



## Got Five Minutes – Get Organized!

Sarah Welch & Alicia Rockmore

**W**e hear it all of the time. ‘I just do not have time to get organized. I want to, but I just can’t fit it in with everything else going on in my life.’ While this may indeed be true, you can get organized in baby steps if you just set aside a few minutes each day. The National Association of Professional Organizers estimates that people waste an hour a day searching for things they know they have but cannot get their hands on. If you find just five minutes each day for a month to clean up your act, you will save much more than that in no time. So let’s get started.

### Alicia & Sarah on “How to Find the Time”

‘We started to think about all of the ‘could be wasted time’ that we make use of to tidy up and get things in order. Think about your day and we are sure you too will find many opportunities for five minutes here and there that will add up to real results over time. Some of our favorite organizing bursts happen while waiting in the car pool lane for pick up, in the morning when we might be talking to our mom or husband on the phone, watching swimming lessons, or the last hour of the evening when everyone else is tucked in and sleeping. Each of us has these moments everyday where we can easily multi-task or finish a quick project. All you need to do is consciously look for these moments and then seize the opportunity.’

Here are some of our favorite quick organizing projects. Most can be done in just five to ten minutes.

#### #1: Clear out your voice mail boxes

We all have old needless voice messages saved on our home, cell and work voice mails. Delete them.

It will save you time the next time you have to find a saved message you really need.

#### #2: Put 20 pictures in a photo album

But a photo album and keep it handy. When you have 5 minutes, grab a stack of pictures you have been meaning to put away and place in an album. It clears clutter and preserves the pictures.

#### #3: Run the trash relay

Grab a garbage bag and run around the house and throw out useless things (e.g. old newspapers, junk mail) until it is full. It may not make a dent at first, but a few of these breaks and things start to get cleaned up.

#### #4: Return one important call

Sometimes only the urgent calls get returned. When you have a few minutes, make a call you have been meaning to do and get it out of the way.

#### #5: Toss five things in the refrigerator

We all have those things that should be long gone but aren’t. What about the empty mustard bottle that still is in the refrigerator door just in case there is something left to squeeze out? Toss it along with everything past its expiration date.

#### #6: Clean out one bathroom drawer

When was the last time you cleaned out the drawers in your bathroom? Maybe never. Pick one drawer each day and pretty soon you are done.

#### #7: Sort it out

Take the time to sort the mail pile and get it in order. Put things in 3 piles: (1) things to read, (2) things that need attention like bills, and (3) things to toss. Just getting rid of the junk should cut the pile in half and make it easier to deal with the rest.

#### #8: Look at the next 7 days

Take out your calendar and actually look at the next week and take a moment to plan. Are there birthday gifts you need to buy? Sitters you need to hire? How nice would it be to get these things done ahead of time so you do not have to run around at the last minute?

*We are the co-founders of Buttoned Up, inc., a company dedicated to helping stretched and stressed women get themselves organized (along with everybody else they’re responsible for too!). We welcome your thoughts! Please send ideas and questions to us at: [yourlife@getbuttonedup.com](mailto:yourlife@getbuttonedup.com) or visit us at [www.getbuttonedup.com](http://www.getbuttonedup.com)*