

# AD IT YOURSELF



Even if you're messy, your home doesn't have to be. Illustration: Ellie Schiltz/Getty Images

## AD IT YOURSELF

# 7 Organization Hacks That Will Transform Your Messy Home

No need to get rid of clutter—find a good spot for it instead

By Lisa Cheng

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You may have tried a zillion organization hacks to tame household clutter by obsessively paring down and hiding everything in sight. But

there's another way to tackle a disorderly home: Embrace the mess instead of fighting it. "More than ever, there is a push for everyone to live their authentic selves," says Amber Dunford, design psychologist and style director for Overstock.com. For some, that means ditching the minimalist aesthetic in lieu of "cluttercore" (a trend known for embracing densely packed decor, but not just dumping everything in a messy heap.)

No need to beat yourself up over unattainable standards of perfection when it comes to decluttering and nailing all the organization hacks in your home. Want to be true to the (messy) you? Here, seven hacks to keep your household chaos under control.

## Engineer a system that works for you

The biggest trick to keeping the clutter at bay is to design a system that syncs with your own personal habits—one that makes tasks easy to accomplish. "If something feels overly complicated and requires too much effort, it is human nature that we will likely avoid it or, at best, put it off," Dunford says. As an example, she points out, if you're not going to take the time to neatly fold a towel over a towel rack, then ditch the rack and opt for some modern wall hooks. "These keep your space looking stylish and put together, plus save you a little effort every day." For those who have given up on closet organization, investing in acrylic shelf dividers will force you to categorize clothing, or at the very least prevent one big pile of sweaters.



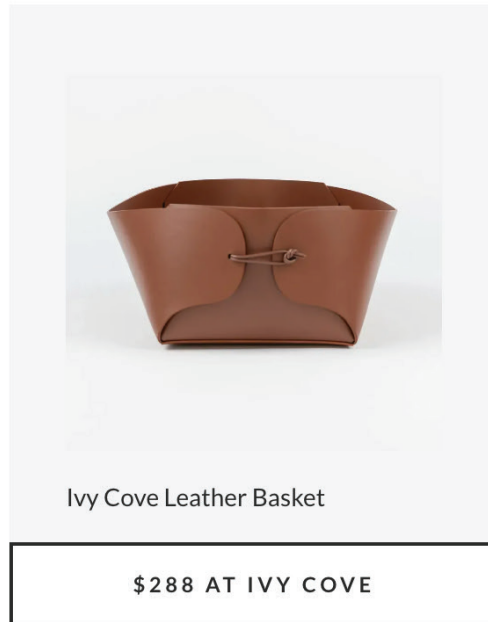
5-Hook Wall Mounted Rack

\$35 AT AMAZON

## Create a place for everything

"Identify places for everything to go so it doesn't go everywhere," says designer Kim Coombs of KBCO Design in Orlando. That could mean

hooks for keys and other hanging items such as dog leashes, or dedicated baskets or bins for shoes or mail, like the Ivy Cove leather basket that looks sleek and will keep all the flyers at bay. A catchall container makes dropping miscellaneous items down a guilt-free habit.



That could also mean organizing entire zones of a room according to how you use the space or the items you keep there. “Bathrooms [especially] tend to have lots of odds-and-ends that can take over quickly if you don’t have a system in place,” says Dunford. “A hair product shelf, a medicine area, or a bath supplies cabinet are a few zones that come to mind. Curating associated items into a common area increases the likelihood that you will return them once you are finished.”

## Find stylish storage containers

Organizing can be easier if you tell yourself, “It’s really just decorating!” “Find creative and beautiful storage solutions for everyday items,” says Kait Schulhof, founder of A Clean Bee. “I like collecting interesting vintage vessels for this exact purpose.” As an example, she suggests vintage blue-and-white tureens for dishwasher tablets, vintage baskets for kids toys, and pretty wooden or stone boxes to store office supplies. To keep your nightstand in order, store all the random necessities—like a sleep mask, lip balm, and hand

cream—in a pretty floral keepsake box from [Rifle Paper Co.](#)



Rifle Paper Co. Keepsake Box

**\$58 AT RIFLE PAPER CO.**

## Put popular items within reach

Another reason to use storage containers is that they provide easy access to things that you use frequently—especially if they're open and take up some real estate on your counter. "Open boxes or bins curate your items and make it convenient to toss them back into their assigned area once you are done, without fussing over lids," Dunford says. If you do corral the containers into a cabinet, consider clear containers that show you what's inside so you don't have to remember the contents.

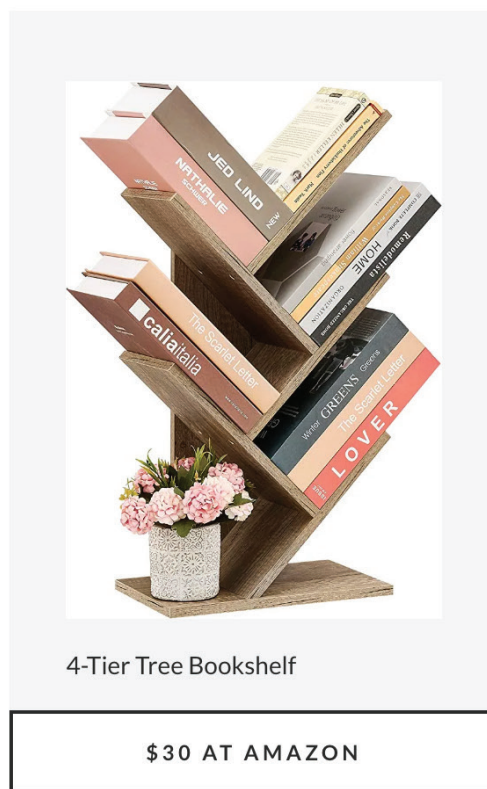


Clear Containers

**\$25 AT AMAZON**

## Harmonize unkempt areas with existing decor

Take stock of things that create a mess—maybe you're an avid reader who has books strewn about—and find ways to artfully arrange those items to match the decor, Dunford says. “It can be a stack on a bench at the foot of your bed, an open nightstand where they can be contained on a shelf, or you could colorize them in stacks and rows on top of your dresser.” Take it a step further and get a bookshelf tree, which will retain the ease of accessing novels without worrying about knocking the stack over.



## Minimize the look of clutter with layers

“When it comes to shelf styling, create areas for the eyes to rest,” Dunford says. This can be done through negative space or creating varying layers in height, she explains. “A simple formula might be to lean a taller piece of art, layer a medium one in front, and then place a smaller element in front such as a plant or a cool found object from an antique shop.”

## Reduce mental clutter with calming colors

Clutter can not only be in your space, but also in your mind. “Keep your color palette simple and create negative space to reduce psychological clutter,” says Dunford. “A contrasting color palette is highly energizing and creates visual tension. Working in a range of monochromatic colors creates calming energy and can set a relaxing emotional climate.” Not sure which neutral is right for you? Try the [Lick x Kelly Hoppen](#) sample box filled with six earthy peel-and-stick examples.



Lick x Kelly Hoppen Sample Box

**\$12 AT LICK**