



Tonia Tomlin, owner of Sorted Out, used storage baskets and tins for crafts to help organize kitchen table clutter.



ShelfGenie's Glide-Out shelving works perfectly for heavy and bulky items to eliminate unnecessary bending and reaching.

Conquer Kitchen Chaos

SECRETS TO CREATING AN ORGANIZED KITCHEN By TONIA TOMLIN

With the many purposes and functions of the kitchen, it's important that your kitchen be as organized as possible. However, with the many items most kitchens hold — food, appliances, cookware, utensils, plates, cups, etc. — it's not uncommon to find that the most-used room in the house is the least organized.

But, take heart: By following a few simple tips, you can conquer kitchen chaos.

CLEAR OFF THE COUNTERS

Store kitchen utensils in drawers, not on the counters in a bucket or basket. Eliminating the clutter from the counters makes the kitchen feel more inviting and "orderly." Keep the island cleared of the paper chaos by investing in a mail center, such as one from Pottery Barn. Each piece of mail, school permission slip and coupon will have its own home while making yours organized.

PURGE THE CARDBOARD

Get rid of your cardboard. It doesn't keep food as

fresh as clear, air-tight plastic containers or zip-lock bags. Cardboard also attracts bugs. So empty those cereal boxes and other boxed food items. Your food will be easier to find, taste a lot better and save you money in the long run.

INVEST IN THE RIGHT ORGANIZING TOOLS

Maximize your storage space in pantries by going vertical with your organizing tools. Put a bag holder on the wall for reusing shopping bags and under-the-shelf baskets in cabinets to maximize space. Use trolley bins for storing paper goods. They help you know what you have so you can use it.

SORT YOUR STAPLES, SNACKS AND SUPPLIES

Most people don't take the time to organize their refrigerator, but it is well worth the effort. Organizing the refrigerator is a simple way to save time, money and space.

Arrange your shelves in the refrigerator by category, such as dairy drawer, veggie drawer, fruit drawer, children's snack bin, etc. Also, the refrigera-

tor doors tend to become catch-alls with no method to the madness. Designate the doors for condiments and special items, such as special needs foods for diets, illnesses, weight loss, or medicines, etc. This will help you when making grocery lists, and you'll save money by not buying items you already have but can't find. On top of that, you will have a nice, uncluttered refrigerator.

Once you get your kitchen organized, stick to your organization system. Remember: It's much easier and much less time consuming to stay organized than it is to be disorganized.

Tonia Tomlin is the Founder and President of Sorted Out and Sorted Out Publishing (www.SortedOut.biz). Tomlin is an author, publisher, speaker and mother of twin girls. She has been featured on HGTV's Mission: Organization and is the author of the book Chaos 2 Calm: The Moms-of-Multiples' Guide to an Organized Family. You can contact Tomlin at Tonia@SortedOut.biz.



ABOVE: For uncluttered countertops, keep large appliances out of sight but within easy reach with Glide-Out shelving by ShelfGenie.

RIGHT: Three graduated depth shelves hold pots and pans of every size, while the drawer is great for lids and other flat items. The Base Pot and Pan Organizer with Inverted Frame from Timberlake Cabinetry is designed to keep kitchenware accessible and orderly.



FAR RIGHT: Timberlake Cabinetry's Wood Tiered Cutlery Divider with a dual level, fully extendable drawer design alleviates cutlery clutter and keeps silverware organized.

