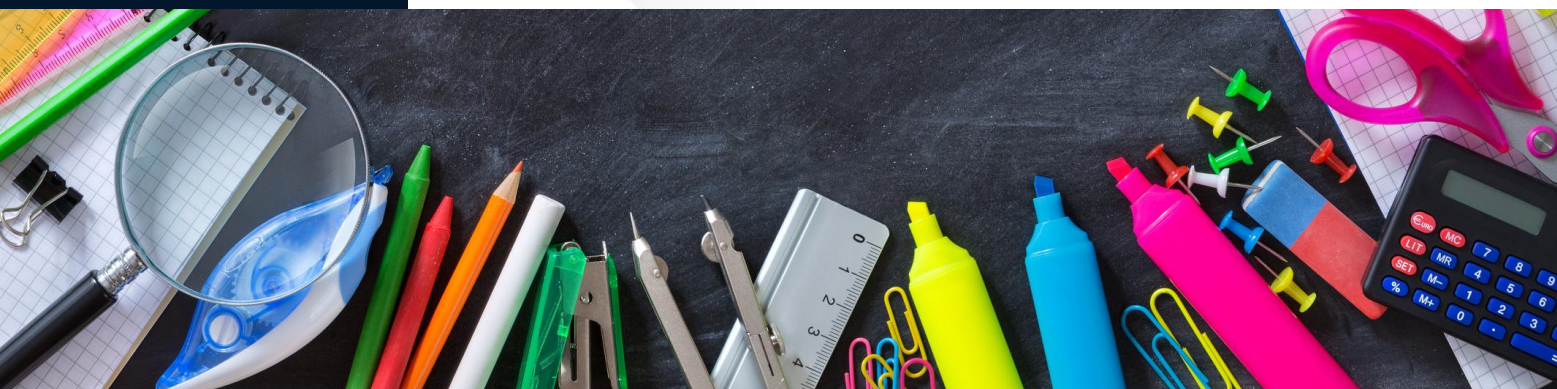




Back-to-School, Back-to-Routine: Home Organization Tips

The transition from summer fun to school schedules can feel hectic—but the right home setup can make all the difference. Here are some simple ideas to help families get organized before the first bell rings:

- 1. Create a Drop Zone** – Set up a mudroom or entryway station with hooks, cubbies, and baskets for backpacks, shoes, and sports gear.
- 2. Homework Headquarters** – Designate a quiet corner or desk with good lighting, supplies, and minimal distractions for focused study time.
- 3. Family Command Center** – Use a wall calendar or whiteboard to track school events, activities, and meal planning.
- 4. Label Everything** – Color-code bins, folders, and even lunch containers to keep items easy to find and put away.
- 5. Snack & Lunch Prep Station** – Stock a pantry or fridge section with grab-and-go snacks, and set up a lunch-packing area for busy mornings.
- 6. Streamline Morning Routines** – Lay out clothes the night before and keep essentials (shoes, jackets, instruments) in one accessible spot.
- 7. Weekly Backpack Clean-Out** – Build in a Sunday routine for kids to empty papers, projects, and crumbs so they start fresh each week.
- 8. Digital Declutter** – Organize school logins, apps, and schedules on a shared family device or app to keep everyone on the same page.

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End-of-Summer Home Maintenance Checklist

Before cooler weather sets in, tackle these simple tasks to keep your home in great shape and avoid costly repairs later:

- **Inspect the Roof** – Look for missing shingles or damage caused by summer storms.
- **Clean the Gutters** – Clear out leaves, sticks, and debris to prevent clogs when autumn rains arrive.
- **Service the Air Conditioner** – Change filters and schedule a quick tune-up so your system is ready for next summer.
- **Seal Windows & Doors** – Check for drafts and apply caulking or weatherstripping to boost energy efficiency.
- **Power Wash Outdoor Spaces** – Freshen up patios, decks, and siding to remove summer dirt and mildew.
- **Check Lawn & Garden Tools** – Clean and store equipment properly before fall, or schedule maintenance if needed.
- **Trim Trees & Shrubs** – Cut back overgrowth to protect your home from falling branches during storms.
- **Test Safety Devices** – Replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to ensure they're working properly.



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