

## *Declutter Your Home: Why Being Organized Saves You*



. Image: Image: Burcu Avsar/Offset.com

**Americans waste almost an hour each day looking for misplaced stuff. Hooks and bins in your entry help corral your items while keeping them in sight, saving you time when you're heading out the door.**

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If you've ever accrued a late fee after losing a bill, thrown away spoiled peaches you forgot to eat, or bought yet another pair of sunglasses because you couldn't find yours, then you know being disorganized can cost you money.

At best, clutter in the home causes mistakes, late fees, overdue payments, and missed deadlines. At worst, a house in chaos can eat away at your finances, mar your credit, and reduce your productivity. That's a whopping price to pay for being disorganized.

According to an Ikea "Life at Home" survey, 43% of Americans admit to being disorganized, and the average American wastes 55 minutes per day looking for stuff they've lost or misplaced.

"Do you think organizing is just for appearances?" asks Lisa Gessert, president of Organizing.buzz, a professional organizing service in Staten Island, N.Y.

"Organizing your home is financially beneficial." Gessert stresses to clients the need to sort, purge, assign things a home, and containerize. "This process saves people tons of money."



## *A few words from the Principal Broker, Amanda L. Grover, SFR*

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### *Declutter Your Home: Why Being Organized Saves You Money...continued*

Here's why being organized saves you money, and how to get your home into shape:

#### **Disorganization in the Home Office Costs You:**

**Lost papers** = time spent looking for them, money wasted on duplicates

**Misplaced bills** = late fees, bad credit causes higher interest rates

**Missed tax deadlines** = penalties



If any of these sound familiar, you'll need a home office system for dealing with important papers, bills, and personal correspondence. The Ikea survey found 23% of people pay bills late because they lost them. Wall-mounted bill organizers can help you stay organized. Look for ones with two or more compartments to categorize by due date.

"Having your papers organized will save time, help you pay bills on time, and allow you to be more productive," says Alison Kero, owner of ACK Organizing, based in New York City.

Mount shelving and create a file system for important papers, such as insurance policies and tax receipts. Look for under-utilized space, such as converting a standard closet into built-in storage with shelves and cabinets for your papers, files, and office equipment. If you need to use stackable bins, don't stack them around equipment that needs air ventilation, such as scanners and Wi-Fi receivers, since they could overheat and malfunction — costing you money.

#### **Disorganization in Your Closets Costs You:**

**Missing clothes** = money spent on duplicates

**Hidden items** = wasted time since

you can't see what you own

**Accessory mess** = wasted money on items you don't wear, can't find  
Clothes organized in a "Organizing often reduces duplication of possessions," says Lauren Williams, owner of Casual Uncluttering LLC, in Woodinville, Wash. "No more buying an item for a second, third, fourth time because someone can't find it."

If closets are crammed, paring down is a must. First, take everything out. Rid yourself of multiples, anything you no longer wear, and assess your shoe collection. Create piles: purge, throw out, or donate. For what's left, you'll need a better closet system. You can choose a ready-made system that simply needs installation, or create your own. PVC pipe can be used to create additional hanging rods, and you may also want to add shelving to store folded clothes, hats, and bulky items. Look for wire mesh shelving, solid wood shelves, or an all-in-one closet shelving system depending on space. Large and small hooks can be wall-mounted to hold belts, accessories, and scarves.

#### **Disorganization in the Kitchen Costs You:**

**Expired food** = wasted money

**Overflowing pantry** = can't see what ingredients you have and duplicate them

**Crammed cabinets** = overspending on multiple dishes and gadgets  
Since the kitchen is often the hub of the home, it has a tendency to clutter. No wonder the Ikea survey found 50% of the world's kitchens have junk drawers. Categorize yours by adding small plastic or wooden drawer organizers for things like thumbtacks, rubber bands, scissors, and tape.

To avoid buying your third jar of oregano or second potato ricer, buy or build an organizational system for your pantry. Built-in lazy Susan's work great. Use pull-out mini shelving to corral items like dressings, hot sauces, and vinegars. Tackle cabinets and counters by mounting be-

hind-the-cabinet-door racks to hold items like pot lids or cutting boards. Add pull-out drawers in your bottom cupboards to make everything easily accessible and easy to see. You'll thank yourself when you get older, too.

