

Cures for School Clutter

by Kit Bennett



You've thought about preparing your kid's for school, but what about your house? Included with the new school routine, are the backpacks, sport bags, flyers, permission slips, lunch bags, book orders ... Take the time over the next few weeks to prepare your house and your lifestyle for a stress free routine using these ideas created by busy moms!

How To Build A School Station

Start with an old bookshelf as the main "school-station"

Your children can help to paint or design it to their style.

- Add strong hooks with short screws to the outside shelf for back pack, hat, coat...
- A milk crate on the bottom shelf can hold umbrellas or other large items.
- Cut the top and back of cereal boxes to make "IN - OUT" boxes. Your children can help you cover them with wrapping paper. Perfect for library books...school forms etc.
- A clean yogurt container can hold lunch money.
- Attach a dry erase board onto the side for important dates and reminders. "Tuesday is library day!"

Keep this shelf in the entry way, kitchen or somewhere close to the door. Make it a part of the evening routine to go through it to see completed work, schedule checks etc.

Tip:

If you have more than one child you can divide the shelf in half. Paint with two colors, hang twice as many hooks etc.

Easy Organizing Tools

If you don't have the time, space or desire to create a school shelf try these time and space saving tips from readers. The more organized you are the more organized your student will be---I can't make any promises but, it's possible that the morning routine will be a bit smoother as well.

II A solution for larger Art work and projects

At the beginning of the school year visit your local pizza parlor and ask for some Un-used large pizza boxes (they may provide them for free or less than \$1.00). Let each of your children decorate and label them with name, grade and year. Use the boxes to store those projects you don't want to throw away. These boxes will store easily under the bed.

II Quick tip for papers, library books and Show & Tell

Hang an inexpensive three tier wire basket for each child in the kitchen, family room or bedrooms. Keep permission slips, library books that are due, and homework safe from the dog!

II Another under bed Idea

"I save all of the plastic zipper bags from new linens, to store school work and other mementos during the year. They fit under the bed, can be labeled with permanent markers and stay dry! I have one large bag from every year of school."

II No more smelly lunch boxes!

Pour a bit of baking soda in the bottom every night. Shake or wipe it out in the a.m.---Towards the end of the year I wipe it out with a VERY weak bleach and water solution.

II Keep Important Papers In Order

This idea is especially helpful if you have more than one child...

Purchase two inexpensive report folders with pockets--select a color for each child. Cut them in half or open and fold to expose the pocket. Use a hole punch at the top and hang on the "fridge" with a magnetic hook. I let my children decorate the folder with stickers and write their names. These are great for permission slips, sports forms and book orders.