

# Organizational Strategies for Patients

ADHD appropriate organizational systems place **EFFICIENCY** above other values such as aesthetics, preparedness, frugality, or hypervigilance.

<p><b>Efficiency</b>—This should be the paramount objective in creating an organizational system. Patients with ADHD tend to be starters not finishers. They find chores not just tedious but torturous. Efficiency combats tedious chores by reducing the number of steps in each task.</p>	<p>When organizing for efficiency, rely on a system that requires the <b>least amount of work and the fewest number of steps.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tasks are completed <i>quickly</i> with little effort and <i>minimal</i> focus</li> <li>• Not all organization is good ADHD organization. Many systems put other values before efficiency</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reduction</b>—The smallest inventory (the fewest number of possessions) is easiest to manage. Fewer possessions are easier to keep track of and are easier to store. Furthermore, reduction encourages good maintenance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purge your home of overstock</li> <li>• Do not have enough inventory to fill your storage space</li> <li>• You will run the dishwasher when the dishwasher is full if there are no more dishes in the cabinets</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resourcefulness</b> is more realistic than preparedness. Resourcefulness plays to your creative strengths. You may be easily overwhelmed by overstock (which becomes clutter). Doing without is actually easier and can improve your quality of life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When stock is reduced, you will not have a tool for every job. But, you will be resourceful with the few tools at hand and comfortable managing without excess</li> <li>• For example, with only 4 cooking pans and no wok, you will resourcefully use the skillet for stir fry</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reject lesser values.</b> Aesthetics, frugality, hypervigilance, perfectionism, and preparedness can sabotage the ADHD home, by placing beauty, money, and effort before efficiency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on efficiency. Attractive storage systems that rely on standardization (re-writing all recipes on matching cards), saving pennies through effort (coupons), hypervigilance against identity theft (shredding all paperwork), and perfectionism (label makers) require too much time/effort</li> </ul>
<p><b>Structure.</b> Boundaries and routine promote efficiency and control impulsivity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set boundaries. For example, keep all dishes in the kitchen</li> <li>• Establish routines. For example, grocery lists aid memory and combat impulsivity (impulse purchases)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Support.</b> ADHD is a medical condition. Patients with ADHD may <i>require</i> organizational support and should not hesitate to reach out for assistance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Luxuries for the general population are often necessities for patients with ADHD. If your financial situation permits it, a lawn service, housekeeper, professional organizer, or secretary should be considered therapeutic tools</li> </ul>