

# Getting Organized Summer Style

By Sarah Welch and Alicia Rockmore



Ahh, it's summer! It's time to linger over a sunset meal with friends and family, relax on the hammock, splash in the pool with your kids, and generally just let your hair down a bit. Whether it's the heat, an anticipated vacation, or the extra Vitamin D we all somehow tolerate (and dare we say appreciate) imperfection around the house a bit more during the summer months. Happily, it is possible to relax without letting things go to pot organizationally speaking. As fall rapidly approaches and you're looking for a few appropriate ways to stay Buttoned Up without losing your summer cool, read on.

## Alicia on "Group Tasks"

"Summer is all about spending as much time outside as possible. Nobody wants to be inside doing chores, making meals, or cleaning rooms, especially you! Instead of tackling everything yourself, get the whole family to jump in and help get things together. Many hands do indeed make light work. So the next time your kids or spouse beg you to come out and play, point out that quicker they come in and help out, the sooner everything will be finished so everyone can go play."

## Sarah on "Little Tasks"

"During the summer months, I look to maximize the impact of those in-between moments, those two to five minute windows of time. I'll keep a running list in my head of little things that I can do in small windows of time. For example, I know I should throw out some old magazines in the living room. Or take a pile of clean laundry to the bedroom. Or empty the trash from the upstairs bathroom. I'm always amazed at how much I can accomplish by the end of one week by taking advantage of little time windows."

**Here are a few specific ideas on how to make those lazy summer days a little less lazy.**

### 1. Commercially Clean

Ever look over from in front of the TV and see a quick task you could, and should, do? Any time you're watching TV, take the time during commercial breaks to tidy up one room of the house. You will be amazed what you can accomplish in just two minutes and two seconds. And all you people with DVRs, no cheating by fast forwarding though all the commercials!

### 2. Delegate 3 things on your list

One of the easiest ways to cross tasks off your list is to delegate them. Sure, it may seem difficult at first to relinquish certain tasks – will others do it poorly or wrong? - but it is one worth overcoming. Start by having people help out with three things you had planned on doing yourself. You'll not only be surprised at how willing others are to help you out, but also by the weight taken off your shoulders once you're used to delegating effectively.



### 3. Focus on the reward

"You can go swimming once you clean up your room." "No ice cream until you've helped clear the table." Ah, yes, rewards. It's the oldest trick in the book, but that's because it's also the most effective. The summer months are a particularly good time to use rewards as it's a time when, not only are there the most fun activities, but, as the parent, you're in charge of most of them.

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*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)*