



Organizing 101

Was getting organized one of your New Year's Resolutions? Started yet? If not, just call it *spring cleaning* and move forward with these simple steps:

- 1 Set priorities.** It can be overwhelming to tackle all of the clutter at once. Pick a room—or an area of a room—that is bothering you the most, and start from there. We will use a mudroom/laundry room for our examples.
- 2 Allow yourself time.** And stick to it. Avoid distractions and remember, it will likely take you twice as long as you think.
- 3 Sort.** Set up a staging area and label sections or containers/boxes with sticky notes. For example: cleaning supplies; laundry supplies; light bulbs/batteries; pet supplies; items that don't belong; items to toss; items to donate. Note: For items that don't belong, put them in the labeled box or section. Don't take them to where they belong at that moment. That would be a distraction, see #2.
- 4 Purge.** Ask yourself these questions for each item: Do you use it? Do you need it? Do you love it? Did you even know you had it? If the answer is "no," purge it.
- 5 Assign a home.** Find a logical space for each item, keeping the most used items within easy reach.
- 6 Contain and label.** You may need to purchase some storage products. For our mudroom example, we would recommend turntables for the cleaning products; stackable, clear, plastic bins with lids for cleaning rags/light bulbs/batteries/tools; and a 3-drawer, clear, plastic unit to keep small items separated. Note that this shopping excursion is #6, not #1. A common mistake is to shop for products first, but you really should assess your needs and write down measurements before you shop. If you're like the average homeowner, you likely have many of the products you need from your last organizing attempt.
- 7 Maintain.** This is the most important step. Simply put things back in their designated homes and spend 10 minutes a week doing a maintenance check.
- 8 Still overwhelmed? Call us.** We can work with you to create an *Action Plan* for you to implement yourself, or we can work with you every step of the way.

