



The Organizing Authority®



IKEA®
Conshohocken

Thank you for joining us for the **“Ask the Organizer!” Free Shredding Event** on Saturday, April 30, 2011, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at IKEA® Conshohocken, sponsored by the National Association of Professional Organizers - Greater Philadelphia Chapter (NAPO-GPC), Wiggins Shredding and IKEA®.

ORGANIZING TIPS

Living Room/Media

- Put a small table or rack by your entry way to collect backpacks, purses, wallets and keys. Make sure everything has a place so that clutter doesn't pile up on sofas, chairs and coffee tables. Use this location to place outgoing items so they leave the house.
- Come up with a number of DVDs and CDs that it is reasonable to store in your entertainment system, based on how often you use them. Consider downloading or renting as space-saving options. Use storage that is closed to avoid dust.
- Have appropriate storage (aka “a home”) for books, sofa throws, remotes and magazines so everything can be put away quickly. Use baskets, ottomans, magazine racks, bookcases, etc.

Kitchen

- When you open cooking or baking staples with a long shelf life, such as spices, write the month and year on the container so you can keep track of its age. Also, when you freeze food, put the contents and date on it.
- Buy inexpensive measuring cups and spoons and store them inside the container of ingredients that you use frequently (e.g. coffee, hot chocolate, oatmeal, dog food). Only keep items you use every day on your counter.
- Have the five kitchen basics according to Rachel Ray: a good sharp knife, huge cutting board with rubber feet, big deep sided skillet, good wooden spoon and bowl for garbage by the cutting board. Keep only the gadgets you use, including items in the gadget drawer and appliances.

Workspace/Office

- As you bring mail through the door each day, designate one sorting area where you categorize it: to do, to read, to file, trash (use a large can). Then designate places for each category; place bills where you pay them, papers to file in the filing cabinet, reading material in a basket/briefcase, to-do pile by your day planner, etc.
- Set up your filing system with broad categories and keep it simple. Set up folders according to where you would go to find it if you needed it. Purge files once a year when you do your taxes.
- Keep taxes and all supporting documents for seven years. Keep the most recently completed year in your current file drawer and the rest of the returns in the attic/basement. Bills that aren't used to support taxes can be purged after one year.

Remember to ask a NAPO-GPC Professional Organizer how to enter to win door prizes!

The National Association of Professional Organizers-Greater Philadelphia Chapter (NAPO-GPC) is *the* resource for organizing professionals in Eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Central and Southern New Jersey. Visit our website at www.napo-gpc.org and use the online “Find an Organizer” search tool to find a Professional Organizer in your area.

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ORGANIZING TIPS

Bedroom/Closet

- Determine how much clothing you need by what you use each season and how much space you have. Let go of any clothing that doesn't fit, doesn't make you feel good, hasn't been worn in a year, or is ripped, torn or stained. Follow the "one in, one out" method.
- Organize shoes without boxes on shelves or racks. Boxes take up too much space and you are more likely to wear the shoes if you love them or get rid of them if you don't wear them. Put a dryer sheet in each shoe to keep them fresh!
- To keep closets organized, keep unused hangers in a basket. When you do the laundry, bring the basket along for easy "out-of-dryer on-to-hanger" action! To fold laundry, sort by type first, then fold the items and place in baskets according to where it goes.

Children's Spaces

- Choose kid storage that can serve more than one purpose: storage ottomans, under-bed drawers, toy cubes, bookshelves and baskets. You can even repurpose the lowest kitchen drawer to store baby toys when children are small.
- The essentials in a child's bedroom are a desk, a bookshelf, a toy box, a bed and a place for clothes (either a closet or a dresser). Make sure there is a large trash can and a large laundry basket easily accessible for easy cleanup.
- To preserve your children's artwork take photographs of your child holding the artwork or photos of the artwork itself. Print out the photos then frame them, put them into a scrapbook, or make them into gifts. Pictures also show the age of the child when the art was created.

General Home Organization

- To unclutter a large room, start at the left and go around the room. First do a quick sort and put in piles/boxes as you go: Keep, Trash, Sell, Give Away, Donate, Recycle, Fix, Belongs in another room. Then go throw and purge again. Keep only what you will use, love and want to take care of.
- Store items where you use them. Keep frequently used items in "prime real estate" areas and infrequently used items tucked away for future use. If it's taking you too long to find something you use every day, find another home for it.
- Before you buy storage containers, categorize and purge what is not needed. Then determine the size of container, lid (to keep out dust) or no lid (for easy access), pretty or plastic, clear or opaque. Consider using things you already have to contain your items: your favorite mug, an antique basket/container, etc.

SPECIAL THANKS



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and the many generous donors of the exciting door prizes

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