

3S TOUR GUIDE- KITCHEN EDITION

# Simplifying, Sorting and Sustaining an Organized Life



# Table of Contents

<b>Hey There Hopeful!</b>	<b>01</b>
<b>The Process of Simplifying</b>	<b>02</b>
<b>The Significance of Sorting</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>Your Style, Your Spaces, Your Success</b>	<b>04</b>
<b>Sustaining an Organized Life</b>	<b>05</b>
<b>Staying Hopeful</b>	<b>06</b>

# Hey There Hopeful! I'm Your Organizing Guide, Melissa

I'm passionate about Small Space Successes. Over the years, I've worked with clients, helping them to achieve a more organized and less stressed life.

Through my experiences, I've learned that living an organized life can bring immense benefits to our spatial and general well-being. I'm excited to share my knowledge and expertise with others seeking a simpler, more Hopeful lifestyle.

Choosing an organized lifestyle includes embracing the 'Home Team' concept. Home team being anyone sharing spaces of the age and capabilities to live organized together. Our home team is my son and I (as seen below) and yes, the struggle is real with a teenager some days, but being a team is the core and helps reset the lifestyle when life moments happen.



I truly believe that organizing can be an uplifting and positive change. I'm eager to help others create an organized life and embrace a Hopeful lifestyle.

Organizing is a journey, and you're not on it alone. Stay Hopeful Friend!

 *Melissa Stecher*

# The Process of Simplifying

## *What is Simplifying and How Do We Do It?*

### What is simplifying?

At Hopeful Simplicity, we define simplifying as 'decluttering anything that doesn't serve our current selves.' We let go of the items of our 'used to' days and the 'intend to...' objects the future may hold.

We do this by rehomeing, trashing, or donating **Expired**, **Outgrown**, and **Unused** items. When we rehome some things, they are a 'keep' item but moving to another space. Perhaps the bulk snack box can be rehomed to a storage shelf in another room to free up the everyday shelf in the kitchen. Trashing is more obvious, and things are leaving our homes forever with the simple step of tossing them out. Items for the donating pile include pieces going to a center near you or gifting forward to someone you know who needs or wants said item. If you prefer to donate things instead of tossing them out, a great tip is to schedule a weekly or bi-weekly trip for the donation drop and to put the box directly in your car to get it out of your house.

### How/What exactly do we Simplify?

**Expired** items can be marked by a date or something we recognize. Yes, we may be in a pre-date period on the bread package, but the mold appearing on the corners tells us it's expired. Sure, that pan can still fry up an egg, but it's supposed to be non-stick, and if everything sticks, that's an expired item. Is the coating of your favorite spatula chipping into dinner, that's an expired sign. Dishwasher gel pods aren't supposed to be hard and solid, right? That is another expired item to declutter from your kitchen.

**Outgrown** typically has our brains going to the kids' stuff, BUT it's a lot bigger than that when we look at the whole organizing picture. Yes, if the kids have grown and are now enjoying the days of school, the plastic dishes and sippy cups can be simplified out of your space. Seasons of life change, and those changes bring outgrowing processes and products. Moving to a remote job created a outgrowth of needing as many to-go containers for packing lunches. Goals on a health journey get reached, and food intake changes; this creates an outgrown phase of needing certain foods or products. Even hosting big holiday parties can be outgrown as we all shift through various ages, leaving serving dishes in abundance and taking up space in our homes that can now be decluttered.

**Unused** immediately recalls previously loved pieces that now sit in our cabinets, taking up prime real-estate space. Did you get into baking when the kids were on a break, and now all the extra pans and accessories are sitting around unused because that time has passed? Did you used to host Thanksgiving every year, and those 'extra' casserole dishes have been collecting dust since the traditional dinner was moved to someone else's house? Small appliances can be great but those 'handy' gadgets often turn into too much trouble to bother with and quickly become another thing sitting around unused.

Whether you're **simplifying** expired food, outgrown kids' dishes, or unused bakeware- set, those timers for 15 minutes and make your kitchen space a little lighter by decluttering.

# The Significance of Sorting

## Your Style for Success

Knowing your personal organizing style is a key part of getting organized and staying organized. It's the power of knowing which containers are right for you and how to set up sustainable systems throughout the spaces, phases, and seasons of life.

## How to get started.

1. If you're still figuring out your organizing style, I've got a [free resource video](#) to help! It'll guide you in discovering your personal organizing approach, understanding the types of spaces you have, and learning how to apply the 3S Method.
2. Start by picturing how you want the room to feel. What kind of energy do you want in the space? How will it support you—and your family—through daily life?
3. If it's a shared space, be open to compromise. When multiple people use a room, organizing it becomes a team effort. Start the conversation about what changes could help everyone feel more comfortable and supported.
4. And most of all—Stay Hopeful! It's the mindset that carries you forward toward a more organized, peaceful, and manageable life.



