

So Much Paper, So Little Space, So Little 7ime!

Sarah Wasaff, Owner of Holistically Organized



Do you get as frustrated as I do with the amount of paper that comes into the house, between mail and papers from work and school - there is just too much. Do you also struggle with lack of space for storing all the paper? The system I outline below is to help those that need a process to deal with it all when you don't have a home office.

Set up a centralized basket to collect in any coming paperwork and mail for the week. You

can put this basket anywhere...in the kitchen, in your bedroom, etc. Also, you could hang a basket on a wall near the entrance to your home.

As mail comes into the house, sort through and recycle any catalogs or junk mail (be sure to shred any items with sensitive personal information). Catalog Choice, is a resource for removing yourself from unwanted catalogs and junk mail. The only mail I typically receive are the one-off bills (typically medical bills, small kids in daycare = lots of doctors visits). All other statements I have elected to receive electronically. Any other paper that comes into the house for the week will also get put into the basket after reviewing and determining I don't immediately need to take care of such as receipts or forms from your children's school, etc. Then pick one day a week to go through the basket. I typically do this on Fridays, as I like to do a little pre-weekend house pick-up. Picking a designated time to go through the basket saves you time throughout the week to focus on other things at night like spending time with kids, cooking, homework, bedtime routine and of course much needed me-time or we-time with your significant other!

Now what do you do with it all on Friday (or whatever day you choose)? If you are really short on space I would recommend scanning your bills to an external hard drive once you have paid them. You could also do this for receipts, as well, or any school forms you need to keep a copy of. We purchased a hard drive a while back that has 1 Terabyte of space. Tip: I don't know a ton about cyber-security but I do tend to leave my hard drive unplugged from my computer. I'm not positive, but feel like it can help prevent cyber-fraud! After you have finished scanning everything, be sure to shred what you no longer need.

If you have room for a small file cabinet set up some files to store the important stuff. I have a file cabinet that I use to file throughout the year, then at the beginning of the year I go through and clean out what I no longer need to keep. The items I do need to keep I move to a file box that I keep on the top shelf of a closet. It's OK that it's a pain to bring the box down to access it because I only do it once maybe twice a year!

I'd like to share 3 additional space-saving tips for storage when you don't have a home office:

- 1. Use your filing cabinet as another piece of furniture as well maybe it holds your microwave in the kitchen, cable box in your bedroom or wireless printer
- Mount your televisions in order maximize the space under vour tv
- Utilize the the vertical space in your closets; add additional shelves if necessary to make use of the every inch of your closets

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Don't Test the Waters By Swimming in Lady Bird Lake

By Jenny Webster Jurica, TexasHillCountry.com

Did you know that you're not allowed to swim in Austin's famous "Town Lake," also known as Lady Bird Lake? With all of the boaters and stand-up-paddlers, this probably surprises many. It's not a new law though. This law has been in place since 1964.

Swimming Banned Since 1964

Austin's Parks and Recreation Department provided two reasons for the ban on swimming in Lady Bird Lake: one being a combination of poor water quality and the other, the danger posed by debris leftover from bridges and dams. It's also speculated that a series of drowning deaths on the lake in the 1950s and 1960s - including two young sisters who waded into a 20-foot pit – led to Austin City Council passing the ordinance. The City of Austin created the reservoir in 1960 as a cooling pond for the new city power plant. The reservoir is named in honor of former First Lady of the United States Lady Bird Johnson, who called Austin her home for much of her life. In the 1970s, Lady Bird focused her attention on the Austin riverfront area through her involvement in the Town Lake Beautification Project. From 1971 to 1978, she served on the board of regents for the University of Texas System. She also served on the National Park Service Advisory Board and was the first woman to serve on National Geographic Society's Board of Trustees. So, nature and preserving our resources was clearly one of her passions.

Are You Ever Allowed in the Water?

What happens if you are kayaking on Town Lake and you fall in? The rules explain that you're only allowed to swim in the lake if you are "rescuing someone (presumably yourself included), doing construction authorized by the city or swimming in a permitted event." So, if you fall out of your kayak, you'd better get back to the boat as quickly as possible. The punishment for being caught swimming in Lady Bird Lake is a \$500 fine.

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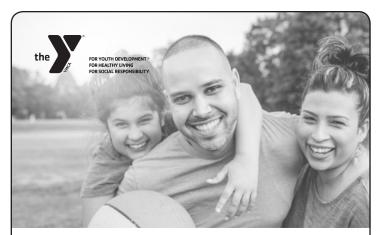
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