



According to NAPO-NY members, "An organized environment needn't be sterile or overly neat for that matter. The real key to its success is comfort and convenience: your space should work for the way you live and/or work, and reflect your personality and style." That said, NAPO-NY offers these easy tips to help streamline that clutter:

1. **Closets:** Sort your closet so that the clothes you wear most often are within easy reach. Not sure which pieces you wear most? Put post-it "flags" on all your clothing and remove it when wearing. Be sure you can easily grab all the unflagged clothes when standing in front of your closet. Grouping "like with like" will also help you find item quickly. So, put all tank tops together, all capri pants in one area, etc.

2. **Home/Office:** Transform any book collection into your personal library. Grouping art books together is like designing your own private museum; having reference books in one place makes it super-easy to look up the odd fact. Now, anchor your bookshelves by putting the weightiest books at the bottom, and go up from there: novels, mysteries, travel, etc. It's easy and fun to have a library that beckons to you, whether you want to re-read a favorite mystery or study up on Paris.

3. **Kitchen:** Keep juice glasses near fridge and mugs near coffee maker. Another quick trick: make food measuring easy. If you routinely measure out the same ingredients at mealtime -- coffee, hot cereal, flour -- eliminate the wasted effort of measuring and then washing a single utensil day after day by simply storing the utensil inside the container. For instance, keep a 1/4-cup measuring cup inside your oatmeal box or storage container.

4. **Home:** Set up a bill-paying center. Keep your checkbook, stamps, return-address labels and blank envelopes in a single, easy-to-access location, gathered together in a small rack that's dedicated to this purpose. At bill-paying time you'll write the checks, stamp the envelopes, and put them near the door to be mailed in one easy motion.

5. **Home:** Be sure you have pens, pencils, and/or scissors in every room. They'll wind up scattered throughout eventually, so beat yourself to it by having a set wherever you use them: in the office for dealing with papers, in your art/craft/gift-wrapping area, in the kitchen, at your bill-paying center (see above), in the bathroom, and even a small pair of scissors near your closet, for cutting price tags and loose threads from clothing.

6. **Desk:** Keep your desktop clear of anything you don't use every day. Desks have a natural tendency to become cluttered with supplies we need but that get in the way until it's time to use them: stapler, tape, a calculator, scrap paper for notes, paper clips, and the list goes on. Stow these things on a shelf within arm's reach of your desk, or in an easy-access drawer. You'll love having the space freed up on the desktop, while giving your necessities a handy home.

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7. **Home/Office:** Corral your mail. Set aside one place for incoming mail. Drop it into a tray or box to limit the sprawl and be sure to have a wastebasket nearby for the immediate disposal of junk mail. When convenient, take the bills from your mail corral to your bill-paying center and send off right away.

8. **Cleaning:** Too busy to clean all at once? Recreate the job wheel we used in kindergarten when every day you had a different task. Rather than aiming to clean everything all at once, break the job down into segments: Saturday is bathroom, Monday is kitchen, Tuesday is laundry, Wednesday is vacuum, Thursday dust everything in sight, Friday mop the floor.

9. **Home:** Stop wasting time looking for your keys. Place a small shelf or hook (pushpins are great!) by your front door to put them on. If you don't have room for a small shelf or don't wish to put a small hole in your wall, put a small plastic bag over the inside handle of your front door and drop your keys and even sunglasses in there.

10. **Kid's Clutter:** Put a wicker basket for toys by your stairs or in your living room. Then, at the end of the day, take the basket upstairs or to your kids' room and put everything back in its place. Best thing: you only have to make one trip!