



Manage Media Madness

Keys to sorting CDs, DVDs and computer discs

by Allison Carter



Whether your collection of CDs and DVDs is large or small, all those little discs can be difficult to manage. They often pile up around the TV, the CD player and the computer. Luckily, there are some attractive and inexpensive ways to store discs and other media essentials so they are easy to get to and put away.

Sort and purge

Before you begin organizing, get ready for a big cleanout. Gather some boxes and begin sorting your stuff. Take out each CD, DVD and videotape and decide if it's a keeper, one to give away, or a throwaway. If you are especially short on space, get tough about what you really still use and still like. If you haven't

Sorting Secrets

Perri Kersh of **Neat Freak Professional Organizing** in **Chapel Hill** recommends following these guidelines for keeping your electronic media in order and ready for use.

- First, sort through your CDs and DVDs and assess what you want to keep and what you may no longer need. There was a time and place for Culture Club, but will you really listen to *Karma Chameleon* again?
- Once you decide what to keep and what to toss, sort and organize your must-keep collection.
- Next, consider how you'd like to store your media. One space-efficient method is to remove CDs and DVDs from their cases and store them in large three-ring notebooks. There are also a number of vertical storage units such as CD and DVD towers.

Eileen Stevie of **Stevie Organizing Service (S.O.S.)** in **Raleigh** points out that with the constant changes with electronic media, there are several new organizing options.

- If you have an iPod or MP3 player, you can carry your entire music collection around with you, whether it's 200 songs or 3,000. This just about eliminates having to store CD cases.
- Keep your CDs and DVDs near where you're going to use them and be sure to put them back where they belong when you're finished with them so you'll be able to find them the next time you want them.

- Whatever system you use, allow room for your collection to grow. One of the disadvantages of using racks for CDs or DVDs that are stored using an alphabetical filing system is that every time you add to your collection, you'll have to move and reinsert each CD into a new slot.
- And no matter how you store your media, always be mindful of heat and humidity and the effects that might have on them.

Janice Russell of **Minding Your Matters Organizing** in **Cary** offers these tips for maintaining your family's collection.

- Taking out items that are not favorites or will not be watched again is especially important if you have an older form of media, such as cassettes, which may have limited machines for playback.
- Store items for appropriate accessibility. If children have permission to play certain media, those items should be within reach; media for more mature audiences should be out of reach. At the same time, it is important to store items close to the location where they are most likely to be played or viewed.
- Choose an organizing scheme. You can sort them alphabetically and/or categorically. If you are storing music, you can establish similar categories, whether by artist or genre.