# Your Style, Your Spaces, Your Success



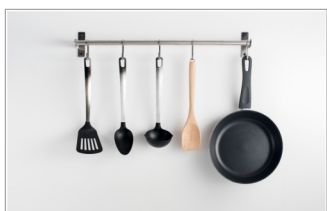
## Macro

One-step put-away is one of the macro-organizers greatest systems. Think containers without lids for quick drop-and-go solutions. This could be as simple as removing the snack box ends to eliminate the need to open the box each time you reach for it without having to get a new container. Open shelf storage is also another friend for macro-organizers. Direct on-shelf stacking of dishes or storing the toaster, removes the step of opening a door and supports one-step put-away success.



## Micro

One-step retrieval works well for micro-organizers—containers inside containers and extra detailed systems for sorting solutions. Each type of snack could have its own container instead of being compiled into one bigger home. Dividers and additional sorters could be added to the dishes space to sort by size or into the silverware drawer to designate individual homes for each type of utensil. Sorting like with like and detailing more from there helps reach those one-step retrieval preferences.



## Visual

Seeing is believing stays in mind for visual organizers. If I can't see it, I don't have it, right? Open shelves are an obvious success for sorting in this style. Having a shelf above the sink for drinkware, creating a mug tree next to the coffee pot, or even keeping appliances on the countertop can all be successful solutions. Hanging racks and wall hooks are a couple of other visual systems. Swapping out cardboard containers for clear food storage is a great solution for seeing-is-believing organizers.



## Non-Visual

When seeing it all is just too much. Solid doors and drawers are great options for non-visual organizers. Using non-see-through containers is a great solution with open shelves or glass doors. Sorting like with like when it comes to colors can also serve as a calming solution to avoid the visual overwhelm. Maximize your countertop clarity by tucking the less used appliances in a cabinet or use all the same color containers when sorting the pantry to lessen the too-much is too-much feelings.

# Sustaining an Organized Life

## How to Stay Organized.

This is where the biggest misconception can be found when it comes to living an organized life. The thought that once you get there, you're done. Sorry to be the bearer of the news, but that's simply not the case. We are always going through life, and with that comes things, phases and stuff. With that stuff and the knowledge that living organized is a lifestyle and not a one-and-done process, achieving the lifestyle with a side of less stress is what Staying Hopeful is all about.

Decluttering is hard, and sorting for success isn't necessarily easy, but once you get through those steps, we can focus on establishing habits, routines, and maintenance moments.

Sustaining schedules generally include various tasks on a daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and yearly basis. These are all the things from getting rid of dirt to making sure appliances are working correctly.

Do the dishes get washed, dried, and put away each night? Is the weekend for restocking the pantry, meal planning, and prepping? Does the drain get treated at the beginning of each month? Do you de-ice the freezer at the change of seasons? Does the general electrician visit each June to make sure the refrigerator is running correctly and cooling at the right temperature?

Beyond the chore-like processes, we can't forget to sustain the organized part of this process. Setting a schedule to check-in with spaces is essential in making sure the clutter stays away, and sorted systems remain successful. We follow the 'rule' that as many times as you're in a space a day is the number of times of year you check in with that space.

Kitchens tend to be at least twice a year. So, if you're starting this in January, be sure to mark the calendar in June to check your spaces.

Are there expired, outgrown, or unused items that can now leave this space? Are the sorted systems working for the whole home team, or does a small space need adjusted to meet another's style needs? Is the space leaving you feeling a need to clean, making it necessary to adjust the regular schedule? Sustaining an organized life is the final step to staying organized after all your hard work toward getting organized.



# Staying Hopeful

Living an organized lifestyle is no different than other life choices we make which take consistency and work. Yes, I struggle at that thought every time, too, and even fall off the wagon from time to time, but resetting isn't as hard now that you know the steps. As we go through all the seasons and moments of life, changes are bound to happen but understanding the process of simplifying and decluttering is always the first step. Sorting for your style and success always comes after your spaces are simplified. Scheduling elements to check in and sustain those sorted systems is always the final part of getting organized and staying that way.

Staying Hopeful is stepping into your organizing power and believing that even if a stumble happens, getting up and setting things up for success is now part of your personal power. Staying Hopeful is knowing that you're not the only one on this organizing journey and you're not alone. This chosen lifestyle comes with a community of Hopefuls sharing space with you throughout all our social and .com places. From sharing your thoughts in the [Facebook group](#) (especially on those fun 'What do you think?' Wednesdays) to pinning ideas on your [Pinterest](#) board, Hopeful Simplicity is out there providing solutions, conversations, and an inspirational community to be part of your organizing journey toward less stressed living.

If you're ready to start organizing your small spaces, on your time at your pace, be sure to join the [Hopeful Simplicity Library](#) subscription plan. It's got each step of the 3S Method for all the small spaces and is just \$9 a month.

Don't hesitate to reach out if you need a sprinkle of Hope throughout your organizing journey. And don't forget- You've got this friend, just remember to Stay Hopeful!

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