

INTRODUCTION

Is clutter taking over your home and life? I thought so. It's been a long time since I've met anyone who *doesn't* feel buried under a mountain of stuff. Well, take heart, my friends: Using my simple SOS method—Sort, Organize, and Store—you can clear out the clutter and reclaim your home, your time, and your sense of well-being.

HOLD EVERYTHING!

Whether your entire house is in a state of chaos, or you have just one room that needs de-cluttering, my SOS strategy will show you how to find a place for everything and keep everything in its place. In each chapter you'll learn how to tackle a specific part of your home using this revolutionary three-part plan. As you'll soon see, it can be fast, fun, and easy to weed out unwanted junk, reorganize your space, and store your stuff in the way that works best for you.



SORT

This is the first step on the road to clutter-free living. In each Sort section you'll discover surefire solutions for determining what to keep and what to toss. But your sorting spree doesn't stop there: I'll share some terrific tricks for banishing visual clutter, so your rooms look serene and spacious. Finally, you'll learn some no-fail techniques that'll keep the clutter from creeping back in (as it tends to do) and re-staking its claim on your home, sweet home.



ORGANIZE

Even after you've sorted through your belongings and gotten rid of things you don't need, your home can still seem cluttered—until you organize the keepers in such a way that clutter-free living

becomes a no-brainer. That's where the smorgasbord of ideas in this section comes in. I'll guide you through the process of analyzing your available space, focusing on areas where clutter tends to collect. You'll find lots of clever ways to take advantage of every square inch, whether you're working with a kitchen that sees lots of daily activity, or an attic that's used only for storage.



STORE

Each area has its own special challenges, ranging from dampness and pests in the basement to wildly fluctuating temperatures in the garage. Well, never fear, ol' Jer is here! Using the third part of my SOS strategy, you can conquer those perplexing problems—and a whole lot more! You'll discover new ways to use your existing storage space, and learn how to turn potential trash into handy helpers that'll stow all kinds of things. Plus, I'll clue you in on how to store everything from ship models to shirts and books to broccoli, so they're out of the way when you're not using them and easy to grab when you need them.

TO EACH HER OWN To banish clutter once and for all, you have to understand what caused the mess in the first place. That's why, throughout this book, you'll find special **Alert** boxes that focus on the three usual suspects when it comes to cluttering things up:

1. Collectors, who deliberately acquire things ranging from free-for-the-taking beach stones to priceless Fabergé eggs
2. Pack rats, who hang on to anything and everything long after the items have served their useful purpose
3. Mess-makers, who create clutter simply by not putting things back where they belong

Once you identify which kind of clutterer you are (or live with), I'll share the steps that you'll need to break the cycle and conquer the chaos for good.

NOW, THERE'S AN IDEA! Make that plenty of ideas! I've added two recurring features in this book that will help you clear the clutter creatively. **Out of the Box** helps you solve de-cluttering dilemmas by saying "No thanks!" to sloppy old habits. (Sneak peek: Believe it or not, you can actually make your bedroom less cluttered if you ditch the dressers.) And that's not all—**Making Space** shows you how to find storage space in places that you never dreamed existed.

HELP FROM THE PROS, AND JERRY As an extra-special bonus, each chapter also contains right-on-the-money tips from full-time professional organizers who really know their stuff. I call them the **Clutter Buster Pros**, and they're here to do what they do best: provide expert advice to help minimize clutter while maximizing storage space. If you follow their terrific tips, I guarantee your life will be simpler, more productive—and a lot more fun!

And speaking of advice, you'll find even more of my practical de-cluttering tricks in the **Ask Jerry** boxes. That's where I tackle your toughest problems with some commonsense solutions.

WHY BOTHER AT ALL? It's as clear as the nose on your face: A clutter-free home is a happy home, and you want your home to be delirious! By following my SOS plan, you'll be well on your way to success. For starters, you and your family will feel more relaxed. (Just think: no more searching high and low for car keys every morning!) You'll also have more free time because you won't have to sift through piles of stuff to find what you're looking for. Plus, imagine the pride you'll feel when someone visits and compliments you on how beautiful, well organized, and peaceful your home looks.

So what are you waiting for? Shout out "SOS", dig in, and before long you'll see how easy it is to can that clutter!