

Filing Frenzy

A 4-drawer filing cabinet can hold 18,000 pieces of paper...does a household need that much paper?

3 Steps to Making Filing an Ease

No need to create an in-depth system for your papers. All papers fit into 3 simple categories:

- 1) Active: (to buy, pay, read, etc) items that require a next step, file close by in a place you see daily such as a tickler file or in the front of drawer
- 2) Reference: (sports schedules, etc) items needed for a short period of time; can be in a family binder or in a desk accordion file
- 3) Archive: (birth cert, legal docs, etc) items you don't access often; can be in the back of a file drawer or storage box

Other simple ways to file that may work better for you....

By Category: car insurance, utilities, vendors, etc.

By Month: a file for each month (not ideal if you have a mass amount of paperwork/bills)

By Color: Color code files based on category. Personal, Insurance, Business, Kids, Memories, etc. Or Finances (green folder), Business (blue), Health (red), etc.

Here's a Secret to not getting overwhelmed by paper.... Create an EXIT PLAN.

Every paper that enters the house has a system for how it will exit or land in a permanent file drawer.

Three-five categories such as: (will vary by household)

- 1) action required
- 2) to enter into Quickbooks
- 3) to file
- 4) for hubby to review
- 5) Reference etc.

Or, if you have minimal papers, create a Tickler File by the Day of the month:

Make 31 folders, or get an accordion folder that has 31 tabs. Store active papers that you need to remember by date. (bills, paperwork to reference later in the month, kids permission slips, etc) Once you've dealt with it, then it's ready to go into the permanent file or be tossed.

Get a shallow basket or bin (no more than 2" deep). Use it as your LANDING ZONE for papers.

Tips:

Set a standing time each week to file so it doesn't pile up. Put it on your calendar!

Archive/purge files annually

Keep the tabs all on one side, not staggered. Makes it easier to find items.

Make a decision on what to do with the paper the first time you touch it.

If you can easily find it back online, you don't need to keep it.

If you don't need it, Don't keep it!



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