

Why get your scrap supplies organized?

By Megan Spears, Disorder2Order, Professional Organizer

Every crop is always the same; I arrive early and unloaded my gear before anyone else gets there. I immediately start browsing the shelves to see what's new. I can't help but wonder why I am always drawn to the same store to crop. Is it because they always have the latest and greatest or is it because of the people that come to crop there?

My name is Megan Spears and I am a professional organizer. I have been creating scrapbooks since 2000 and I am totally addicted. It's a passion that I think about in my sleep and actually stage things in my home to create the perfect pages of my children. Our pictures play such a big role in our lives that we can't help but want to have all the latest and greatest new embellishments, tools and most of all PAPER!!!!

As a professional organizer, it's hard for me to not want to offer advice, tips and tricks to my fellow artists when I am in my element of cropping. I just can't help myself, mostly because as artists (we really are...) we think in our creative minds which don't like structure and flow in an unorganized manner. I will tell you that with a few simple strategies you might find that being organized will give you more time to do what we love.... Make pages!

1. **Sort Like with Like.** This is something I tell all my clients... artist or not. You never want to put your galoshes with the butter dish... same principles apply.
2. **Define Your Style.** Style has everything to do with scrapbooking and everything to do with how we define "LIKE." Some people like things sorted by brand while others like things sorted by color. Style defines us and how we think.
3. **Don't buy for fashion.** I always encourage people to use what you have before making big purchases for storage. The reality is that it's so much more fun spending our money on our pages than the items we store them in.
4. **Pictures come first.** If you are desperate to get yourself organized because you never have enough time to create... start with sorting your pictures. Once you have your photos in order the thought of starting to work on pages doesn't seem so difficult.
5. **Know what you have.** How many times do you run across a beautiful piece of paper in the store and think... "I have to have that!" You add it to the pile of newly purchased goodies and as soon as you get home you realize that you already have it. Knowing what you have can save you money.

It's amazing how just a few simple strategies can make your time more efficient and productive. We spend our hard earned dollars on beautiful pages that we hope our families will enjoy forever. If my husband ever really knew how much money is invested into my pages, he would ground me. The nice thing is that when I dedicate my time away from my family or my work, I want it to be productive. I want to know that when I put my pencil down and turn off the light I have something to show for it. Beautiful pages of days gone by.