

# Rethink Your Junk Drawer

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by Christine Vick

I'm not opposed to junk drawers. I have a couple of spots in my house where items are not perfectly corralled into divided containers. The trouble starts when a space gets so cluttered that necessary items can't be located or used. So take a moment to restore a bit of order to a jumbled drawer in your kitchen, office or bedroom. You may find a few lost treasures, and you'll definitely gain peace of mind. Here's how:



## **Lost and Found:**

Empty the drawer completely. When sorting through the contents, separate and set aside items that can be tossed or belong elsewhere. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Do the remaining items fit easily into the space?
- Why am I keeping them here?
- Is there a better home for a certain object?

Typically, a top kitchen or office drawer should contain frequently used supplies that need to be at your fingertips. Relocate items you need once or twice a year.



## **To Contain or not to Contain:**

Drawer dividers are an obvious solution: they're inexpensive and are readily available in a variety of materials and sizes. If your junk drawer is chock-full, it's probably worth the investment, so postage stamps don't disappear under layers of office supplies. However, if you've pared down and the space is spare, it's okay to have keys and a roll of tape floating around.

## **Avoid Temptation:**

The greatest threat to your junk drawer is letting it live up to its name. Once you've cleared and sorted the contents, make a commitment not to drop odds and ends there indefinitely. Instead use a basket stashed in a closet or cupboard to house items temporarily until they have a permanent home.



## **Get Creative:**

If you need to maximize drawer space, consider adding a container to the desk or counter top above it. A galvanized bucket can store scissors and pens (outfit the bucket with small dividers to hold items upright). Or purchase a clear over-the-door shoe holder and hang it on the back of a pantry or closet door. Items such as tape, post-its, scissors and glue fit neatly into the pockets and are visible and accessible.

Since it's likely that you rummage through your junk drawer on a daily basis, it's a great organizing project. It's a doable project that won't take all day. The satisfaction you feel may even propel you on to a larger project, like your coat closet or pantry.

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