

Closet organizers double storage space

by Nicole Stahl
Special Writer

Does it feel like you're always short on storage? Cowed by clutter? Drowning in disorder?

Before you do something drastic, like putting up a "For Sale" sign, or donating half your possessions to the Salvation Army, consider how to make the most of your existing storage space. The first place to look is behind closed doors...into your own closets.

As you probably suspected, the typical closet arrangement—an eye-level pole, topped by a solitary shelf—is not very pragmatic. In fact, from an organizational point of view, it's an invitation to disaster. Look at all that dead space between hanging garments and the floor. Even with shoes in tidy rows under the clothes, there's still a couple feet of vacant real estate crying out to be used. Ditto for the awkward overhead shelf. Just how many sweaters can you stack up there before they all start toppling over—or out?

Because of its linear layout, the traditional closet utilizes less than half of its total available space. To increase efficiency, you need a configuration that takes advantage of volume, every cubic inch of it.

That's where organizer systems come in. A custom-designed assortment of

modular components—poles, drawers, shelves, baskets and accessories—boosts closet capacity by grouping similar-sized items together. No more three-foot long sport jackets hanging in the same spot as a five-foot-long evening gown. Every

and allotted its own customized place.

Organizer systems don't just tame the clutter jungle inside the closet. By providing drawers and containers for personal items like socks, lingerie, and jewelry, they can give back floor space in the bed-

center, or a comfortable lounge chair. When you've already converted the spare bedroom into a luxurious master bath and walk-in closet, that's an important contribution to living space.

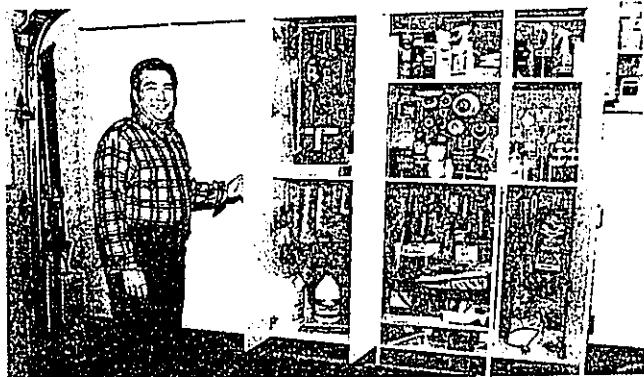
Given their efficiency, it's not surprising that organizer systems are now moving out of the closet. With upgrades like Formica surfaces and rounded drawer edges, the latest components are meant to be seen in work areas throughout the house.

The in-home office, for example, is "one of our focuses for future," says Ray Markham, owner of the West Bloomfield franchise of the California Closet Company, the West Coast firm that pioneered the organizing concept. A new product line called CalSpace includes work surfaces, shelves, drawers and file cabinets to make the home office look as professional as any executive suite.

CalSpace storage is especially suitable for the part-time office that has to accommodate other functions, according to Markham. When out-of-town friends come for a weekend visit, you can stow the computer keyboard in a sliding drawer, stash work paraphernalia in convenient cubbyholes, put a double bed out of the wall cabinet, and voila—an instant guest room.

Another place where organizing systems work wonders is the garage, the tra-

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Ed Albertson, President of Directory Services International Corp., in Clawson, proudly displays his well-organized garage and tool cabinet. Albertson completely renovated his home with closet organizer systems by the California Closet Company.

inch of closet space is devoted to some kind of storage compartment, and every item of clothing is identified, measured,

room itself. That means you can finally swap that mammoth triple dresser for a computer workstation, an entertainment

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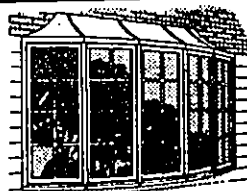
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