

# Extra Organizing Tips: Vicki Norris

## Office Organizing Tips

Professional organizer and *Mission: Organization* guest Vicki Norris offers web-exclusive tips.

To clear clutter requires understanding the factors that contribute to disorganization in the first place. The process is as much mental as mechanical. Before engaging in the process of organizing, ask yourself the hard questions about your clutter:

- Are existing systems getting the job done, or are they contributing to clutter?
- Is lack of maintenance a factor?
- Are your things in their proper place, but there are simply too many things?
- Is there enough space allocated to each activity?

Once you've taken a good look at the causes of your clutter, map out an office environment that allows you to maintain order.

## Invest in adequate furniture

Offices need a clear work area, and that means providing adequate space for computer hardware and peripheral equipment, a spot for reference materials, file space and a location for frequently referenced supplies and paper. Make sure your office furniture provides ample space for work and storage.

## Establish activity centers

The efficient office should be zoned into activity areas:

The Work Center, which includes a clear workspace, the computer and frequently-used office products.

- The Reference Center, which includes binders, manuals, dictionary and professional books and materials.
- The Supply Center, which contains office and paper supplies.

## Properly placed hardware and peripherals

- Position your equipment by frequency of use. If the printer is used daily, it should be within easy reach. If the CPU is only accessed for troubleshooting, it can be placed under

or next to the desk. If a scanner is rarely used, it can be placed outside the work area.

- When setting up hardware, be conscious of access to drives, trays, and cords. Don't block access to drawers or take up leg room with tangled cords.

### **Establish a paper processing area**

- Establish an area within your Work Center for papers that need immediate action.
- Store paper associated with clients or ongoing projects in an area that is easily accessible and within your view.
- Establish a permanent filing system for papers you will reference but not on a regular basis.