



Closet Works can keep your craft room organized, too. Choose from features like vertical dividers for various canvas sizes, pull-out trash bins and integrated LED lighting.

THE SIMPLE LIFE

At Closet Works, Chicago's go-to source for decluttering in style, organization is the name of the game.

By Korey Huyler

With the whole country obsessed with *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up* by Marie Kondo, it's not surprising that organization-themed businesses are seeing a huge upsurge in clients. From professional organizers and junk removal companies to eBay businesses and wardrobe consultants, companies that help make your life simpler are getting tons of buzz.

Case in point: Closet Works, the beloved Chicago-based business that specializes in creating custom closets, efficient offices and spaces with purpose. But there's so much more... Closet Works creates pantries, mudrooms, craft rooms, entertainment centers, garages and wine storage, too.

At Closet Works, chic organization is the name of the game. In fact, the name Marie Kondo now pops up regularly in conversations with clients. "We hear the phrase 'spark joy' from Marie Kondo now more than ever before," explains Closet Works president Tom Happ. "The phrase 'sparks,' pun intended, a positive influence toward the long-term benefits of becoming organized. Once a person recognizes the need to be organized

and actually accomplishes it, then it becomes more rewarding each and every day."

For many busy people, organization is a top priority in 2019—and this often starts and ends in a person's home. From closets and offices to kitchens and garages, keeping your home organized is key to peace of mind.

Closet Works offers many innovative options for kicking your home organization into high gear—and it typically starts with the closet. "You should look at professionally organized closets as an investment for both you and the future value of your home," Happ says. "People like organized spaces, and in the future, this makes your home really marketable. Organization is an investment with a high ROI."

But getting organized is easier said than done. Happ notes that for many clients, the hardest part usually is just getting started. We asked Zena Hallman, the director of sales and marketing at Closet Works, to share some tips on how to start organizing and decluttering your closet. (And, trust us, these are tips that Marie Kondo herself would love.)



Closet Works' fully customizable systems for mudrooms eliminate backdoor clutter and give families the perfect space to land with coats, gloves and shoes. *Right*, For this reach-in baby closet, Closet Works keeps things organized with a triple-hanging clothes system that can be reconfigured into a double-hanging system as your child grows. Bonus: The addition of drawers and baskets eliminates the need for dressers within the room. For this reach-in baby closet, Closet Works keeps things organized with a triple-hanging clothes system that can be reconfigured into a double-hanging system as your child grows. Bonus: The addition of drawers and baskets eliminates the need for dressers within the room.



City living means making the most out of every space. This handsome home office system can include a Closet Works wall bed for when friends or family come to visit.



1. **Do one space at a time.** “Don’t be overwhelmed believing you need to do it all at once,” says Hallman. “Once you see the benefits of living in the newly organized space, it makes it much easier to tackle each additional space.”
2. **Start by purging.** “While going through items in your closet, take time to purge,” she says. “If you didn’t know you had it, then simply get rid of it and don’t put it back.” Either donate it or give it to a friend.
3. **Create a system.** “Once you start getting organized, have a system where you allow yourself to identify what you wear and what you don’t,” Hallman says. “For example, place all the items you wear on the right side of your closet. Every year, you can simply review the items on the left side and decide what should be purged.”

Besides custom closets, Closet Works builds dynamic craft rooms (with plenty of organization spaces to allow the creative mind to flow); walled offices with “wall beds” (like a Murphy bed with additional storage in a surrounding wall unit); and baby closets (the addition of drawers and baskets eliminates the need for dressers

within the room). For a stress-free home environment, Closet Works stresses the importance of organization in every room of the house.

The hot 2019 trend of living simply continues outside your home, as well. Hotels are spending more and more of their budgets on wardrobe built-ins to make guests feel at home during their stay. To remove the clutter that is filling all of our lives (and minds), some hotels are leaving space under beds for suitcases and even building cubbies for coats and shoes, thereby eliminating the need for an extra coat closet. Hotels understand that organization and simplicity (resulting in much less stress) are what most people are striving for.

Happ agrees. “In the past [few] years, we have seen the trend of clients who are downsizing,” he says. “When downsizing, custom closets are no longer a luxury, they are now a necessity. The closet is a special place where you start and end every day, and when properly organized, you have less stress and can enjoy a healthy life.” ^{sl}

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