



## Get organized

### De-cluttering to meal-planning and much more!

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#### GETTING STARTED

"Starting to get organized can be intimidating," says Good Riddance co-founder Heather Knittel, understating the obvious. She offers this list of baby steps to minimize the fear.

1 Start with something small -- your own chest of drawers or a hall closet.

2 Set a timer so you don't become discouraged or overwhelmed and quit. Start out by working for a half hour. If you still have some energy, then extend it for another 15 minutes or so. Also, take a break if you decide to work more than two hours. This will clear your head out a bit.

3 Put things in their proper places and keep them there. Sort items and keep like with like. Remove things that don't belong in the area in which you are working.

4 It's important to maintain order, so you must spare a couple of minutes a day to keeping things neat. Incorporate this into your routine work schedule.

5 Schedule a yard sale on your calendar, and if possible, place an ad. This will help keep your commitment to get organized.

6 Working on the most visible places first will help motivate you. Once you begin the process of decluttering you'll be surprised at how inspired you will be to continue.

#### NEAT IS ITS OWN REWARD

Clutter wastes time and energy. Knittel of Good Riddance offers these tips for controlling clutter.

1 Children respond well to colour-coding. Use different-coloured plastic bins in the playroom or kids' rooms for different types of toys. Clean-up time will be easier and it will feel like a game to the children.

2 Functionality is important to each room and clutter happens because you have the incorrect items in a room. Scan your house and make a mental note of what you do in each room. Identifying the use of each room in your house and keeping those related items in their respective rooms cuts the clutter significantly.

3 Hang it up! Ensure you have easy-access areas to hang coats and other items. We strongly recommend over-the-door hangers for the room of each person in your family.

4 Ikea has many economical solutions for storage. You can shop online and they can even provide you with staff to help you assemble your newly purchased furniture at a very reasonable price.

5 Junk drawers are essential. But you only need one junk drawer per household. Limit what you stick in that drawer!

6 Mail can be sorted swiftly if you have a recycling bin or bag at the front door. Simply discard the flyers and soliciting mail into the recycling receptacle before you come into your house. This tactic will easily cut in half the mail you bring into your home.

7 No sewing room! Use a closet to sew or do crafts in -- clean-up is easy, too -- just close the door!

8 Paper is the cause of so much clutter -- but here's a tip for those magazine articles you have been collecting. Keep them in a basket large enough to store them flat. Once the basket gets filled to the top, simply reach in, remove and discard

the bottom half. If you haven't read these articles by now...chances are you never will!

9Designate one area in your home or office for purse, keys and glasses and be diligent about putting these items there -- always!

#### THE EVER-IMPORTANT ENTRANCE

You never get a second chance to make a first impression -- so keeping your entrance hall tidy and welcoming is important. But it's not all about the guests. You'll thank yourself every time you leave or come home. Here are some basic tips from the organizing whizzes at Good Riddance ([goodriddance.ca](http://goodriddance.ca)).

1Always have a receptacle for umbrellas.

2Use wooden hangers in a hall closet. Coats and outerwear need the heavy-duty support these hangers provide.

3Use baskets or plastic bins to store mittens, gloves, scarves and baseball caps. Store ballcaps, hats and gloves in one and scarves, wraps, etc. in another. Or, if room permits, create a bin for each member of the family. You can also colour-code the baskets (a great idea for kids).

4Create an area for shoes. Ikea's wooden two-tier shoe racks are great (and inexpensive), and so are the vertical shoe pocket holders you can hang from the pole in the closet.

Sometimes it's difficult to keep shoes from covering the floor of an entranceway, especially if you have teenagers. Another option

is to use a large basket on the floor where teenagers can store their shoes.

5If you have a tendency to leave mail at the door rather than bringing it into the house and going through it on a daily basis, provide yourself with a basket large enough to hold the mail so it doesn't get strewn all over the place. This way you contain the mail in one place so you can retrieve it when you have time to deal with it.

6All hallways should have some sort of bench or table to provide family members with a place to put things down (temporarily!).

7It's handy to have a place to hang keys but some people prefer not to hang keys in clear view of the front door. Keys can be hung inside the closet or on a hook elsewhere in the home.

8Make use of all vertical wall space if you have a small hall closet. Hooks are easier and quicker to hang coats on and should be used if possible.

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