

## “Brain Box” Housecleaning Organizer: Plan Your Work



### **Planning Your Daily Jobs**

- Because housework never seems to be done, it must be divided into portions, allotted to certain days, and done with all expediency. This brings a feeling of “finishing”.
- Decide what chores to do each and every day. These “daily” jobs are usually done to keep the home “neat”. Note this information in a written housecleaning plan, preferably one that is flexible and easy to use.
- Rarely will company notice if your house is really clean, if first it is neat.

### **Organizing Your Weekly Chores**

- Decide what weekly jobs will be tackled on which days of the week. Note this information, the **job’s title** and its **assigned day**, in your written housecleaning plan. Remember, the plan must be flexible and easy to use. Weekly chores usually keep the house “clean”.

### **Doing Your Daily Jobs**

- Do your “daily” jobs first to get your routine housework done in a timely manner.
- Set parameters on your schedule to get the housework done in a reasonable amount of time, without too many interruptions, and in such a way as to bring personal satisfaction. All family members should help in some way every day.

### **Doing Your Weekly Chores**

- Next do the “weekly” jobs which have been assigned for today. While these jobs tend to be invisible when done, they are miserably obvious when left undone. It is always easier and faster to clean using a routine. Involve all family members as much as possible in these regular chores.

## “Brain Box” Housecleaning Organizer: For the Big Jobs



### **Planning Your BIG Scrub Jobs**

- Decide what household chores can be done on a less-frequent basis. Decide how often these “scrub” jobs will be done. Decide which months would be most appropriate for each. Divide the jobs into smaller portions so that each portion can be done in 20-30 minutes. Note this information including the **job’s title** and its **assigned month(s)**, in your written housecleaning plan.
- Each day, after daily and weekly jobs are completed, plan to do one major “scrub” job. These are chores which usually need attention only on a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual basis.

### **Regular Monthly Jobs**

- Monthly jobs include items which don’t need attention every week, but had best be done before they become overwhelming: Wash the car, dust the railing, file papers.

### **Infrequent Quarterly Jobs**

- Quarterly jobs include cleaning and maintenance items which become noticeable if neglected: Change furnace filters, clean out the magazines, straighten the mud room.

### **Important Semi-annual Jobs**

- Semi-annual jobs include those which would best be done at least twice a year to keep the house nicely clean: Vacuum furniture, wash windows, clean the shower curtain.

### **Essential Annual Jobs and Projects**

- Annual jobs and projects are those chores which need to be done according to the season: Prepare the family calendar in January, retrieve winter clothes in September, complete Christmas cards early in December.

## Kitchen Organization



### **Clear Off Counters**

- Empty counters mean a bigger kitchen. Clear off any items not being used frequently. This increases the work space available for all kitchen activities.

### **Clean Out Drawers, Cupboards, and Shelves**

- Remove everything but the essential tools from kitchen drawers so that retrieving a tool is a “reach in, pick up, and go to work” motion. Do the same with cupboard and shelf items.
- Apply the A, B, C storage rule. Can you reach it without stretching or bending? It’s an “A” location. Do you have to reach or stoop? It’s a “B” location. Must you kneel, stand on a stool, or stick your head in a cupboard? It’s a “C” location. Put most frequency-used tools in the most convenient “A” locations, others in the rear, upper or lower “B” and “C” areas.

### **Condense Useful Tools**

- The sink, stove, and mixing counter are the three main work centers of the kitchen. Move tools appropriate to those tasks close to those locations.
- Unstack items wherever possible so bowls, pans, and tools can be reached with one hand.
- If tools are frequently used, have several of each, usually at least three: i.e., measuring cups, measuring spoons, rubber scrappers, and wooden spoons.
- Use stackable storage containers to save space when they are empty.

### **Make the Kitchen Work for You and Your Family**

- When in doubt, take a shelf or drawer full of kitchen tools to another part of the house and retrieve them when needed. Those rescued within the first week are the most important. The rest can be safely stored in “B” or “C” locations, given away, or even discarded.
- Keep only as many pans stored in an “A” location as there are elements on the stove.
- Less is more, because more is a chore. Simplify wherever possible and watch cooking and cleaning up become much more pleasant.

## Food Management - Master Menu, Grocery Lists, Shopping, and Food Preparation



### **Prepare the Master Menu**

- Plan out twenty-eight favorite main meals (i.e., four main meals for each day of the week). Include vegetables, fruits, and breads. Prepare a four-week Master Menu indicating these main meals and side dishes. Write up recipe cards for all 28 meals and store in the front of a recipe box behind Sunday through Saturday card dividers. Rotate through the meals each month.

### **Plan Out the Weekly Menu**

- Using the Master Menu as a guide, plan this week’s menu noting the unusual meals which this week will bring: i.e., leftovers to use up, a birthday dinner, or a picnic at the zoo.

### **Prepare a Master Grocery List**

- Prepare a Master Grocery List with all the items which are regularly bought at the grocery store, both food and non-food. This is best done by going through the pantry, frig, freezer, and by reviewing recent grocery receipts. Duplicate the Master Grocery List fifty-two times.

### **Complete a Weekly Grocery List**

- Using a printed Master Grocery List, note which items to purchase that week. Include amount to purchase, price each, and total budget. This is an important first step in saving money.
- Spending money on sugar is of little nutritional value. Spend here frugally. Spending money on fruits, vegetables, eggs, and breads gives more for every dollar. Watch milk, cheese, and meat purchases. Make the food dollar stretch.

### **Use Shopping Methods to Get the Most From Every Dollar**

- The best time to shop is early in the day, when alone (as possible), with a completed grocery list & best price information, and with a full stomach.
- Keep a calculator close at hand to compare prices. Bigger is not always cheaper, name brands are not always better, and end cap items are not always a good buy.