

# How the Organizers Organize

WE ASKED SEVEN PROFESSIONALLY TIDY WOMEN TO SHOW US THEIR HOMES—AND SHARE TIPS FOR TACKLING TRICKY SPACES.

By Laura Fenton

**ZONE DEFENSE**  
For an easy-to-maintain system, designate areas for different categories. For Shira, that's barware, entertaining gear, and work and school supplies.



## Shira Gill

Shira's dining room in Berkeley, California, triples as an office and a backdrop for her online organizing classes. The built-in cabinet holds items she needs for work and family time.

**1** Edit ruthlessly. Shira pared down her hosting supplies to the most she'd use for the largest party she throws—her Hanukkah open house.

**2** Labeled bins corral small items, like candles, napkins, and party decor. (Try Medium Nordic Storage Baskets, \$9 each; containerstore.com.)

**3** It's not a waste of time to put stuff away at night, even if you'll just take it out tomorrow. Shira's family "shuts off" at 6 p.m. by stashing work in the cabinet and closing the doors.



**BOTTLED UP INSIDE**  
 Rather than play “hunt, spin, and pluck,” Nikki pours spices into flat-sided jars designed to lie in a drawer (Rajtan Spice Jars, \$3 for 4; ikea-usa.com). They’re alphabetized—and right next to the stove.

