



ready, set, get motivated!

Kick procrastination to the curb and transform disorganized quarters into orderly spaces with these hurdle-conquering strategies from the pros.

Written by Ann Wilson Illustrations by Mark Marturello

WHEN IT COMES TO GETTING ORGANIZED, we all share a bit of Scarlett O'Hara's "tomorrow is another day" philosophy. But when tomorrow turns into weeks or even years, one small pile gives way to an unbearable amount of clutter. The good news is that it's never too late to take back a disorganized home. Organizational experts have an arsenal of turn-it-around tactics aimed at stimulating attitude changes so you can experience the benefits of a well-organized existence.

FEELING OVERWHELMED

ATTITUDE: "There's just too much to tackle. I don't have the time or energy."

SOLUTION: Come up with a plan and a timeline for taking it one step at a time.

Turn-It-Around Tactics

Feeling overwhelmed is the No. 1 reason clients seek the help of Virginia-based professional organizer Kathy Jenkins. "Being organized just means having a place for everything, putting everything back where it belongs, and knowing where things are so you can grab them quickly," Jenkins says. To keep it simple, she offers these tips:

- **Examine the room you want to organize** and visually break it into small areas that you can tackle in increments. Set achievable deadlines to give yourself a goal to work toward. Make a list of what stays and what could go to reduce clutter. "Organization becomes a plan rather than a dream when you write it down," Jenkins says.
- **Focus on the reason you need to reorganize**, such as creating a clutter-free area for family gatherings or cleaning out a guest room so there's space for visitors. Or, if negative reinforcement motivates you, picture how the space will look if you take no action:



unsorted mail piled to the ceiling or people eating while standing up because there's no place for them to set their plates.

- **Prioritize your tasks**, starting in an area where you can quickly see progress. "Commit to changing one habit, appreciate your success, and move on to the next," Jenkins says.
- **Schedule time to work on a project** when you're most energetic and least likely to be distracted. Set a timer and quit when the timer rings.