



Neat Freak News

Bimonthly organizational tips for home, work and life.

www.neat-freak.com

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Brace yourselves, because I'm about to contradict myself. I always preach "organization is not about the products you buy, but the systems you build," and "no one needs to break the bank to get organized." Well, turns out there are some REALLY cool new organizing tools available that are functional, well-made, and pretty to look at, too. And when something is nice to look at, it's more likely that you'll be motivated to keep it looking that way! So I thought I'd share some of my new favorites and tempt you to splurge (just a little) on something that will help you get and stay organized this summer.

Pull yourself together with M:O

I just purchased some of these snazzy looking binders and folders from M:O and I can't say enough great stuff about them. They're colorful, well designed, and very functional for professional or personal use. I love the clear business card holders that easily stick to their other products -- I look like a pro AND I'm sure no one will be tempted to take off with my fabulous looking stuff! Check out their full line at www.yourmo.com.

Cord Management for the electronically overloaded

If you're like our family, you're constantly sorting through cell phone, iPod, and camera chargers trying to untangle a big mess. This product brings all of your cords together to live in harmony in one pretty, leather-like station that charges up to 4 devices at once. Check it out under cord management at www.kangaroomstorage.com.

Just Organize Your Stuff!

I'm a bit miffed that this product exists, because I had dreams of designing something just like it, but they beat me to it and I have to admit, it's really well done. The JOYS binder system helps you organize your entire life, including everyday stuff, wealth, wellness, home and hobbies. The graphics are attractive, it's customizable to work for you, and it truly is a product that can simplify your life. A perfect solution for busy families. Visit them at www.justorganizeyourstuff.com.

Tool free furniture from Legare

These products were a favorite at the NAPO (National Association of Professional Organizers) Conference this year (yes, seriously, there is such a conference made up of Neat Freaks just like me!). Their furniture is cool and modern – even Design Within Reach is selling it – well designed, and best of all it's "tool free," meaning easy and fun assembly. Essentially, it's furniture that fits together like a big puzzle. Legare makes

desks, media storage, bookshelves and more. Visit them at www.legarefurniture.com to view their full line of products!

Friends of NeatFreak can receive special discounts on many of these products. If you see something you like, just let me know!

FREAKIE FREEBIES

It's summertime. That means time to cut the grass, blow up the baby pool, kick around the soccer ball, and shut your eyes and sigh each time you make your way through your untidy garage. Don't put it off any longer! Here are a few quick and easy tips for taming your garage clutter. Hey, you might even park your car in there again.

1. The Big Empty

Wait for a sunny, not-so-hot weekend and pull EVERYTHING out of your garage. Once it's out, sort into piles. I recommend the following:

- Love it, Use it, Keep it
- Belongs Elsewhere
- Donate or Giveaway
- Trash

As you're deciding what to keep, sub-sort into categories (e.g. paint supplies, camping equipment, holiday decorations, yard tools, needs repair, etc.).

2. Pitch It!

If it's not in the keep category, don't let it back in the garage. Rather than filling up the landfill with unwanted stuff, try donating and/or giving away as much as you can. Our community has a very active Freecycle Yahoo! Group and you'd be amazed at what people are willing to take off your hands for free.

3. Hose It Down and Clean It Up

While it's empty, sweep, hose it out, paint the walls, paint the floor—do whatever you need to do to make your garage feel loved again.

4. Give it a Home

Group like items together and assign them a permanent home. Think about your frequency of use. Holiday items can be stored up high since you only need them once a year. Sports equipment that your kids use frequently should be kept down low so they can access it independently.

5. Hang it, Shelve it, Containerize it

Purchase or use existing clear plastic bins, hooks and shelves to store items and keep as much as possible off the floor. Think vertically and use your wall space creatively

—you can even purchase storage shelves for the space over your garage doors!

If this all sounds good, but you know you'll never get around to it, CALL ME! I'll tell you about my Garage Reclamation Package that will make your garage feel like a respected part of the house again.