

Everything In Its Place

By Amy Simone, A Space in Time

We recently purchased a new washer and dryer and although I love my new appliances, I really miss the old ones. But not for the reason you might think. Previously, the washer and dryer were side-by-side in our mudroom, which opens into the garage. The surface area and location of these appliances made them an ideal spot to put goods that I needed to remember to put in the car and take with me. The new washer and dryer, by contrast, are stacked vertically. Although these appliances are designed to save space, my only horizontal surface in that room is now the floor, which just isn't working for me.

Thus, the hunt for a suitable bench or table has begun. In my opinion, it is important to have a convenient and accessible place to put certain items of daily life. Your keys should have a consistent spot. You shouldn't have to search for your wallet or phone, and your coats and shoes should be in a grab-and-go position. Also, there should be a "staging area" in your home that commands your attention just before you leave the house to ensure that you don't forget to bring something. In South Burlington, we are fortunate to enjoy shorter commutes to just about everywhere. Still, do you really want to spend time driving back home to get something that you forgot?

Then there's the matter of leaving the house with the right items. When I was in grade school, my mother did not drive. Thus, I learned at a fairly young age that if I did not remember my flute on the days that I had band practice, that I would be the one sitting in front of a music stand with no instrument in my hands. I'd like to think that this experience helped to form the way that I think through my days now. Where will I be going that day? What items will I need once I get there? Anything non-perishable can be stashed either in your car directly the night before or put in the staging area that works best in your home. If you have a really difficult time remembering things, put them right in front of the door, where you would literally trip on them if you didn't stop to pick them up on the way out. (I don't recommend this for everyone, as I suppose it could be a fire hazard, but use this method when needed.)

As for the daily essentials, such as keys, wallet and phone, for example, test your current system by timing yourself one morning to see how long it takes you to leave the house. Were the items that you needed in established spots or did you spend a lot of extra time searching for them? How could you shave off some of this non-value-added time from your routine? You'd be amazed how much a small tweak to your routine, once you've developed it into a new habit, can simplify your life. The true value of putting up a \$2 wall hook to hang up your car keys so you can find them quickly...priceless!

Life is too short to spend it running around like a crazy person, trying to find your things, or dashing back home to pick up something that you forgot. Do yourself a favor and honestly evaluate your current habits and storage solutions. Time spent refining the way you organize your essentials will pay you back in ongoing dividends, as you find yourself headed out to door quickly and with everything that you need for your day.