

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Free Your Closet: Remove The Doors And Reveal Your Organized Self

(NAPSA)—“It’s easy to hide a mess behind closed doors,” says best-selling author and personal organization expert Meryl Starr, owner of the New York-based *Let’s Get Organized*. That’s why Starr radically recommends removing your closet doors. In her recently released second book, “The Personal Organizing Workbook” (Chronicle Books, January 2007), Starr takes home decluttering even deeper by helping readers organize their personal lives.

“There are solutions out there for a simpler, easier life,” Starr shares. “Organization is a positive habit anyone can have and it helps reclaim your busy life one room, one task, one problem at a time. With an affordable, efficient organization system, your closet can become a beautiful and functional part of the bedroom. And when it’s all together and out in the open, you’re more likely to keep it organized.”

Swear you don’t have enough closet space, or you simply can’t find what you need every morning? Follow Starr’s tips to tackle closet chaos, reveal your organized self and save time:

1. Sort and discard: Empty your closet seasonally and donate or dispose what you no longer wear. Then arrange your collection by category, grouping shirts, pants, suits and dresses. Depending on the nature of your wardrobe, you can also separate casual clothes from those you wear to work or to work out.

2. Add shelving: A center tower of laminate or wire shelves creates a place for accessories and folded items like scarves, sweaters and denim. Upper storage shelving above the highest hanging rod is ideal for out-of-season clothes



Expert organization: Starr installs a closet system in her daughter’s bedroom.

you use less often.

3. Hang efficiently: The storage pros at ClosetMaid—producers of the expansive do-it-yourself storage solutions—recommend that a closet rod for long items like coats and dresses be placed 70 to 84 inches from the closet floor. Then create a separate space with two levels of hanging for shorter items. With a double hang, the top rod should hang 84 inches from the floor, while the bottom rod hangs at 42 inches.

4. Click your heels: The shoes you wear most frequently should be accessible by storing them on a shoe shelf or in a hanging caddy. Shoes worn less often are best kept in boxes on a shelf.

5. Go to the wall: Install a valet rod for hanging incoming dry cleaning or tomorrow’s outfit. Special racks keep ties and belts neat, pressed and out of the way until needed.

As a mother of both a high school son and college daughter, Starr knows a thing or two about helping kids get organized, too. “Kids, especially teenagers, need a



Wire baskets make it easy to see what goes where.

hamper that’s built into their closet system,” Starr says. “Trust me. It’s essential in keeping clothes off the floor and parents happy.”

Starr also emphasizes the importance of keeping like items together in your child’s closet. Storing school shirts separately from weekend gear such as athletic jerseys saves busy teenagers time as they move throughout their academic and athletic schedules.

Wire shelving and baskets are excellent for younger children, too. “ClosetMaid’s wire baskets make it easier for kids to see what goes where and allows them to have a hand in putting away their own laundry,” Starr recommends. “If you have the storage systems in place and start at an early age, organization is one of the best tools you can teach your children.”

You can learn more online at Starr’s Web site: www.merylstarr.com. For information on tools to get your life and your family together, including an online design tool such as the Visual Storage Planner, visit www.closetmaid.com or call (800) 874-0008 for help in designing your space.