

# Best Organizing Tips for Busy Parents

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Parents continue to comment that they need more time and organization in their lives to relax, play, and function more effectively in their daily lives.

This is no surprise as more parents are working

outside the home more hours each week. Due to the high cost of living, parents are required to travel outrageous distances from their homes to their jobs. Additionally, parents no longer have a leisurely weekend day to clean the house. Typical weekends are filled with their children's scheduled participation in sports events, birthday parties, and school related activities. Attendance to these activities require added travel times and schedule coordination for all family members. Many parents also spend their weekends with second jobs, volunteer activities, and catching up with household errands. Reducing the time required to organize for the day and manage the household is critical for parents to survive their daily livelihood. Summarized below are the best organizing tips shared by parents to help you survive the daily demands of household management:

Organize for the day. Plan your activities for the day while keeping it simple. For every hour of planning and organizing, you can save two hours of stressful household management. Planning should include individual time for yourself, time for exercise, time for sleep, and time for consuming nutritional meals. Exercise can include the hours you spend walking children in strollers, hiking at the soccer fields and football fields while watching your children play a sport, and walking to a nearby cafe for lunch or a coffee break.

Spend 30 minutes each morning completing household chores. Effective strategies include having family members make their beds and pick up their bedrooms. A designated family member can empty the garbage and recycle bins, pick up clothes and large items in the common family areas, rinse and wash dishes, or load or unload the dishwasher. This activity can save you an added hour each day and will provide you with a sense of order when you return home from work or a full day of family activities.

Spot clean bathrooms when bathing the children. While your children are bathing, you can wipe down counters and toilets with an environmentally safe bathroom cleaner. After your children are bathed, you can wipe out the bathtub or shower area and mop the floors with the cleaner. This activity should only take fifteen minutes once or twice a week and can save you an added hour each week.

Prepare two meals at a time. Three to four times a week, prepare casseroles or meals that can be frozen. Nightly salads and vegetables can be picked from your vegetable garden and prepared as a fun filled family

activity right before the meal is served. This activity can save you four hours each week and can add another family play activity at a very stressful time of day.

Complete laundry once or twice a week. Today's clothing does not have to be sorted for cleaning beyond heavy (i.e. towels, throw rugs) and lighter items. Clothes typically are color-fast and do not require ironing if removed from the dryer when slightly damp or when the drying cycle is completed. Many parents or family members spend hours folding clothes or having piles of clothes dispersed throughout the house. You can limit folding each item and sort according to where it will be stored in the house. When storing, place piles of similar items neatly in a closet, cabinet, or hang in a closet. This modified process can save you two to five hours of laundry management each week. Additionally, there will be no more piles of laundry distributed throughout the house or hidden in closets.

Deep clean your home once or twice a month. Although you now are managing most household cleaning daily, you will still need to clean or vacuum floors or carpets, sanitize bathrooms, and dust the house weekly or every other week. Plan for this two to four-hour activity on a weekend morning or on one evening a couple of times a month. You can save four hours a month when all cleaning activities are consolidated.

Order food, clothing, and family items online once a week. Through the use of computers and mobile devices, you can order everything you need for your home once a week and have all delivered to your home

for free or for a nominal fee. You may only have to run errands once a month for the larger shopping trips to discount warehouses or shopping malls. The savings in time, gas, money, and stress are phenomenal. As you start using online services, read carefully to determine if there are higher charges for ordering online verses going to the store for the same items. Typically, there is a warning for added costs on the home page or when paying for the items with your credit card. When using your credit card, consider the security of personal information entered on your computer or mobile device. You can save up to five hours a week with coordinated purchases.

Complete online banking and bill paying. Through the use of computers and mobile devices, you can complete most of their bill paying and banking online once or twice a month. Caution must be used to ensure the security of your personal information when using your computer or mobile device. Additionally, it is important to monitor all expenses and bank transactions to ensure there has not been any identity theft or incorrect charges. You can save one hour each month, gas, and the cost of postage when conducting most of your business online.

Organize your home to reduce clutter. Walk through your home each month and when completing the laundry each week. Dispose of any household items or clothing that are worn or no longer used. When deep cleaning, organize your closets, cabinets, garage, and common household areas. When you acquire new items, dispose of worn or used duplicates. Limit the number of cherished items that still bring you joy and happy memories. By reducing your clutter, you will have

more time to enjoy daily life. You can save up to two hours a week looking for misplaced items with less clutter.

These house management strategies can provide you with twenty more hours of personal and family play time each week. As your children become more responsible, they can manage many of the household tasks with your guidance and modeling to help them prepare for independent living. In our blog comment section, please share your shortcuts in house management to help all of us achieve daily balance and serenity in our active family lives.

Happy organizing!

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