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Organizing and saving money

By Amy Stanley

During these tough economic times, each of us is trying to look for ways to save money. Organizing gives us the opportunity not only to declutter our lives and free ourselves from stress, but also to save money. Here are some ideas that help you save money AND stay or become organized:

- ✓ Consolidate Errands – On Sunday night look over your week to see what you have planned. Can you pick one day to do your errand running and shopping? AND, can you streamline it so that you go to fewer stores and or group your running to stay in one area? This will help to save you time and money in gas. An example would be if your child has an activity that you are going to drop him/her off, do you have something in that area you can do on your list? Try to do your grocery shopping on one day, at one store for the week. To do this, you might need to take a quick inventory of what you have on hand already and get an idea of what meals you will be planning for the week as well.
- ✓ Go GREEN! - We all have heard about being friendlier with our environment. Recycling and buying organic are some of those tips. But printing less can not only help the environment, but it can help you stay organized. Less paper means less to try and organize and control. Plus, you save money on your printer cartridge and the paper you would have used to print it.
- ✓ Use what you have – Don't do your regular grocery shopping and use for a week what you already have in the house. This will save you money both at the store and the gas from going to the store. As for organization, it will force you to take inventory of what you have as well as free up some space.
- ✓ Share – Instead of buying something you need and or want, what about asking a friend, neighbor or family member if you can borrow theirs. This might be something you need just for a short term project, etc. How does this help you be organized? This is less you have in your home which leads to less you have to organize and dust. It will also save space in your home. An example would be if you don't use a crock-pot often, but you have a recipe everyone loves for a crock-pot appetizer. Unless you have parties often or are invited to parties often, why buy a crock-pot unless you use it often. Instead, ask to borrow someone's for those times you need to make that dip! Or if you are finished with something you aren't going to use ever again (ex: a DVD), why not send a note out saying – anyone interested in this? Frees up space in your home and you might have just saved someone else money on a rental.
- ✓ Do you really need it or do you WANT it? Have an item you want to buy, reconsider. Expert organizer Peter Walsh reminds us to stop bringing more things into our home! This is where clutter comes from. We have heard the advice to those watching their weight – if you don't buy it, you won't eat it at home if it isn't there. Same advice can be applied to clutter – you can't clutter your home if you don't bring in more and more stuff. And then by buying less, we save money. If that item is on your mind and you REALLY WANT it, make yourself earn it. Keep a wish list of items you would like to buy. When you accomplish a goal, reward yourself with a purchase – the bigger the goal, the bigger the reward possibly. You will also find over time with the wish list that some of those things your really "needed", you no longer WANT! A wish list requires no dusting and does not take up any room in your home. I do recommend though that you keep it organized. An example would be to keep it in a spreadsheet. Mark the place where you can purchase the item, the cost and the name of it. This way you can search for a specific item as well as decide how much you want to spend on your reward. Nothing fancy, but still organized.

Contact **ORGANIZING BY AMY** after checking out our monthly special for a copy of the Wish List spreadsheet template.

Readers Share Organizing Tips...

Monthly Question: **What have you done recently that saves money and keeps you organized?**

For those of you who send an email answering this question or sharing other organizing tips, we will post it in our next newsletter. You will also get 10% off any organizing service provided by **ORGANIZING BY AMY**.

Calendar – October 2008

October, 2008 – Breast Cancer Awareness Month (<http://www.nbcam.org/index.cfm>). Some business will celebrate with the Lee™ Denim Days (<http://www.denimday.com>).

Sunday, October 12, 2008 – *Children's Day*. Take some time to spend with your child. Ask him/her/them what special activity they would like to do with you today. Give them your time and attention. If you don't have a child or yours is all grown up, what about a niece, nephew or another special child in your life. I guarantee the parent(s) would love to have some free time as well!

Monday, October 13, 2008 – *Columbus Day*. Remember there might be some businesses closed due to this holiday.

Saturday, October 25, 2008 – *Make A Difference Day*. This is a national day of helping others. It was created by USA Weekend Magazine. For more information, visit <http://www.usaweekend.com/diffday/aboutmadd.html>

Friday, October 31, 2008 – *Halloween*. Don't forget to check your local community to find out when Halloween-ers will be Trick or Treat -ing so that you can prepare. Remember, if you are a parent of a Trick or Treat-er, to prepare. This involves having safety items so cars see them. Who will stay at home to hand out candy?

Monthly Checklist – October

This section provides readers with a monthly reminder of things to do. There are so many things we have to remember. Some of those things can be done on a monthly and or yearly basis. Here is a reminder of what to do THIS month (each month will have a different list):

Yearly:

- Shop for Halloween. Remember enough candy according to the number of Halloween-ers you usually get. Don't forget some decorations. Do you have everything for everyone's costumes?
- Start preparing for the holidays. Make a list of who you shop for and ideas for them. Start thinking about your holiday cards as well – who is on the list, how many cards will you need, will you do a picture card (make an appointment!) or pick out your card.
- If you have a ceiling fan, make sure if you switched the direction of it, to turn it the opposite direction (blowing down heat versus pulling up heat).
- Winterize list. Bring in your table and chairs, put in any storm windows, turn off water to the outside, fertilize lawn, check your car (antifreeze, windshield wiper fluid), clean up the yard.
- Flip mattress. Maybe it is time to refresh that mattress and flip it. In 3 months, consider just turning your mattress.

Monthly:

- Women – SELF BREAST EXAM!
- Check smoke detectors and flashlights – Change batteries in smoke detectors when you change your clocks.
- Download pictures from digital camera
- Back up computer
- * This one isn't a monthly, but QUARTERLY – put and or change baking soda in your refrigerator and freezer. It cuts down on smells and food tasting funny.

- o * This one is a chore AS NEEDED – put a Clorox™ Toilet Tab in your toilet. It will keep things fresh. Check on it every 3 months or so to see if it needs replaced.

Monthly Special

In our featured article, we discussed having a wish list that rewards you as you accomplish goals. **ORGANIZING BY AMY** has a template that is easy to use and can get you started. For \$10, we will send it to you with some tips as well. Email organizingbyamy@comcast.net

Product Highlights

Here we like to highlight products/ideas that you should check out... To coordinate with this month's theme – Saving time and money:

The Definitive Guide To Home Organization For Busy People. If it is for busy people, it should help you save time with organizing
<http://redhead6.abe008.hop.clickbank.net>

Organic Vegetable Gardening Ebook. Gardening saves you trips and time to the store and money on groceries. Organic concentrates on the best for your and environment. Although, in our area, we might be done with the gardening season, it is never too early to plan of next year. You will have all winter to read and plan.
<http://redhead6.resco.hop.clickbank.net>

The Menu In A Box 100 Day Meal Planning Kit. This kit will help you plan for your meals. Planning for meals can save you time and money. It is available as an eBook so you are also saving paper.
<http://redhead6.menuinbox.hop.clickbank.net>

Visit ORGANIZING BY AMY. We have many product sites that can be helpful in giving balance to you and your life.
<http://www.organizingbyamy.com/products.html>

Announcements

ORGANIZING BY AMY'S Newsletter will be going on hiatus. I will be returning hopefully some time in January after taking some "maternity leave". Feel free to still visit our website or email us during this time although responses will be limited. (Just as a note, my delivery date is October 29th. During this time before delivery we will be doing some ORGANIZING of our own preparing for this new baby!). I would like to thank all of you who have supported us during our launch and growing our business. We looked forward to a successful 2009 and *helping to give balance to you and your life!*

'Unity is strength. Knowledge is power. Attitude is everything.' – Lance Armstrong

Happy Organizing!

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