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seattle style file

By *Kathy Schultz*
NWsource shopping columnist

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Jan. 6, 2005

Get organized in 2005

While looking for a specific lipstick a few weeks back, I was amazed (and somewhat appalled) at how many tubes I've acquired. Without revealing the exact number — let's just say it was in the double digits but less than 79 (excluding lip glosses) — I realized it was time to get organized.

I spoke with Laura Leist, organizer extraordinaire and founder of Eliminate Chaos. Leist is a professional organizer and provides services for everything from cleaning out your garage and designing an organization system to whipping your residential or commercial office and computer files into shape. She gave me some excellent tips on cleaning up clutter and making a smooth transition from home to office each morning with maximum efficiency and a minimum of mayhem. Here are some suggestions from the orderly Leist:

YOUR CLOSET

- Make sure everything is pressed before it goes in the closet. It's a lot easier to get dressed in the morning when clothing is ready to go.
- Organize your clothes. Leist suggests grouping clothes by color from light to dark then breaking them down into pants, skirts, blouses, dresses, suits and dressy outfits.
- Hang all of your clothes in the opposite direction than you normally do. Once you wear the item, hang it back up in the "normal" direction. Clothing that has not been turned around in a year, hasn't been worn. Donate or consign that clothing. "Realistically, people wear only 20 percent of their clothes and they're not wearing them for a reason," says Leist. "You want to look and feel good in your clothes. Resist the urge to put discards back on the hanger."
- Use a shoe organizer and group shoes by pairs you wear most often. Then arrange by use, such as work, casual and dressy. Use

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SALE ALERTS

- [Hold Everything](#) is closing its City Centre store, and everything is 25 percent off through January.
- [Storables](#) is having a sale through Jan. 24 with a 25 percent discount on all organizing solutions for the closet.

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a floor-based shoe organizer underneath "short-hanging" clothing to maximize space.

- Separate the black from the blue. Ever walk out of the house with blue socks and black shoes? Use separate drawers or a drawer divider for black and blue socks, nylons or tights.
- Put accessories such as purses, scarves and sweaters in baskets or stackable storage drawers for convenience and a cleaner look.

GETTING READY

- Use over-the-door hangers and get the next day's outfit ready the night before. Leave the hangers there so you can easily hang up clothing when you return.
- Put all your makeup basics in one place. Everyday cosmetics such as foundation, blush and mascara should be grouped in one drawer, container or a cosmetic bag you can grab to go. Organize additional or little-used makeup in another drawer or container. Have extra products or samples you never use? Donate them to local women's shelters.
- Group products. Group hair care, body care and cosmetics in separate areas, shelves, or drawers. Put items you use on a daily basis on the counter or in the top drawer.

OUT THE DOOR

- Have a designated location for the things you're going to walk out the door with everyday. It can be on top of the stairs, in the laundry room, on your dresser. Use a basket or decorative container to stash keys, cell phones, sunglasses or other items you need everyday.

If you'd like to experience Leist's amazing organizational talents firsthand for a discount, volunteer for one of the projects in her upcoming book. For more information and tips from Laura Leist, visit her Web site at www.eliminatechaos.com or call 425-670-2551.

SHOP FOR SOLUTIONS

Of course it helps to have the right equipment to get yourself in order. Leist shops everywhere for storage products and organizers, depending on the needs of her clients. Some of her favorites include **Target**; **Lowe's**; **Bed, Bath & Beyond**; **Crate & Barrel**; **Pottery Barn**; **Storables**; **Hold Everything**; and www.thecontainerstore.com. (Tips: Hold Everything is closing its City Centre store, and everything is 25 percent off through January. Storables is having a sale through Jan. 24 with a 25 percent discount on all organizing solutions for the closet, including custom closets, hangers, clip-lid storage boxes, drawer organizers, garment racks, shoe- and sweater organizers and more.)



⌘ Enlarge **BOOTSY HOLLER**
Magnetic cupboard wall organizer by Three by Three helps organize any room in the house. \$40 at www.fredflare.com.