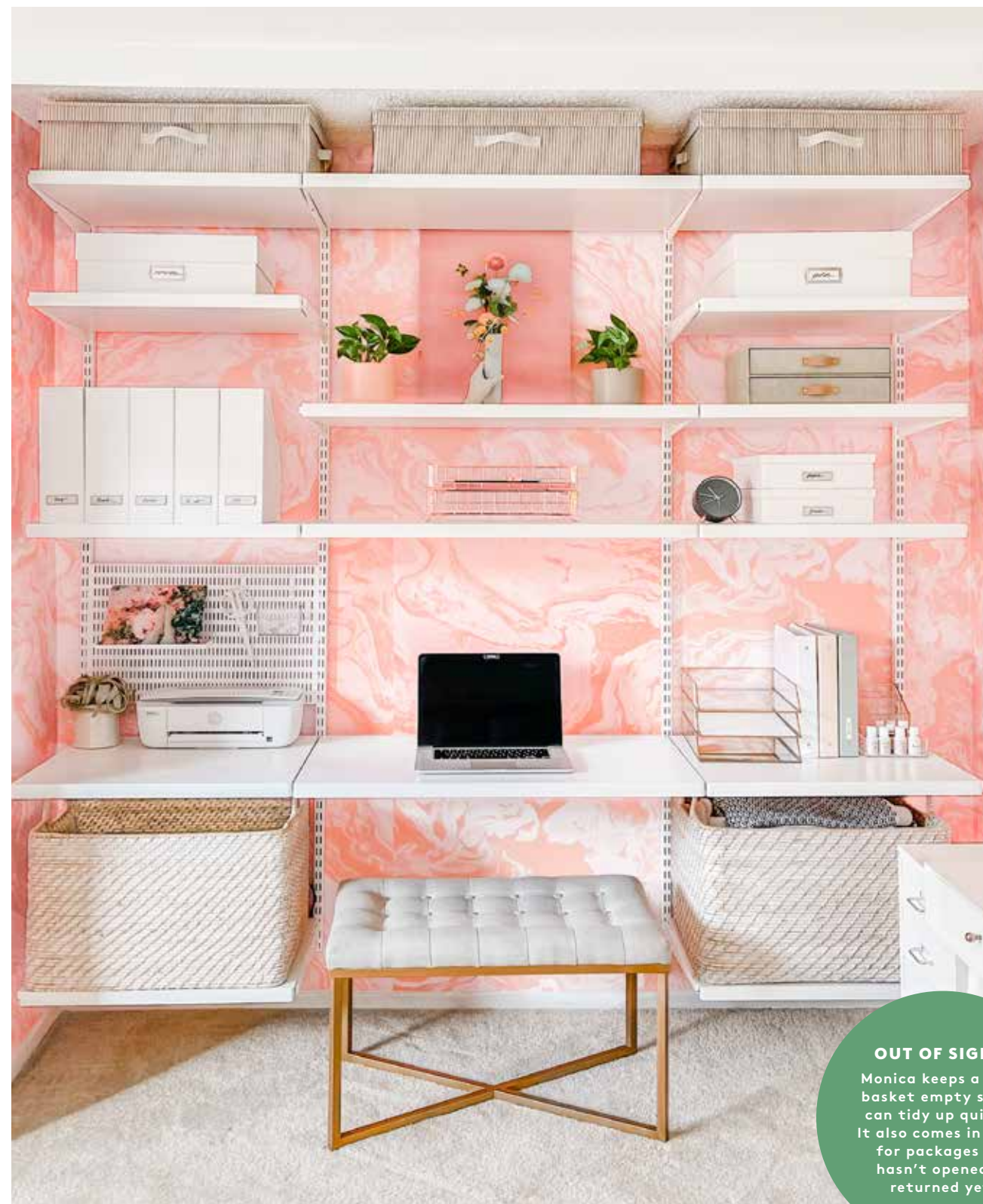


## Nikki Boyd



For the author of *Beautifully Organized*, cabinet drawers are the foundation of her space-saving kitchen in Charleston, South Carolina.

- 1 Nikki aims for such a clear organizing system that anyone can locate what they need—even if they don’t live in her home.
- 2 Always use drawer dividers. Nikki likes the Expandable Bamboo Cutlery Organizer (\$30; bedbathandbeyond.com). Leaving a drawer undivided, she says, “is like hanging a welcome sign for clutter.”
- 3 Teatime is the highlight of Nikki’s morning, so she devoted an entire drawer to her collection. “I give prime real estate to things that encourage me to live a better life,” she says.



**OUT OF SIGHT!**  
 Monica keeps a large basket empty so she can tidy up quickly. It also comes in handy for packages she hasn’t opened or returned yet.



## Monica Leed



With the help of a closet system, a guest room corner is an efficient (and pretty!) home office for the Los Angeles-based owner of Simply Spaced.

- 1 A few decorative accents make a modular closet system (like California Closets or Elfa) cute enough to live in the open. Monica’s backdrop of colorful wallpaper draws focus from the Elfa brackets, while cloth-covered boxes hide paperwork and supplies.
- 2 Upgrade the vibe with things that spark a smile. (The point of life is not PowerPoint.) Monica keeps personal photos and plants in view. “It makes work fun and intentional,” she says.
- 3 Monica sorts paperwork into categories: Active papers (her to-do and to-file items) are stored in open trays; accessible files (things she refers to regularly) go in magazine files; archival items, like taxes, are kept elsewhere.

## Laura Cattano

Thanks to styling and organizing, this New Yorker doesn't mind having her open closet on full view in her small apartment.



**1** Arrange clothing by color, from light to dark. In each color group, hang items from lightweight to heavy. "This way, nothing gets lost, and you can see everything within a hue," Laura says.

**2** Consider a limited palette. Laura's wardrobe is in a narrow range of colors, which saves her time when getting dressed because almost all the pieces go together.

**3** Set up your closet so you can easily access the garments you need to make an outfit. Use open shelf space for sweaters and jeans; save drawers for first layers, like tights, underwear, and lounge-wear. And hang clothes so the fronts of the garments face where you usually stand—not away from you.

### BOUTIQUE ARRANGEMENT

In lieu of a jewelry box, Laura displays her baubles on a marble tray. She places them in pretty boxes and bowls, much like her favorite shops do.



PREVIOUS SPREAD: KITCHEN BY CHRISTOPHER SHANE; NIKKI BOYD HEADSHOT BY ABBY MURPHY; OFFICE BY MONICA LEED; MONICA LEED HEADSHOT BY AMANDA PROUDFIT; THIS PAGE: CLOSET BY LAURA CATTANO; HEADSHOT BY JEREMY BALDERSON

## And for Those Other Challenging Corners



### GARAGE

Samatha Pregenzer, founder of Simply Organized, used two storage systems in her Bay Area garage: pegboard-like metal panels, which offer "a place for every tool," and wall-mounted drawers below, for things like car-washing supplies and vacuum attachments.

OMNIPANEL, \$32; OMNIWALLUSA.COM



### LINEN CLOSET

Shira Gill keeps just two towels per family member (plus a guest set) and two sets of sheets per bed. Shelf dividers prevent items from migrating, and bins hold less-used supplies, like painkillers and bandages.

CLEAR SHELF DIVIDER, \$11; CONTAINERSTORE.COM



### LAUNDRY ROOM

Katrina Teeple, Dallas-based founder of Operation Organization, buys large jugs of detergent to decant into glass bottles. She stashes the bottles and stain removers in a basket on the counter for quick access.

BORMIOLI ROCCO SWING BOTTLE, \$6; SURLATABLE.COM



### PANTRY

Meggie Mangione, CEO of Organized Life Design in Houston, pours grains and dry goods into clear, airtight containers so she can see how much she has on hand.

POP CONTAINERS, FROM \$18; OXO.COM