10 Organizing Fundamentals

These 10 fundamentals will apply to every organizing task you undertake, big or small. Follow them and you are well on your way accomplishing your organizing goals.

1 **Have a concrete goal.**
This will keep you focused and serve as a reminder if you start to lose motivation. For your closet, maybe the goal is to make getting ready in the morning easier and faster so getting out of the house is less rushed and stressful.

2 **Start with a small project.**
Start with a single drawer you use every day (cutlery, bathroom, desk etc). You get the quick satisfaction of finishing and a daily reminder of how an organized space makes your life easier, both of which serve as motivation to take on larger projects.

3 **Schedule a specific time to organize.**
Leaving it for your spare time means it won't get done because spare time doesn't really exist. But if you specifically set aside time for organizing, just like you would for a get together with friends or a work project, you greatly increase your chances of actually doing it.

4 **Begin by pulling EVERYTHING out.**
Just shuffling things around in the space isn't helpful. When you pull everything out you get a real sense of exactly what and how much you have.

5 **Put similar items together.**
Once everything is out, put like items together. All hair products together, all eye shadow together, all face creams together etc.

6 **Purge.**
Purge duplicates and expired items, items that are broken, not in wearable or usable condition, rarely used, not needed or that need to be relocated. Click here for free sorting signs and here for a list of questions to ask yourself if you are having trouble letting go.

7 **Assign a home to everything.**
When an item has a "home" you will always be able to find it when you need it and know where to return it to when done.

8 **Use containers to corral similar items together.**
They don't have to be pretty (although it is fun when they are), they just have to be functional. This will help you stay organized and also provide a visual cue of how much of an item you have.

9 **Use labels!**
Labels ensure everyone using a space and the things in it can easily locate items and put them away when finished with them.

10 **Take 10 minutes at the end of the day to tidy items not in their assigned homes.**
Even if you just corral all items into a basket to properly deal with the next day, at least the space is tidy and you only have one basket to carry around to put things away the next day.