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DE-JUNK THE JUNK DRAWER

Is your junk drawer full of — well — junk? Nearly everyone has one, but some are more useful than others. Here's how to whip yours into an organized and functional space.

Take everything out and start tossing. Junk drawers are notorious for accumulating the stuff you keep “just in case” or which doesn't have a designated “home.” Discard unidentifiable keys, screws, and nails. Out go old pens, scraps of paper with scribbled phone numbers, crumpled receipts, and expired coupons.

Group what's left into categories. Usually, you'll end up with office supplies (pens, stickie notes, tape, glue, rubber bands, scissors); fix-it supplies (hammer, screw driver, small tin of nails); and a few other odd bits.

Purchase a drawer divider (you can find plastic or wood versions at your local discount store or online) or simply reuse some small cardboard boxes to separate and contain your junk drawer's contents. (Check boxes work great!) Small mint tins work well to hold everything from paper clips to nails, stamps to coins. Label them for easy storage and retrieval.

Use your junk drawer with caution. When you're about to toss in something, ask yourself if it should really go elsewhere (like the trash can or another room.) If it belongs in the junk drawer, then immediately place it in the right section of the drawer so you can find it when you need it.

Elizabeth Bowman is a professional organizer and the president of Innovatively Organized, a professional organizing services company. She has a passion to help busy professionals streamline their homes, work spaces, and schedules.

Visit www.InnovativelyOrganized.com for more information. You may also contact Elizabeth directly at 206.369.8853 or elizabeth@innovativelyorganized.com.

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