

Top tips for fall organizing

By Jennifer Raftis, CPO

Fall is definitely my favorite season. I love the changing colors, cooler weather and of course, boot season. Organizing and packing away the summer toys, swimsuits, goggles, and the million beach towels feels great!

Because I raised three kids who started back to school in the fall, it was always a reset time in my house. Even though our kids have grown up and don't live at home, I still think of fall as a time to organize and reset for the upcoming months. Of course, back to school still affects my schedule as I have to make sure I don't get caught in the school traffic. Can you relate?

Now is an ideal time to start looking ahead and organizing for the fall weather, different schedules and of course, the holidays.

Here are a few things you can organize now to stay on top of the schedule:

1) **Summer items** - Before you clean and put everything away, double check the condition of the items. Is it time to retire the swimsuit and beach towels or can you get another year out of them? Flip flops, sandals, shorts and tank tops still good to go?

2) **Wardrobe** - Even though it can stay warm through the fall, it will get colder in the mornings and you will probably need to start layering. Accessories like scarves and hats are easy to wear in the cool mornings and take off later when it gets warmer. This is a great time to check on the condition of your sweaters, jackets and boots. Taking

these clothes out of the closet and laying them out can help you better see their condition. Trust me, leaving them on the hanger in the closet won't work for a thorough closet thinning. Check the clothes for stains, pills, holes, and ask yourself ... is it still in style? Start a shopping list of all items that you are throwing away or donating so you know which pieces you need to replace.

3) **Digital clean-up** - It's always a good time to edit the space on your devices. Task yourself to set a timer for 10-15 minutes a day for a few weeks and go through your email, photos, and apps to eliminate junk. Digital clutter can be as overwhelming as physical clutter, and after eliminating the excess, you will have more storage on your devices too!

4) **Financial organization** - I recommend creating a budget before the holidays. Be sure to include the price of plane tickets for your college or out of town children and entertaining expenses (I always forget how much I spend on food and beverages when everyone comes home). If you live with a partner, it can be helpful to agree on the amounts you can budget for gifts as well as setting a budget for your annual contributions to charities. We have always made contributions only once a year so we can throw out all donation requests that are bombarding the email inbox and mailbox throughout the year.

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