ROOM BY ROOM · KITCHEN

How to Organize the Pantry

A shelf-by-shelf pantry plan with high, middle and bottom zones that make sense.

WHERE TO START

Clear the kitchen table to use as your work station, then empty the pantry onto it.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- ☐ Four boxes or totes
- ☐ Trash bag
- ☐ Cleaning cloth
- ☐ Containers and labels
- ☐ Bins on casters or turntables

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Put the time on your calendar like any other appointment. One room per session is plenty.

The method

1. **Set up four boxes**
   Label them Toss, Donate, Keep and Relocate. Every item goes into one of them, so nothing ends up in a new pile.
2. **Empty it completely**
   Take everything out and set it on a cleared table or counter. You can't organize around things you haven't seen.
3. **Clean before anything goes back**
   Wipe the shelves, drawers and surfaces and sweep the floor while the space is empty.
4. **Group like with like**
   Sort what you're keeping into families. Seeing all of one kind together shows you how much you really have.
5. **Give every family a home**
   What you use most goes closest to hand. Add containers and labels only once you know what stays.
6. **Close the session**
   Take out the trash, put the donations in your car and return every Relocate item to its room before you stop.

In this room

Think in three sections

High, middle and bottom shelves, each with its own job.

Heavy goes low, rare goes high

Bulky items on the bottom shelves, appliances you rarely use up top.

Food in the middle

Cans, pasta, beans and rice, flour, sugar and condiments, each in its own family.

KEEP IT THAT WAY

Give the pantry a quick pick-up and wipe each shelf before you shop for groceries.

ONE THING TO REMEMBER

If you want to paint or add wallpaper, the empty pantry is the moment to do it.

YOUR CHECKLIST IS ON THE NEXT PAGE

More tips and photos in the full post: read it here

ROOM BY ROOM · KITCHEN · CHECKLIST

The Pantry Checklist

STARTED _____ DONE _____

- [ ] Set up four totes or boxes and label them Toss, Donate, Keep and Relocate.
- [ ] Clear off your kitchen table completely to use it as a catch-all and work station.
- [ ] Remove everything from the pantry and put it on your kitchen table or counter.
- [ ] Clean every shelf and drawer of your pantry. If you want to give it a facelift, this is the time: paint or wallpaper it as you wish.
- [ ] Divide the pantry into three sections: high, middle and bottom shelves.
- [ ] Place large appliances you don't use very often on the higher shelves.
- [ ] Place bulky and heavy items on the lower shelves. Use bins on casters or turntables to make them easy to reach.
- [ ] Use the middle section for all your food, divided into families: cans, pasta, beans and rice, flour, sugar and condiments.
- [ ] Use containers and decant everything from its original packaging. Label all containers.
- [ ] To keep your pantry neat and organized, give it a weekly pick-up and clean each shelf before you shop for groceries.

NOTES

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