

# The basics of organizing

**MELANIE STOKES**  
Owner, Intuitive Living

“ First, determine: Do I use the item?  
Do I love it?

“If the answer is no, get rid of it. Give it away if somebody else could use it or appreciate it; if it has value, sell it; or if not, trash it. If you don't love it, but use it, make a plan to replace it with something you do love.

“Simplify before you organize. For example, do you really need 30 pairs of black boots?”

Find a home for everything. Ask yourself, how often do I use it? Where do I use it? Where does it need to live? Before you purchase something, first ask yourself those questions. “If you don't have an answer for that, you don't need it. A client in Texas had so much stuff in their home that they bought the house next door.”

Before you buy a container, determine its use. Does it need to be pretty or just functional? Measure first, then look around the house. “Sometimes you don't have to purchase anything.”

- A checkbook box is the perfect size for pens.
- An empty toilet paper roll works great for storing those long electrical cords.
- Baskets make great containers.
- Have a collection of something, like hats? Hang them on the wall for décor. ”

