

# New Year, Fresh Start



## New Year's Resolution #1 - Get Organized!!

by Anne Blumer, SolutionsForYou, Inc.

It's a new year and you've resolved this is the year you are going to get organized! As you begin the process, starting into what seems like an insurmountable task, your energy and enthusiasm begin to wane because like so many attempts to get organized before you just don't know how or where to begin. Sound familiar? Sometimes just knowing where to start is the most daunting part of organizing. Here are a few rules of thumb to follow when you head down your path to getting organized:

### BEGIN WITH YOUR BIGGEST FRUSTRATION

- Ask yourself what is causing you the most frequent frustration - that is where you want to start.

### PLAN YOUR ATTACK

- Plan time for your organizing project; four-hour blocks work best.
- Have the materials and resources you need on hand (garbage bags, drop box, stickers/labels to identify where items will go, and boxes for sorting).
- Don't buy containers until you have sorted and purged your items to know how many you need.
- Arrange with the charity of your choice to pickup your items for donation immediately after your organizing project is completed.

### WORK WITH OTHERS

- Working with someone can help you stay focused and is more energizing and fun.
- Ask a friend to help you get organized and return the same favor or for another trade.
- You may even consider hiring a professional organizer if you feel you need expert solutions and systems.

### WORK SYSTEMATICALLY

- Focus on the task - don't zigzag! Start working in one area and stick with it until it is finished.
- Sort your items by what you are keeping, selling, donating, or throwing away.

### PURGING AND LETTING GO

- Look at each item as though you were packing it (or not) for a move. Does the item still have a purpose in your life today?
- Once a gift is given to you, you are free to do with it what you choose. The object isn't the gift. The gift is the act - someone thought of you and wanted to express their thoughts in a tangible object.

- People associate an object with a special memory. The object is not the memory - the memory is inside you!
- Still having trouble letting go? Judith Kohlberg, founder and former Director of the National Study Group on Chronic Disorganization, suggests that you treat your belongings as "friends, acquaintances, and strangers." Friends are items that you like having around - ones that really mean something to you. Acquaintances are objects that come into your life, stay for a short time, and then leave again. And strangers are easily discarded - you have no strong feelings of devotion toward these items. This method works particularly well for people who have powerful emotional attachments to their belongings.

### REWARD YOURSELF

- Celebrate your newly organized life and reward yourself with an activity (movie or massage) or something consumable (nice dinner out after your project is completed) - the last thing you want after purging is to add more stuff to your life!

For further ideas and tips on getting organized visit [www.SolutionsForYou.com](http://www.SolutionsForYou.com) or call 503-706-3502.

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