

Wipe Out Car Clutter: How To Get Your Cargo Under Control

(NAPSA)—If you have cassette tapes, CDs, videotapes, DVDs, maps, toys, spare change, water bottles, flashlights, first aid kits, umbrellas, jackets, trash and all kinds of other stuff in your vehicle, you've got plenty of company (in addition to plenty of stuff).

"People spend so much time on the road these days, they treat their vehicles like another closet," says Sue Elliott-Sink, director of content for enjoythedrive.com, the consumer Web site from SEMA, the Specialty Equipment Market Association. "Then, when it's time to give someone else a ride, they wind up tossing all kinds of embarrassing stuff into the back seat, trunk or cargo area."

These tips may help you get all that clutter under control.

1. Take advantage of unused space.

A shelf that mounts above your vehicle's sun visors, and smaller organizers that attach to the sun visors, let you stash stuff up and out of the way. They also keep items out of children's reach. Organizers that fit under a seat let you stow items out of sight, so the interior looks neater.

2. Get the back under control.

Trunk and cargo area organizers come in a variety of sizes, so they can hold the stuff you always carry—such as a roadside emergency kit—as well as groceries, plants and other purchases. Many organizers can be folded up when not in use, and some are designed to contain spills.

3. Put litter in its place.

Trash containers designed specifically for vehicles make it easy to keep the interior clean.

4. Stop stuff from rolling.

Some accessories are designed to control awkwardly shaped items. For instance, cargo wedges



NEAT AND ORDERLY—Automotive organizers clean up clutter and prevent items from rolling around while you drive.

feature Velcro® on the bottom, so they stick to your carpet, and work like doorstops. Cargo nets also hold items of various sizes. Some have a built-in cargo bar that can be used to corral larger items against the rear seat of a van or SUV, or against the front of a car trunk or pickup bed.

5. Add a console.

There are consoles designed to go on the floor in front of a bench seat, on top of a front or rear bench seat, and between bucket seats. Several surprisingly affordable consoles feature built-in power points for charging a cell phone. Some also have a light inside, so it's easy to find the stuff you stow, and others feature large—or adjustable—cupholders. Office-style consoles that sit on the front passenger seat can hold files, a laptop computer, pens, paper and other desk equipment. Some have a top that slides toward the driver's seat for making notes, too.

6. Lock up valuables.

A variety of organizers are lockable. You can install a steel security drawer in the trunk or in

the cargo area of a van or SUV. Law enforcement officials use such drawers to secure guns and ammunition, and they work equally well for cameras, purses, briefcases and other theft-prone items. You also can find locking consoles, as well as tool boxes that fit in a truck bed or in the cargo area of a van or SUV.

7. Keep stuff you need handy.

Organizers that attach to a vehicle's headrest make it easy to keep items you use on a regular basis—like maps, sunglasses and CDs—handy. Some hang down the front of the front passenger seat, while others face the rear. These organizers are useful for keeping toys and videos within reach of children, too.

For more information on cargo control accessories, visit the Web site enjoythedrive.com. It has information on hundreds of the latest custom auto accessories, as well as links to product manufacturers' and retailers' Web sites. You can also write to SEMA, Organizers, 1575 S. Valley Vista Dr., Diamond Bar, CA 91765-3914.