



GET ORGANIZED

Too much clutter distracts us from success. A well-organized kitchen and pantry reduce daily stress and provide us with the tools to reach our healthy life goals. Being organized saves us time and money and helps us enjoy being at home. We can set and achieve goals - such as having a healthy family - more effectively. Bringing organization into our kitchens and lives is a step we will not regret taking! Here is why getting organized is important:

The Facts:

- In the average home, reducing clutter eliminates 40 percent of housework.
- In a study conducted by The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 71 percent of polled participants said their quality of life would improve if they were better organized.
- The National Resources Defense Council says that Americans are throwing away \$165 billion worth of wasted food each year which means the Average family is spending \$2,275 per year of food they never actually eat.

GET ORGANIZED IN THE KITCHEN

1. **Clean out your fridge and pantry.** Toss out expired foods or any mixes/sauces/dips that you never use. Make room for key pantry staples items such as healthy whole grains, dry/canned beans, and broths. **Purchasing air-tight, stackable containers with labels is a great way of easily seeing what is on hand and tracking expiration dates.*
2. **Create a weekly meal plan.** Choose one day each week to plan all meals based on the upcoming weeks' events and post it somewhere the entire family can see. Do not forget to include breakfasts and lunches. Decide what days you can cook, when to rely on leftovers or the slow-cooker, and remember: ***it is ok to take a night off.*** If you are only able to go the store or farmers' market once a week, then plan to eat the most perishable foods first. Organize your recipes for quick reference. **Grocery shopping once a week vs. daily saves you money!*
3. **Make a grocery list.** Base your list on your weekly meal plan. There are many templates out there as well as applications for your smart phone, so look for help if needed. Choose one that works for you or create your own based upon the layout of your favorite grocery store. Stick to your list - you will save time and money.
4. **Prep, Portion and Conquer.** Based on how busy your week is, **prep** your ingredients upon returning from shopping. Store them in food containers or baggies to shorten the time from prep to table each night. **Portion** veggies and leftovers for quick lunch bag packing. **Conquer** the weekly meal plan by getting the family involved in the prepping and portioning!