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## Now is the perfect time to organize your paper

**P**aper – it's everywhere and it's endless! We try our best to reduce it by creating automatic bill payments, canceling catalogs, and reading news online. But, it still comes into our homes, and if left unattended, it takes over our space. Every year getting organized is one of the top New Year's resolutions that people make. January and February, especially, are good months to get your papers organized as you prepare for the year ahead. It's the time of year when you are setting up new calendars, wrapping up the previous year's medical claims, deciding what to do with holiday catalogs and greeting cards, and getting your financial data ready for income tax season.

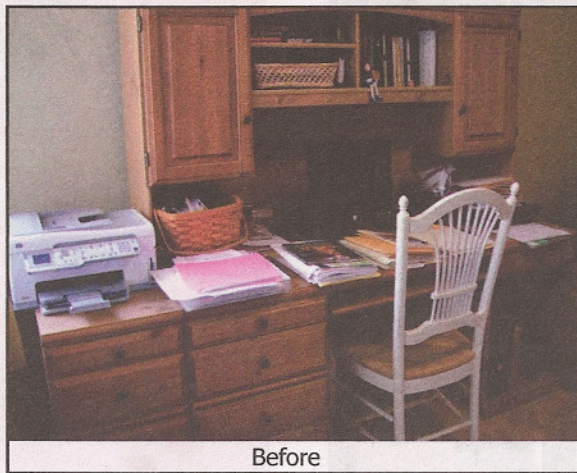
*Read on for some tips to organize and manage the paper in your home.*

### Establish a way to deal with all of your incoming paper

Put your mail in a designated place every day. As soon as you bring mail into your home, open it and dispose of junk mail immediately. Separate mail into categories: bills to pay, financial statements, items to read. Hint: Establish one place (a folder, an envelope, a drawer) to collect all those year-end statements, 1099s, and other papers that you will need to do your 2009 income taxes. As you receive these items, put them in their designated space immediately. When it's time to do your taxes or to bring them to your accountant, you'll have everything in one place ready to go.

### Develop a filing system

Every piece of paper needs a designated home. Create a system that will allow you to find what you are looking for quickly and easily. A filing system tailored to your needs is critical to keeping papers organized and accessible. Your system will need to accommodate your bills, receipts, important papers and documents, resources, owner's manuals,



Before

warranties, magazines, catalogs, etc. You will need a storage area for your files. It can be a file drawer, a file cabinet, portable bins or container – depending on your specific needs.

### Know what to keep and what to discard

Before filing anything, evaluate whether or not you need to keep it. Always ask yourself these two questions: Is it likely that you will ever refer to it again, and; is it readily available elsewhere? Most items that are filed are never looked at again. Of course, keep items that are required for legal reasons. Hint: Buy and use a shredder to destroy papers that contain account numbers, social security numbers, or other sensitive information that you do not want in the wrong hands.



After

Take time now to get organized. It's easier than you think, and it can be a low or no cost project that will save you time, money, and a great deal of frustration later.

For more information call 239.287.6511 or visit [www.thepapertamer.com](http://www.thepapertamer.com)