



ORGANIZING FOR HASSLE-FREE HOME REPAIRS

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Have you ever considered organizing your house with an eye toward home repair? It always seems that when you least expect to have to spend time or money on your home, something breaks that needs immediate repair. Whether you need the services of a plumber, electrician, mason, or drywall specialist, all trade professionals that work inside your home will need quick access to your space to get the job done.



This situation became crystal clear to me recently when I needed to hire a contractor to fix a broken sewer pipe in our house. Even though I consider my basement to be relatively well organized for an unfinished space, it was necessary to move belongings away from the affected area in order to access and repair the broken pipe. This task was not as easy as I would have liked. Luckily, the shelving units and boxed paperwork blocking access to the pipe could easily be relocated. I also needed to empty a small room of its entire contents in case the cement slab required demolition (thankfully not!). Because we lost the use of two bathrooms for several days, this repair also required maximizing space in the one remaining operational bath that we all needed to share.

If your home requires immediate repairs, or you are considering a longer term home renovation project, get prepared for the work by organizing the rooms in your home prior to repairs so you don't incur additional hourly expenses. Service providers often charge by the hour, and having them wait around while you tidy up your cluttered space is not the best use of your hard-earned money!

Here are some tips to help streamline spaces that may be disrupted during maintenance work or if you have to quickly empty a room for repairs.

PLUMBING WORK: Consider where pipes are located in your home (bathrooms, kitchen, basement or crawl space). Organize under-sink cabinets for easy removal and replacement of contents. To prepare, empty the cabinet, sort items by category, purge unused items and store contents in open or covered bins that can be easily stacked and removed at a moment's notice. To

maximize vertical space under a sink, consider using shelf dividers or two-tiered pull-out shelves for easy access.

ELECTRICAL WORK: Consider household items that block access to wall outlets or switches, light fixtures, the electrical panel or wiring located in unfinished spaces. Can these items be easily relocated or shifted to gain access? Furniture can be temporarily moved for access to wall outlets; however piles of books, papers, or other belongings may be more time consuming to relocate. Use storage solutions that can easily be moved when required to support these loose items, such as open baskets, small shelving or drawer storage units.

DRYWALL/PAINTING/HVAC WORK: Create zones in storage areas so items can be easily identified, moved and replaced. In linen, storage, or utility closets, organize shelf contents by category to create zones. Corral small or loose items in bins for easy access and label them so other household members can follow the system. If clothing closets require access, keep a portable clothing rack in storage for temporary transfer of hanging clothes. Seasonal transfer of clothing to storage bins will also minimize work required to prepare your space for workers.

For added incentive, to stay on top of organizing systems in your home, schedule all of your home repairs at the same time so that you can do a "once and done" approach to both your

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organizing and your repairs. This act of preparation gives you accountability to perform routine maintenance on all fronts, and when repairs are completed you have the added bonus of an organized space! [GO](#)

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