#### **Disorganization in Your Living Areas Costs You:**

**Lost keys, missing wallet** = late for work, lost productivity

**Not being able to fully enjoy your home** = you spend money elsewhere for fun

**Blocked ventilation** = utility costs rise

Your living space is where you want to get the most enjoyment out of your home. If you can't relax and enjoy yourself there, you'll constantly be seeking out other places to find solace and fun — and that can add up to a lot of money spent on entertainment and recreational venues.

And, meanwhile, you could be paying more than you should for the living space you're not enjoying. "I run into people whose homes are unorganized to the point of papers, boxes and 'stuff' blocking air vents that supply heat and air conditioning to their homes," says Gessert. This costs a fortune in utility bills. Likewise, a jumble of electrical wires around TVs and home entertainment systems can be sucking energy from always being plugged in. Connect them all to smart power strips that can turn everything off with one switch.

Once you're living with organization, you'll start to see the benefits everywhere. No more dealing with late fees on bills, having to buy replacement earrings or bread knives when items go missing, and — perhaps best of all — no more having to leave your home in order to find relaxation and entertainment. After all, saving on bills can be a big boost to your monthly budget, but there's no greater value than getting more enjoyment out of your home.

Jennifer Nelson-HouseLogic

“Challenges are what makes life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.”  
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## Get to Know Our Team! Some Things That Might Surprise You...



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OLD MAN WINTER HAS FINALLY COME!! WE'RE FIGHTING THE SNOW AND THEN THESE WARM WEATHER BURSTS THAT ARE MELTING IT JUST AS FAST! YIKES! IT'S GREAT FOR THE WINTER SPORTS THOUGH. OUR OLDEST DAUGHTER IS LOVING HER FIRST YEAR OF SKIING AND OUR SON CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF THE SNOW! THE LITTLE ONE...WELL, SHE JUST STARES OUT THE WINDOW WISHING SHE COULD BE OUT THERE WITH THE OTHER TWO! BE SAFE OUT THERE!!

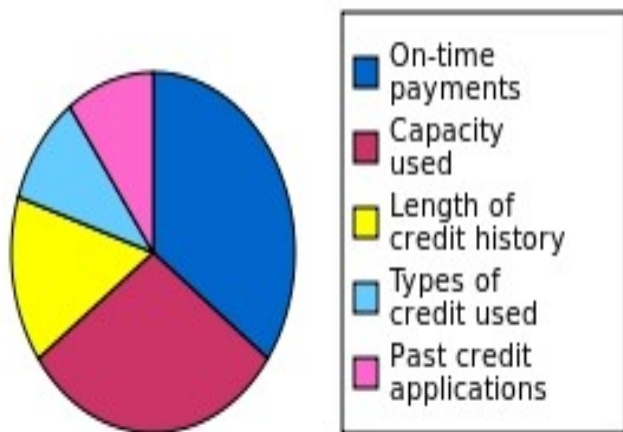
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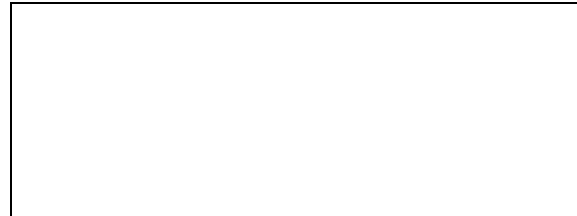
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HOW CAN IT POSSIBLY BE FEBRUARY ALREADY? WE WILL SOON BE IN SPRINGTIME MODE—WORKING OUTSIDE, FRESH AIR, PLANTING, GETTING THE POOL READY FOR SUMMER, SPENDING TIME WITH THE KIDS, PLANNING A SUMMER VACATION. IT ALL HAPPENS SO QUICKLY! WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO SPEND THE SUMMER IN A NEW HOME? WHETHER YOU ARE A LITTLE BIT COUNTRY OR PREFER CITY LIFE, WE HAVE THE HOME FOR YOU. LET ME HELP YOU FIND IT!

I HAVE MUCH ENJOYED THE "LIGHT" WINTER, SO FAR. THE ONLY THING I MAY HAVE MISSED WOULD BE THE SLIGHTLY SLOWER SCHEDULE! THINGS AT THE OFFICE HAVE BEEN BUSY AND THE MINISTRIES I AM INVOLVED IN HAVE KEPT ME ON THE GO, WITH NO BAD ROADS TO KEEP ME HOME! SPRING WILL BE HERE SOON AND SO WILL MORE NEW LISTINGS! STAY TUNED! :)



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