



# SIMPLE SYSTEMS

## CREATE A CUSTOMIZED ENTRY STATION

The entry area is generally the first area I tackle with clients because it will pack a major punch in your everyday life. Generally when things get dumped all over, it's because they don't have a clear or intuitive home. Start this project by making a list of all of the things your family needs a "home" for in your entry area. A typical list includes storage for bags and backpacks, coats, dog leashes, shoes, mail, keys and cell phones. Next it's time to set up an assigned place near the front door for each item on your list. Sturdy hooks work well for coats, dog leashes and bags. Make sure the hooks are mounted at arm's reach for kid backpacks and jackets so they can be responsible for their own things. Shoe shelves, cubbies or labeled bins or baskets will do the trick for shoes. A pretty ceramic dish is great for tossing keys, cell phones and loose change. For mail and magazine storage I love wall mounted wall pockets or a large pretty basket on your entry table.

## CREATE AN "OUTBOX"

When I am helping clients edit and organize their belongings, inevitably we will stumble upon things that don't have a clear home – a library book that needs to be returned, a birthday present for a party next week, clothing that needs to be given back to a friend. I suggest setting up a large bin or basket for this purpose and storing it in a convenient location near your entry closet or front door. A sturdy tote will do the trick and can be easily tossed into your trunk when you are on the go. I call it the "Outbox" since it contains items that need to go out of your home. It will make a world of difference not to have all of those random items floating around your house!

## CREATE A TREASURE BOX

Each person in your family needs a "home" for their sentimental items and treasures. Follow these easy steps to set up treasure boxes for each person so they can keep track of their most prized possessions. First, select a large bin or box that you like. Buy and label one for each member of your family. Use the boxes to collect and store mementos, awards, certificates and other special memorabilia. Assign a home for each box that you can access as needed (e.g., top shelf of a closet, garage, basement, etc.)

## CREATE A DONATION STATION

Find or buy a sturdy tote bag and hang it in an entry closet or other convenient location. Fill your bag with outgrown toys, clothing and other donations as they arise. When the bag is full, bring it to your local charity. Make sure to hang the empty bag back in its assigned home. Repeat!

## THE WEEKLY PLAN

This may sound like a drag but it will make your life sooooo much easier! Avoid the weekly frenzy and set aside one day a week to plan ahead and tackle your to-do list. I recommend using Sunday to pay bills, do laundry, tidy up, select clothing for Monday morning, plan meals for the week and purchase groceries and any necessary household supplies. Sticking to this simple plan will make your entire week run so much more smoothly and eliminate the need to run errands and attend to chores all week long.