



“How To GET Organized and STAY Organized”



Meet Donna Balkovic

Founder of A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING, Donna has been professionally organizing spaces in homes and offices for over 10 years. Donna thrives on creating order and functionality out of someone's chaotic clutter. Her motto is to “reduce stress and simplify your life”. Services she provides:

Home Staging: help showcasing your home to ensure it sells for top dollar in the shortest time. **Packing to Move:** ensuring you pack only what you want and need in your new home. **Unpacking Your New Home:** help with the unpacking, sorting and organizing of your new home so you set it up once. **Home Organization:** transform cluttered and disorganized areas to maximize space for ultimate functionality. **Office Organization:** sorting piles of paperwork, streamline filing systems and regain control of office efficiency. **Time Management:** personal training on managing multiple schedules, meeting deadlines and basic home and office operations.

If one of your New Year's resolutions was to get organized, you are not alone. You know your drawers need straightening, your closets need streamlining and your basement storage area needs uncluttering. With such big tasks ahead do you find yourself frustrated because you don't know where to begin? Being organized is one thing, but getting organized is another. Without the proper tools to get there, you are quickly caught in a tailspin and easily discouraged.

I have found there are 5 steps to complete any organization project. From a drawer to a closet, to a file cabinet to the attic, these steps will help you transform any dysfunctional space into organizational bliss.

- **STEP 1: SORT ITEMS** Enter a room, open a drawer or closet and start sorting like items into piles. All books, pens, hats, glasses, sheets, whatever it is...sort! Once all items are sorted and you are faced with numerous piles of “stuff”, move on to Step 2.
- **STEP 2: PURGE ITEMS** Have large trash bags and empty bins or boxes on hand. Label “Toss”, “Donate”, “Keep”, and “Relocate”. Work through each pile and determine what you will throw away or donate to a charity and what you will keep in this space or relocate to another area of the house. When you have cleared the space and are left with what is staying, move on to Step 3.

• **STEP 3: CREATE A PLAN** This is the most critical stage of the organization process. Sketch out a plan on paper how you envision this space will work for you. You will work through several drafts until you decide on one that stores items efficiently and will create an effective functional system. Once you are satisfied with your plan, you are ready to move on to Step 4.

• **STEP 4: CONTAINERIZE** Now is the time to determine what containers, bins, shelves or organizing system will be needed to store your items. Take measurements, browse organization websites and walk through home improvement stores to get ideas of storage units available to serve your needs. Only buy items that fit into your plan and ensure you allow for growth. Once your space is put together, you can breathe a sense of relief and admire how organized it looks. BUT you must remember, it is not all about the “look”. Ask yourself “Is this functional, and how do I keep it this way?” Step 5 is the glue that holds it all in place.

• **STEP 5: CREATE A MAINTENANCE PLAN** The final step is creating a maintenance plan to ensure your space retains its newly created functionality. This may mean adopting new systems into your day and your family's daily routines. Maintaining an organized lifestyle can be habit changing. Old habits need to be broken and new habits created. These must be taught and repeated until they become second nature.

BEING ORGANIZED IS ONE THING, BUT GETTING ORGANIZED IS ANOTHER.

Building habits that stick - you may need to:

- open/sort mail every day. No more piles in the kitchen.
- go through your child's back pack daily. No more missed permission slips.
- schedule time on your calendar to pay bills. No more late fees.
- file papers on a daily basis. No more 3ft piles.
- Shop according to a list and stick to it. No more excess mustard bottles in the pantry.

These steps lay the foundation to complete any organization task on your list. Do remember to not try to tackle everything at once. Create realistic goals and attainable timelines to achieve them. ■

Happy Organizing!

Find out more about A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING, in New Jersey at aplaceforeverythingnj.com or Call: 630-212-1048