

crafty cures

Creative storage strategies clear off available countertop and take a family crafts room from chaotic to calm.



PROBLEMS

- Too much stuff was piled up on work surfaces, making it difficult to work or find items
- The kids couldn't reach books and crafts supplies on their own
- Mom's sewing table was overtaken by kids' artwork

SOLUTION Professional organizer Kathy Jenkins of Come to Order (see bio in "Meet the Pros," page 25) kick-started the reorganization by asking homeowners Rachael and Scott and their two children to sort supplies into broad categories—art supplies, paper, fabric, and sewing notions. "The first question to ask is whether each item is still usable," Jenkins says of the sorting process. "Is the paint or glue dried up, are the crayons broken, is the fabric scrap too small? If the answer is yes, get rid of them."

The next step in the sorting process is to determine if the family still uses the supplies and how much of each item is really needed. "We did a lot of cleaning out and downsizing, getting rid of things we haven't used in years," Rachael says. The result was a more manageable collection of arts and crafts supplies that the family could begin to organize.

With the sorting done, Jenkins turned her attention to designing specific zones that separate kid and adult activities and create accessible storage for every item. A new shelving system above the desk, for example,



"Keep about 20 percent of your space free to allow room for future growth."

—KATHY JENKINS,
PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER

THIS PHOTO The once haphazard sewing station is now neat and organized, thanks to a mix of glass jars, wire baskets, and closed boxes. All containers are easily accessible and no longer clutter the sewing table surface. Colorful wallpaper adds style to a formerly drab area.



REAL-LIFE CASE STUDY

keeps sewing supplies close to the sewing machine and provides a convenient place for Rachael to stash paints that she doesn't want the kids to use without her supervision. Desktop organizers help keep the work surface clean and orderly.

In a corner near the sewing niche, a storage cabinet stylishly corrals art supplies for the kids. Deep drawers hold crayons and Play-Doh while shallow shelves store finished artwork, as well as drawing and construction paper. A grid of clipboards gets the children's art off the table and on the wall in an ever-changing display that personalizes the crafts room.

Rachael's fabric stash—formerly stored in the basement—is now neatly organized by color and stored in clear plastic containers on high shelves on the wall adjacent to the sewing station. Shelves below the fabric storage area allow the kids to access toys, books, and puzzles without any assistance. In the center of the room, a multifunctional coffee table offers a space for the children to create art projects—leaving the

desk/sewing table free for Rachael.

To ensure the crafts space is an enjoyable work area, Rachael and Scott traded dark beige walls for a lighter gray hue and added a vibrant wallpaper to the back of the sewing niche for a dash of fun color and pattern. Thanks to smart storage ideas and inviting decor, this crafts area is finally a space where the family enjoys working together.

RESOURCES BEGIN ON PAGE 108.



ONE-HOUR CLUTTER CURE

MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE Empty the most easy-to-reach spaces in your crafts room and then fill those shelves and drawers with items you use frequently. Set up the space so it's easy and convenient to put things away.

BRIGHTEN YOUR SPACE Hang art or wallpaper to pretty up your crafts area. When you feel happy about your work space, you're more likely to keep it organized.



SPECIAL THANKS The Container Store, HomeGoods, and The Organizing Store



1 Labeled white cardboard boxes stacked on shelves separate crafts supplies by category. Ribbons stay untangled when contained in a box; paints are stored upside-down to show off their colors. **2** A raised shelf expands available storage space on the work surface. **3** Wall-hung clipboards use vertical space to display kids' artwork. A storage cabinet conceals art supplies. **4** Inside the crafts cabinet, clearly labeled shallow shelves store each child's finished works. Bottom shelves hold paper supplies. **5** Adjustable shelves above the sewing table can be reconfigured as needed. **6** Clear plastic bins corral Play-Doh and crayons and can be easily transported to a work surface in the center of the room. **7** Organized by color in clear boxes, fabric swatches are easy to find and are within easy reach of the sewing niche.

