

Garage storage solutions: Cut the clutter and get organized

Who doesn't have a space at home that serves as a catch-all for items that seemingly have no other home? For many, this storage wasteland where items go to be forgotten tends to be the garage. Before long, clutter can overwhelm the space and create an eyesore. Garage clutter also makes the space less functional by making it harder to park a vehicle or store equipment.

Organizing a garage takes work, but the end result can improve the appearance, free up space, make work more efficient, and make it easier to find and use tools more readily. Here

are some ways to get started on organizing your garage.

Start with cleaning and culling

One of the first steps when organizing a garage is to thoroughly analyze what is needed and what can be removed from the garage. If items belong elsewhere, such as in a shed or the basement, move these items first. Discard damaged or broken items. Next, move on to tools or gear that hasn't been used in some time. Will you use it again? If the item has been collecting dust for years, you likely already know the answer to that question.

Pile all items in the driveway so

you have a clean slate with which to start. Measure the room to figure out the dimensions so you'll know how much wall space is available for storage.

Free up floor space

The ultimate goal of a garage storage renovation is to make floor space available, according to Stacey Schweiger of Sunshine Organizing. Lifting items off the floor makes access easier, and protects items should there be a flood or leaks.

A combination of wall shelves, overhead shelves, cabinets, and wall hooks can help homeowners create more floor area. Organiza-

tion becomes easier when everything has a designated space where it can be easily returned to.

Consider weight

When investing in shelving and racks, remember that many of the items stored in garages tend to be heavy. It's important to ensure that shelves and hooks are heavy-duty and able to withstand the weight of pressure put on them. Verify the maximum weight so that racks will not buckle or tip over and cause issues.

Utilize overhead space

Overhead storage can be reserved for items that aren't used

frequently, such as seasonal decorations or luggage.

Out of sight

Some items should be stored out of sight and beyond the reach of children and pets. Cabinets and containers can be used and locked to secure materials, such as fertilizers, paints and solvents.

Additional ideas

Magnets, pegboards, organization bins and systems, and similar products can be used to corral small or errant items like hand tools, fasteners and more. For homeowners, garage organization is worth the planning and time.

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