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For a chance to win a copy of Carol Posener's book *Get Organised! A Practical Guide to Organising Your Home and Office*, visit our **Member Rewards page** (page 11) for details on how to enter the competition.

PROBLEM: I can't keep track of my bills and am always getting late fees!

SOLUTION: Set up a bill payment folder, says Carol Posener.

- Purchase a display folder with at least 20 clear plastic pages inside. When a bill arrives in the mail, highlight the amount due.
- Place the bill in the folder, in the order of the due date. You can see at a glance who needs to be paid – and when.
- Choose a day of the week to check the folder to ensure that bills are paid on time, or schedule them to be paid by electronic banking or BPAY.

PROBLEM: There are simply not enough hours in my day!

SOLUTION: Follow Carol Posener's time-management tips.

- Keep a notebook and pen by the phone to take messages. Scraps of paper look messy and are easily lost.
- Schedule in manageable times to organise a section of the home or office. Break down the task into small chunks, and tick them off once you've achieved them.
- Try to group 'like' tasks together. For example, if you have a number of telephone calls to make, do them in succession, jotting down the time, date and nature of each call.
- Have something extra to do while making telephone calls. When you're on hold, you can be reading school newsletters, or opening your mail.

PROBLEM: I keep missing important renewals and appointments!

SOLUTION 1: Keep a diary or calendar that lives in a prominent spot, such as by the phone.

- Make sure the diary or calendar displays the entire month when you open it. List all the important dates for that month (or beyond, if possible). Check it at least once a week.

SOLUTION 2: Keep a check list of important dates and items to be updated and completed, such as:

- Insurance – home/car/health
- Car service
- Kids' check-ups/vaccinations
- Appointments/birthdays/anniversaries



PROBLEM: My living room looks like a disaster zone!

SOLUTION: Swedish design store Ikea offers some great organisation solutions for achieving a clutter-free living room.

- Estimate your storage requirements by sorting through your books, CDs, videos and records.
- Make good use of any alcoves or recessed walls by lining them with shelves.
- Frame a doorway with shelving to display your books and favourite objects. It's a decorative solution and saves space.
- Pick bookshelves that measure between 22.5cm and 47.5cm (9in and 19in) in width to accommodate a wide variety of book sizes. Store books upright, allowing for 2.5cm (1in) between the top of the books and the next shelf.
- Use coffee tables that have shelves or storage space for hiding away extra remote controls, magazines and other clutter.

PROBLEM: A lack of storage makes my bedroom look messy!

SOLUTION: The Ikea store has some great suggestions for creating a tranquil bedroom.

- Make use of the space under your bed by adding a pullout drawer.
- Create storage space by hanging hooks and rails to inner doors or walls.
- Hang your clothes in a cloth-covered wardrobe if your bedroom doesn't have built-in wardrobes.
- A clothes rod and curtain in the corner of your room will protect your belongings from dust.
- Choose a bedside table that has plenty of room to store books, magazines, tissues. ■

