



Take back your garage by getting it organized

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Need a place to store your high-performance vehicle?
It may be time to clean out your garage.

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When was the last time you could actually park your car in the space you call a garage? For many of us, the garage is a cavernous catch-all that's easy to forget until we actually need the space for a car or two. If it's time for you to get your garage organized - finally! - consider these tips and resources:

1. Start by deciding what to **discard**, and then do it. This may be the most difficult part of the job, but it must be done first. Your temptation will be to buy containers and install shelves for everything currently in your garage. Resist this temptation by sorting through everything and discarding items you no longer need or use. You'll save money and create more space as a result of your effort.
2. Decide what **categories** of items you want to store in your garage, and remove everything that does not fit one of the categories. For example, you may decide on tools, garden supplies and equipment, and car maintenance items. If you find sports equipment and pet supplies, remove them to be stored elsewhere.
3. If you make it this far in your garage organization project, you have completed the most difficult and time-consuming tasks already - congratulate yourself! Now you're ready to look at your garage space and consider what **storage solutions** will suit you best. Whatever you choose, check carefully for the maximum weight shelves are designed to hold, and select sturdy plastic or rubber bins with lids that fit snugly. Do not use cardboard boxes, as they deteriorate in moist environments, and it's easy for bugs to find their way inside.
4. Install **shelving, hooks and brackets** in your garage at a manageable height for the people - adults and children - who will use them. Hard-to-reach storage should be reserved for seldom-used or seasonal items. Consider creating a "loft" system above the garage door or along the top of the walls for these items.
5. If you store poisonous products like lawn and garden pesticides, automotive fluids, paints, or other dangerous chemicals in your garage, assure that they are **clearly labeled**, and store them in a **cabinet that locks**.
6. Large, awkward, or potentially dangerous items should be stored away from high-traffic areas. Use **brackets and hooks** to hang items like bicycles, garden tools, and some shop tools. Store heavy, bulky items on **low shelves** for easy access.
7. If you are changing the **floor** of your garage, find a solution that resists oil and other stains and is easy to clean.
8. Make the day you park your car in your newly organized garage space an event - the more people who see and enjoy the result of your work, the better the chance it will **stay organized!**

For a detailed guide to organizing your garage quickly and efficiently, read books by [Barry Izsak](#), [Bill West](#), or [Jeanne Huber](#).

For garage storage and organization ideas and products, go to [Coleman Storage](#), [GarageTek](#), [Gladiator GarageWorks](#), [Grid Iron](#), and [JNK Products](#).

For ideas to organize odd-size items and to use wasted space in your garage, go to [HyLoft](#), [Loft-It](#), and [Racor](#).

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