

Sneaky ways to create more storage space in your home

By Jennifer Raftis,
Certified Professional Organizer

Most of us have faced the never-ending quest to find more storage space in our homes – it is an ongoing battle between our square footage and our creativity. So, it's not surprising that the request I receive most often from clients comes from families trying to create more order in their chaos by looking for more space and storage solutions for their "stuff."

We have busy lives – working, raising kids, trying to exercise, helping our aging parents, going to our kids' events, cooking, cleaning the house, taking care of our pets – it's a challenge to keep our belongings organized and there never seems to be enough space to store them.

Then, just to mix it up, we throw in a pandemic. The pandemic has caused many of my clients to purchase items in bulk – food, toilet paper, paper towels, cleaning supplies, etc. Unfortunately, many of us don't have the space to store these products.

Organizing tip: Before you consider any new storage solution, I recommend purging first, combining like items together, storing items close to where they are used, and don't forget to label, label and then label some more! (P.S. Remember organizing and maintaining your space counts as exercise.)

Here are a few sneaky storage ideas you might want to try:

Go vertical. For many of my clients, one of the space-saving organizing strategies that has been invaluable has been utilizing vertical space. Just look up! Whether it's in a bathroom, a garage, or in a bedroom, the walls and doors, even ceilings offer under-utilized areas that can help maximize storage space. This solution keeps your space neat, efficient, and organized. Because, efficiency matters!

Overhead ceiling racks utilize the space on your garage ceiling. It's a great place for longer-term storage items and it will remove boxes from your floor. The bonus is that you can also hang items from the bottom of the unit. I love products that provide double-duty solutions!

Over the door storage racks are great for laundry items, cleaning supplies, craft



Photo The Container Store

rooms, gift wrap stations, pantries, kitchen cabinets, and bedrooms. I have even used these for books in a child's playroom! They come in many shapes and sizes that can be hung over or installed on the door. Accessories include baskets, hooks, and bins to fit all of your needs. I have one on my kitchen cabinet door that holds my measuring spoons and cups, and another in my bedroom for my jewelry.



Photo The Container Store



Photo Shutterstock

Hang it up on a hook. Wall hooks, coat hooks, bicycle hooks, s-hooks ... I love hooks! "I don't need hooks," said no one in the history of ever. Hanging things on hooks is a surprisingly easy way to bring order to the items in your home. It can be as simple as peel-and-stick Command™ hooks for the kid's pajamas or a row of s-hooks on a towel bar to hold kitchen items or garden tools. Everything has a home and is so much easier to find!

And don't forget above the garage storage. If your garage has any room above the ceiling, or space between the rafters and the roof, you might check to see if you can put down wood for a floor, add a light (it can be a stick-on light) and even install fold-down stairs for access. This sneaky storage solution will require a handyman that can determine what kind of board needs to be used and how much weight you can have on the floor. This is another great place for longer-term storage items.

Here are some other sneaky storage solutions for keeping your home organized:

Under the bed. Depending on how much height you have from the floor to the bottom of the bed, you can purchase many kinds of containers for storage. Plastic bins on rollers, zippered fabric bags, and more. Sheet sets, blankets, and out-of-season clothes are some of the items that you can store here.

Under the stairs. The area under a staircase is often an overlooked storage area. You can add shelves, drawers, baskets, or hooks to make the space usable for storing coats and shoes, toys, books, or stuff that usually gets dumped in the hallway by the front door.

... continued on Page D11