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On Living: It's that time again: National Organizing Week

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by By Carole Beers
Journal Reporter

This week -- National Organizing Week -- is a great time to get it all together at your home before the holiday visitor and entertainment season.

There's a lot of advice on the Web and on TV on organizing your bedroom, closet or large home office.

But what about one of the most-used areas in a home? The utility room.

And what about little-used areas like a coat closet, that could serve a more productive role as a hobby niche or office?

Peggy Timm of Organizing Options has tips for that loco laundry room.

Laura Leist of Eliminate Chaos has ideas on getting a workspace out of the parlor and into the closet.

Both organizers advise first emptying these places, as you would any space you are targeting. You must go through your stuff, then put it away; give or sell it away; or toss it.

Laundry lowdown

Here are Timm's tips for the laundry room:

- * Set up your laundry room with four to eight different sized baskets. Label the larger baskets ``lights," ``darks" and ``colors." Label smaller baskets ``delicates," ``mending" and ``dry-cleaning."
- * Designate a shelf or cabinet for supplies such as laundry soap, bleach, spot treatments, dryer sheets, mesh bag for delicates, laundry reference book, small box for items found in pockets, and a container for single socks or gloves.
- * Have a spot for the Ironing board and iron. Use a wall mounted one if space is an issue.
- * Use a foldable drying rack, preferably plastic so clothes won't snag, or use a

small clothesline.



* Install a tension pole with hangers if you can.



* Then follow a laundry procedure for every person using the room, i.e., everyone has a laundry basket or bag in their bedroom, and laundry must be removed when washed and dried.

Office smarts



Here are Laura Leist's tips for turning a tiny closet into a home office:

* Empty the space, then measure carefully, and buy a small desk or have a piece of shelving cut and stained to fit the space; attach a pullout keyboard tray and side extensions if necessary.

* Use nearby concealed space, such as that within a kitchen cabinet, for wiring, as well as for printers and fax machines.

* Get a pullout chair and filing system to stow under the worktable when the doors are closed. Stacked wire-mesh filing crates on rollers are ideal.

* Put office supplies, software, binders, etc., in labeled, matching boxes on shelves over the worktable.

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