

# Come To Order®

...simplifying lives one space at a time

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## Scare the Ghosts and Cobwebs Out of Your Attic

By Kathy Jenkins, CPO®, CFMC®

Your attic makes an ideal space for storage. It's the perfect "out-of-sight, out-of-mind" spot, a place where you can stack totes and boxes and old furniture that you no longer use so you can keep your main living space uncluttered, neatly organized, and stylishly presentable. You can hide all of your previous home decorating faux pas and "those used to be in style" clothes, and your guests will be none the wiser.

But eventually, like any space that is used for collecting and storing stuff, your attic needs to be cleaned and yes, organized! Your so-called skeletons can't find sanctuary there forever, or your attic will soon be so full, you won't be able to walk through it.

Fall is a good time to tackle an attic-organizing project. The weather is usually a bit cooler and you are probably in full seasonal transition anyway. There is no better time to start locating, somewhere amongst the cobwebs and dust bunnies, your fall and Halloween décor so you can [dress up your home for the frightful upcoming holiday](#).

An attic organization project should start by clearing out items that you won't use any more. Be honest! There are boxes upon boxes of "treasures" and pieces of furniture that have been in your attic for years, and you've never given them a second thought. Why let them hoard precious storage space? Some of them belong in the dumpster or recycling bin, but other items can still be put to good use. Carry these things to your car and feel good about donating them to a local shelter, Goodwill, Salvation Army, or another charity.

I know that may not be as easy as it sounds. Our material possessions make us feel secure and even emotionally connected to important people in our lives. But in reality, all of the hand-me-downs, gifts, and souvenirs are weighing down our minds, not just cluttering our attics. And if they are just packed away in your attic, you aren't doing justice to those memories, anyway.

It's easy to convince yourself that you may someday use these things, or that grandma would never forgive you for giving one of her cherished possessions away. However, when you make a conscious decision to fill your life with only items that you need or enjoy, you gain more space for new memories and experiences. Find a special way to honor the memory (shadow box, scrapbook, photo album, etc.) and gently give yourself permission to let go and not let your emotions be ruled material possessions.

With that big task accomplished, now it's time to organize the items you do need to keep, such as holiday decorations, seasonal items (clothing, fans, dehumidifiers), special occasion items (a large roaster or elegant dinnerware), and kids' clothing and shoes that can be handed down to younger siblings. For this, you need [shelves](#), [totes](#) and [labels](#)!

These days, there are innovative containers and shelving systems for any item and any space. If you invest in these tools now, you'll thank yourself later. You'll know that items are safe and protected, and

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you'll be able to create an organizing system that keeps your things visible and accessible. For example, look for acid-free tissues, boxes or wrappers if you have delicate items or valuables. For important documents, you'll want a fireproof or fire-resistant box. Also consider if your items can withstand extreme temperatures, since most attics aren't heated or cooled.

As you pack things away, take inventory. Designate a notebook or three-ring binder and keep a list of what's inside each container. You might even take pictures and place them in your notebook to help you remember exactly what you have so you don't have to go rummaging through totes. Not only will this keep you from buying duplicate items of things you already have, but you'll have a full accounting of your possessions should a disaster strike. Your insurance company will be impressed if you can provide a detailed list of items in storage!

Finally, label everything! The more detailed, the better! Include a short description of what's inside the container and even where/when it was or could be used. This not only helps you identify where things are, but it makes it easier to send a spouse or kid up to the attic to retrieve something you need.

With a clean and well-organized attic, there's no place for ghosts and goblins to hide. When Halloween is over, you can simply pack away the costumes, witches, and jack-o-lanterns, stash the totes in the designated area for "Holiday Decorations", and get out your Thanksgiving items for the next round of holiday preparations. After all, you'll have less than 30 days to get ready for the big turkey dinner!

If all of this sounds like a task too big for one person, call us! Come To Order is offering 10% off any attic organizing project for the entire month of October. We'll help take the "spooky" out of this job!

## **About the Author**

As a Certified Professional Organizer® and Certified Family Manager® coach, and Parenting with Love & Logic® Facilitator/Coach, Kathy Jenkins can help you run a more organized, efficient, and happy household & raise happy, healthy, responsible, and well-mannered children! Visit <http://www.cometoorderva.com> to learn more about her professional organizing and coaching services. You can also follow her tips, advice, and recommendations by liking Come To Order on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/cometoorder>

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