

Week 5: Kitchen

Often times the kitchen is much more than a room for cooking. It's where the kids do homework, company lingers while you're making dinner and it's where a lot of great conversations take place. Memories are made in kitchens, so it should be a pleasant atmosphere! Too often our kitchens become cluttered with papers, food packages, backpacks, etc. No more! A place for everything & everything in it's place- and it's place is probably NOT the kitchen.

If you haven't bought baskets or some sort of mail & paper organization system, now is the time. A unit with tiered baskets that mounts to the wall tends to work best because it's out of the way. You can designate a basket for things like bills, take out menus, school news, work items & whatever else needs organization in your life. Once this area is set up, "file" things as they come in. Go through your mail next to your recycling bin so junk mail is immediately tossed. Cork boards are handy for papers that need attention or flyers for upcoming events. Consider setting up an "art gallery" if your kids bring home art projects. A clipboard mounted to the wall allows you to easily feature the Drawing of the Week without having random art work all over your house & refrigerator.

A great trick to making your kitchen look more organized is by using baskets & trays. You can have a "coffee station" with a tray that holds you coffee maker, a jar with coffee, sugar jar & some spoons. You can have a "cooking station" with a tray that holds your most commonly used ingredients, such as butter, a jar with olive oil, salt, pepper, vanilla, etc. A basket with dish towels can free up a drawer & remind you to refresh your dish towels more frequently.

Go through all of your serving trays & bowls, cake plates, baking sheets and utensils to determine what you really need & use. Serving trays seem to multiply over time. If your utensil drawer is out of control, use a canister, crock or even a flower pot to hold your utensils. Gain another drawer & have easier access to the utensils you use daily.