

TRENDING

# 5 FOR 5

## HOW TO ORGANIZE FAVORITE SPACES



Glickman Design Build mudroom, photo by Stacy Zarin Goldberg



Aidan Design kitchen/dining room, photo by Robert Radifera

Area experts agree: Consider what you use on a daily basis and what you don't, then, eliminate the items on the "not-in-use" list. "

No one likes to say it, but one of the best ways to organize is to purge and really think about what is important and essential," says Nadia Subaran, co-owner of Aidan Design. Corner accessory options and pullout pantry units in cabinets by Wood-Mode offer one place to start the process.

"Less is more applies to design aesthetic as well as new lifestyle trends," Subaran says. "New designs are all about open spaces up, tearing down walls, new bigger window expanses, open shelves instead of wall cabinets, and more."

Subaran notes the shallow depth pantry she has in her home where everything is visible and what fits in that pantry is what her family needs. "It helps me to stay in check with my shopping with far less waste as we use what we have," she adds.

Kitchen pantries are also coming back, not necessarily the traditional walk-ins we're used to, but ones with fun door treatments such as barn doors and cool sliding hardware. "It's a great place to install a salvaged door or to introduce a new finish element in the space," Subaran says.

Design experts weigh in on what it takes to organize some favorite rooms in our homes.



*District Design projects, photos courtesy of District Design*

In the Kitchen,  
 Michael Mersch, AIA,  
 Design Studio Manager,  
 Wentworth, Inc.,  
[www.wentworthstudio.com](http://www.wentworthstudio.com),  
 suggests:

1. Create a focal point to add visual interest by installing a special backsplash with mosaic tile, a stone slab, stainless steel or a custom hood. This defines the center of the kitchen with the other areas, such as washing, prep and storage, organized around this center. Also, consider eliminating items no longer needed or used.
2. Use deeper 13-inch wall cabinets, which fit larger plates and dishes.
3. Place the trash cabinet and the dishwasher on either side of the sink, making clean up a breeze, and also consider having the range close by as well for added convenience and efficiency.
4. Group larger items together, such as refrigerators, double ovens, and pantries, as they can affect the feeling of openness in the kitchen. Group these items together in corners and away from the field of view and make sure there is counter space nearby when taking things in and out of appliances.
5. Take advantage of space organizers including pullout lazy Susans, appliance garages, utensil and flatware dividers, spice drawers, tray dividers, and such.

In the Butler's Pantry and  
 Kitchen Island,  
 Carmel Greer, AIA,  
 principal, District Design,  
[www.districtdesign.com](http://www.districtdesign.com),  
 suggests:

1. Use containers in unconventional ways - Removable metal containers within an island can be used for wine storage, herbs or filled with ice for party beverages!
2. Bring storage into the open - Small rooms like traditional butler's pantries can block light in row houses. A good solution is to take the components traditionally in a butler's pantry and place them along a kitchen wall.
3. Find new uses for underutilized spaces - An otherwise unused back or side of a kitchen island can be a great place to store wine and provide visual interest.
4. Go all the way up - Full height cabinetry, used creatively, can house everything from cleaning equipment to wine to A/V equipment.
5. Look around for additional ways to organize - Storage can be built into unusual places that aren't otherwise useful to the kitchen. For example, a small angled space beneath a stair can provide the perfect place for extra beverages.



*Wentworth, Inc. kitchens, photos by Stacy Zarin Goldberg, Ron Blunt and Geoffrey Hodgdon*



Aidan Design Kitchen,  
photos by Robert Radifera



Left, Glickman Design Build mudroom,  
photo by Stacy Zarin Goldberg  
Right, Marika Meyer Interiors living  
room, photo by Angie Seckinger

In the Mudroom,  
Keith Long,  
architectural designer,  
Glickman Design Build,  
[www.glickmandesignbuild.com](http://www.glickmandesignbuild.com), suggests:

In the Library,  
Marika Meyer, principal,  
Marika Meyer Interiors,  
[www.meyerinteriors.com](http://www.meyerinteriors.com),  
suggests:

In the Kitchen and  
Dining Room,  
Megan Padilla, designer, and  
Nadia Subaran, co-owner  
and senior designer,  
Aidan Design,  
[www.aidandesign.com](http://www.aidandesign.com),  
suggest:



1. Create zones in the kitchen to organize different activities. If you're an avid baker, it's important to have dedicated space for bakeware and pastry tools close to the oven. That way, multiple people can work in the kitchen without getting underfoot.
2. Similarly, organize a kid's snack zone. When kids come home from school hungry, think about storing approved snacks and even simple snack plates and cups in a drawer at their level so they can help themselves.
3. Consider grouping your pantry by types of food so they're at hand for week-day meals. One rollout for pasta, tomato sauces, rice dishes and the like, while another stores flour, sugar and other baking ingredients. Less time rummaging through the pantry gives you more time to pull it all together.
4. Think about incorporating built-ins for the dining room if you have a small kitchen. This allows you to store larger serving pieces or collections of serving items (think stacks of appetizer plates) in an organized way.
5. Add open shelving. This is not only attractive, but it's also a great way to keep things that are in high rotation at hand. Consider a collection of coffee mugs by the coffee machine or water glasses near the refrigerator. You won't have to worry about dust if they are always in use.

1. Think storage space - The ideal mudroom should have cabinets that meet your storage and space needs. Consider custom cabinets that match the rest of your home especially when the mudroom is visible from other rooms.
2. Utilize storage benches - Consider benches with storage space underneath to keep your shoes, gloves and umbrellas out of your tripping zone while also being aesthetically pleasing.
3. Add baskets - Incorporate shelf-sized baskets into the mudroom for small items that clutter the shelves. Have baskets for each person in the family, labeled by name.
4. Compartmentalize - Everything, including boots, shoes, coats, hats, needs a place.
5. Maximize overhead spaces - Use the full height of a cabinet by creating a couple of shelves on top of other storage. Even if it is hard to reach, with a small step-ladder, this can be a great place to store less frequently used items.

1. Add color behind shelving to not only invigorate a library, but also to make the built-in or freestanding unit a stylish and functional way to display books and collectibles.
2. Group books together by category, such as cooking, home, economics and history, to create order and then work within each group by color to create an organized and aesthetically pleasing grouping.
3. Incorporate boxes and baskets to add texture and interest but also to help hide clutter.
4. Think of unexpected concealed storage, such as adding base cabinets to a built-in to store files, paperwork and hide printers and computer cords. Consider pullout trays for many computer systems.
5. Edit what you need versus what you want, and add in special items and objects to elevate the space from something purely functional to a welcoming room to curl up and read.