

Home & Life

Back to school — organized

Good organizational systems at home can lead to better organization in the classroom and more success at school.



Kids will soon be heading back to school, so now is a great time to get organized. Before school starts, it is important to have your kids feeling prepared and ready for the year ahead.

Go through their closet item by item (preferably with your children), assess what their needs are and make purchases accordingly. It's also a great time to organize the rest of the room: desk, bookshelves, cluttered corners, etc. Make sure they have supplies ready to go to school, and that they also have a good space in which to do homework.

August is the best time to purchase school

supplies, so stock up now for the entire year for your home and office. "I love the Scotch™ Precision Ultra Edge non-stick scissors. The blades stay sharp and they never get that sticky buildup on them," said Monica Friel, president of Chaos to Order.

Take inventory of supplies before shopping

But wait — before you head out to do the back-to-school shopping, gather all the school/office supplies you have lying around the house. Place them in a container and assess what you need based on what you already have. Also, limit the amount of supplies you keep at the desk.

When you stock up, keep multiples in a container elsewhere. When you run out of something, just go to the container to get a refill. This can cut way down on clutter at any desk (remember this at your office as well).

Not only is this a great time to get the kids organized, it's also a great time to do planning. Schedules are coming out for school and extra-curricular activities. Input all upcoming activities and the schedules you receive into your calendar as soon as you get them.

Find a functional calendar

Take a look at the calendar you are currently using. Is it working for you and for your family? If your writing is so small that you can hardly see it, it may be time to switch from a week at a glance to a daily calendar. Electronic calendars are also a good option. If your kids have iPods, they may even be able to sync with your household calendar and contacts.

If you use an electronic system, everyone can have the family schedule on hand. Reassess what you're using and make sure the system you have going into the school year will work for you throughout the year.

Tackle the entryway

Another area you want to make sure is organized prior to the back-to-school rush is the entryway the kids will be using on their way to and from school. Make sure there is space available for coats, shoes, backpacks and all other school-related items. Hang hooks at an appropriate height for your kids. I love the Command™ Hooks that are strong, yet removable — without any damage to the walls.

You can adjust the height of the hook at the beginning of each school year as your child grows. A bulletin board in this area is also helpful. You can post school activities, invitations and other pertinent items in a convenient spot that everyone can see. Make sure to also have a place for kids to kick their shoes off as they come in the door to avoid a shoe traffic jam.

It's easier to keep up with the demands of school and all the related events when you're organized. Good organizational systems at home can lead to better organization in the classroom and more success at school.

Editor's note: This article was written by Monica Friel, president of Chaos to Order, for the website of the Scotch® brand and is reprinted here with permission. Minor edits were made to conform with 3M Stemwinder style and space constraints.

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