To start with something manageable, consider getting a **Purseket**, one of Leist's favorite handbag organizers. The handy, flexible panel of multiple pockets slips in almost any bag or tote and holds everything from sunglasses to cell phones. \$25-\$29 at www.purseket.com.



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In my personal search for a lipstick holder, I went to **Storables**, your best bet for one-stop-shopping to get your life in order. This store has containers and organizing solutions for every space in your house. I found a variety of acrylic organizers for cosmetics and jewelry. One model holds 24 tubes of lipstick (I had to buy only three at \$10.95 each). Storables also has a convenient Portable Power Station to simultaneously charge up to three personal electronics in one place.

Enlarge **PURSEKET**
Organize your purse with a Purseket, a flexible panel of pockets that shapes to the sides of your bag. Available in various sizes and fabrics at www.purseket.com; \$25-\$29.

Around town, I found a few other stylish solutions to get from home to office, including:

Magnetic cupboard wall organizer: This ingenious new product by local design company Three by Three works in any room, including the bathroom. The 20-by-8-by-4 magnetic board comes with six powerful magnets and accommodates grooming products, toothpaste, brushes and more. Metal items such as tweezers and nail clippers easily cling to the strong magnetic board. The organizer comes in hip colors such as sky blue and mint as well as ivory. \$40 at www.fredflare.com.

Lala laptop bags: These new laptop bags by local designer Lauren Selig are not only chic, but multi-functional with numerous pockets and a clever detachable clutch. The bag's pretty looks belie its workhorse ethic — it's sturdy, secure and padded. The limited-edition bags come in textured leather or suede and colors such as pink, lime, eggplant and violet. Selig's company donates 10 percent of all profits to charities empowering women in business. \$435 at www.lalalaptop.com.



Enlarge **LALA LAPTOP**
Lala Laptop leather and suede bags by Lauren Selig come in vibrant colors. \$435 at www.lalalaptop.com.

R.E.Load Baggage: The girls at this custom bag shop will work with you to design the perfect backpack, overnighter, messenger or day bag, whether you need to tote a laptop or an accordion (really). About 90 percent of the bags are custom designed, though they do have a few ready-made bags at the rough and ready urban studio/storefront on Capitol Hill. The bags are made with Cordura, a strong synthetic canvas material and lined with vinyl to protect what's inside. Popular among bike messengers, the bags are nearly indestructible. The bags run from \$60 to \$400 at R.E.Load.

Chelsey Henry bags: Local designers Chelsey Owen and Sara Paradis make two stylish, multi-tasking bags in durable canvas with smart leather trim in contrasting colors. The Work-to-Play bags safely hold a laptop and small electronics or your workout wear. The Weekender features internal and external pockets and functions as a work bag or overnighter for a quick getaway. \$98-\$118 at www.chelseyhenry.com.

Deanna DiBene cosmetic bags: The cosmetic bags by local designer Deanna DiBene are so pretty you'll be motivated to clean up your act and organize your makeup. She chooses silk, wool or linen tweeds and accents them with sweet little vintage velvet or grosgrain ribbon and bows. Others feature silk brocade and Swarovski rhinestones. The vinyl lining protects



from mishaps. Available at **Duque Salon + Spa + Boutique** in Ballard, **Carmilia's** in West Seattle and **Frenchy's** in Madison Valley for \$31-\$41.

[Enlarge](#)
 Pretty cosmetic bags designed by Deanna DiBene; \$31-\$41 at Frenchy's.

Lingerie and jewelry bags: Denise McMillan makes these beautiful bags. Made from imported and vintage fabrics and trim, they're soft, sensual and perfect for travel or storing your expensive French undies and jewels. \$45-\$78 at www.plushcreations.com and www.makeyoublush.com.

Kathy Schultz is a free-lance writer who lives in Seattle and loves to shop. Her column updates every Thursday on NWsource. If you have a shop, sale, event or great product tip you'd like to share, [e-mail her](#).

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