from the table
feed pets
pick up clothing, shoes
dress self
bring dirty clothes to laundry

☆ AGES 4-5

make own bed
take out garbage
set the table
clear the table
water plants
put away clean utensils
hold the dust pan
take things out of the car
bring in mail

☆ AGES 6-7

separate laundry by color
sweep floors
dust
pour drinks
make sandwiches
rake yard
wash dishes
fold laundry
answer the telephone

☆ AGES 8-9

put away groceries
make shopping lists
put away laundry
empty garbage
peel vegetables
get snacks
take own bath
vacuum
walk pet
sew buttons

☆ AGES 10-12

change the bed
clean the bathroom
cook simple meals
wash the dog
wash the car
wash clothes
clean windows
watch younger siblings with adult in the home
iron clothes

☆ AGES 13+

mow the yard
bake cookies and cakes
do chores in the neighborhood for pay
baby-sit
volunteer work
cook more elaborate meals/family meals
do family meal planning

Use a chore chart. Your child needs visual re-enforcement just like you do (calendars, day timers!).

- ☆ Let the child help choose the site of the chart.
- ☆ Let the child have the reward of placing the sticker or marking a chore done.
- ☆ Place checklists in rooms where more than one task needs to be completed (bathroom, kitchen, etc.)

Always praise a child for a job well done or when a child is done with a task.

- ☆ Use the words “good job” (not good boy) or “I really like the way you _____.” (finished on time, stayed on task, polished those faucets, stacked those towels, etc.)
- ☆ Try hiding a “treat” (notes, stickers, coins, candy) in a place that it can only be found if the task is completed.
- ☆ Teach your child the joy of self-evaluation. Looking to see if each time they do a task they can improve in quality of the job, shortened time of work, work done without being asked.

Be sure to be specific and not to have false expectations.

- ☆ You WILL have to train the child for the task. You should plan on supervising a task, in varying degrees, until it is mastered.
- ☆ When beginning a new task, divide it into workable sections. For instance don't say, “clean your room.” Say, “I need you to pick up all your clothes.” When this task is done satisfactorily, say, “I need you to pick up all the _____ (Legos, Barbies, etc.).” Work through the process until the room is done and then say, “What a great job you did CLEANING up your room.” This re-enforces what the completed task looks like.

Model the behavior you want to see in your children.

- ☆ You have to be willing to do the things you ask from them, admit your failures and try again if you must!
- ☆ Remember, habits take weeks to develop, so make a commitment to stick with it!
- ☆ Start small and work your way into it OR just put the rest of your world on hold and go for it! ☺



Organizing Your Home

You are organized when:

- ✓ clutter is under control and the children know where things belong
- ✓ you have a basic weekly plan for school, chores, cleaning, errands, shopping, church, and other family activities
- ✓ the family knows the basic daily routine
- ✓ you have a system for filing and retrieving important papers
- ✓ you have a system for storage
- ✓ meals are served regularly!

To reduce stress, we need systems for organizing in four key areas:

Time
Information
Paperwork
Space and stuff

Being organized means you can find whatever you need within 10 minutes.

Tips for Organizing TIME

- ✓ Routines are a tool for training children in responsibility and initiative
 - routines don't have to be rigid – use time “boxes,” one after another instead of by the clock
 - job rings, checklists – age appropriate chores
 - daily routine – “Habit is to life what rails are to transport cars,” Charlotte Mason
- ✓ Systems for organizing time
 - calendars
 - plan books
 - “to do” list

Anchor your day with routine. Add to routine one thing at a time; attach a new habit to one already established.

Tips for Organizing INFORMATION

- ✓ Information age, keep the source
- ✓ Systems for organizing information
 - catalogs – file drawer, magazine files, file boxes. Keep only what supports your philosophy, use as a reading list
 - magazines – magazine files. Clip just relevant material and file.
 - activities – write on calendar
 - books – shelves, please!

Easy access is important.

Tips for Organizing PAPERWORK

- ✓ File in a stack on its side with tabs so you can find what you're looking for.
- ✓ Categories
 - household – financial, warranties, records
 - interest files – crafts, hobbies
 - monthly files – holiday ideas
 - unit files/topic files – file resources, book lists, resource people, lesson plans
 - children – art, schoolwork by school year or calendar year

Establish a day in the basic week plan for paperwork.

Tips for Organizing SPACE and STUFF

- ✓ Set up your house for learning. Organize your space with areas designated for particular activities.
- ✓ Borrow the idea of learning centers and adapt to your family.
 - computer/printer – CDs, computer references
 - play – toys
 - making music – instruments, sheet music, music boxes
 - listening – cassettes, records, stereo, books with tapes
 - dress-ups
 - workbench
 - craft supplies
 - writing and drawing – bookmaking supplies, colored pencils, crayons, markers, stencils, rulers, variety of paper
 - reference – encyclopedias, dictionaries, atlas, globe

Perhaps an entire room for learning, but learning activities everywhere to invite exploration.

S ort with four boxes

P rioritize high use/low use

A ssess value

C ontrol with containers

E valuate – are systems working?