

 **Beth Zeigler**

# Meet Your Desk: How to Create a Workspace That Works

Ask yourself: What should live on your desk and what can live elsewhere?

Working with clients in their home offices all over Los Angeles, I see a lot of good working habits and some not-so-good working habits. And while it's fairly obvious to me when I'm looking at a workspace why an individual may not be performing efficiently, most don't realize how to create a workspace that flows.

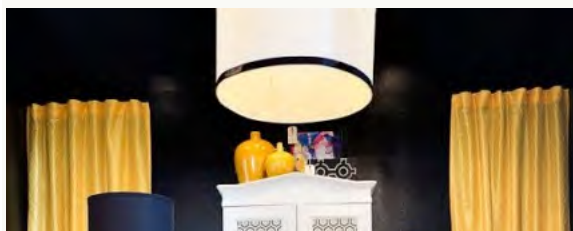
I started my professional organizing career teaching a workshop called "Meet Your Desk." It was a play on the fact that a lot of us work day in and day out without noticing the piles of paper that accumulate. The end result: Most of us wouldn't be able to tell you the last time we saw our desk surface clean and clear of clutter.

Take a journey with me where we'll look at desks that are getting it "right," while also looking at creative ways to store the stuff you don't need and that is cluttering up your workspace.

[Browse home office photos](#) | [Readers' Choice: Top 20 Offices](#)



When we think workspace, our mind is trained to think "traditional office," but this picture shows us that you can set up shop just about anywhere. The **first step** to creating a peaceful yet efficient office area is to stretch your arms out and turn right, then left, while you're sitting at your desk. Only items that you use on a daily basis should live in this space.



Next, you'll want to create a spot in your work **zone for active paperwork** to live. Here, the owner is using a wire paper tray to store projects that need attention.

## The Washington Post

"It's the Flickr of design idea sites"



[More press »](#)

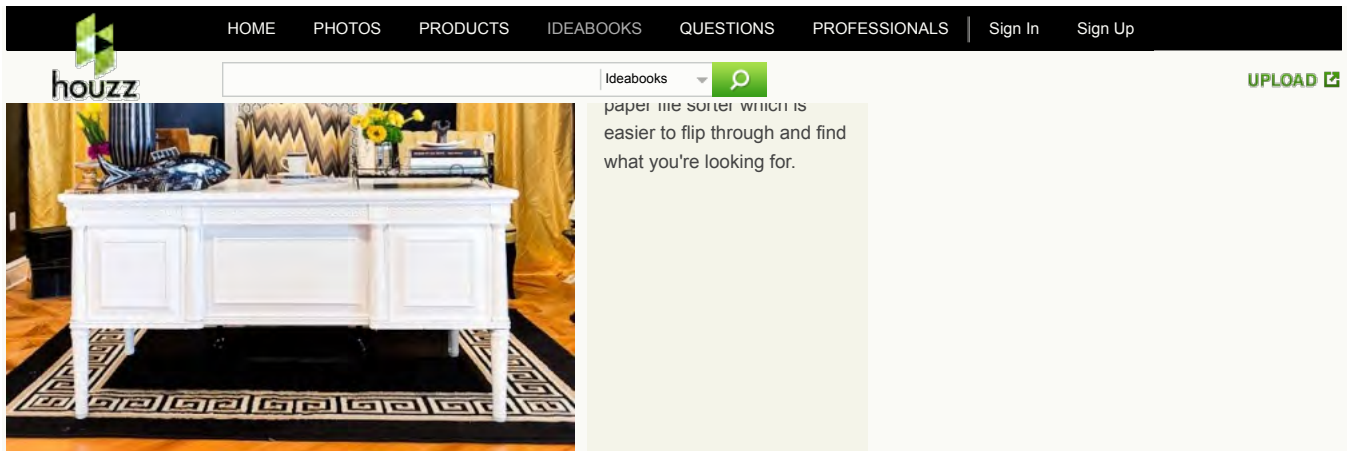
MID-CENTURY for the MODERN heart

**THRIVE**  
Home Furnishings

[SHOP NOW](#) 

### News From Our Partners

- REAL SIMPLE** [Dealing with Mice, Bats, and Other Pests](#)  
*How to get rid of uninvited guests who've decided to make themselves at home...*
- Stylist HOME** [The Quickest Way To Update A Door](#)  
*My photographer friend Christina had me over to her house recently. Naturally, she inquired as to any ideas I could offer to ...*
- casesugar** [House Tour: A Visit to Muralist and Wallpaper Designer Alix Soubiran's Los Feliz Home](#)  
*When Parisian artist Alix Soubiran, the founder and creative force behind wallpaper company Princes ...*
- This Old House** [A Total DIY Kitchen Redo in the Same Footprint](#)  
*With the 2012 Reader Remodel Contest under way, we take a closer look at last year's kitchen winner ...*



What about all those **items that would be nice to have close by** but not necessarily on your desktop? Think open shelving and larger storage pieces (like a low-lying **credenza**) placed behind or to the side of a desk. You can still easily access these items but again, you've made room for an organized workspace where things won't get lost.



notebook and/or keyboard can be hidden when not in use. This will also create extra workspace when you're drafting, drawing or working on a project with papers spread out.



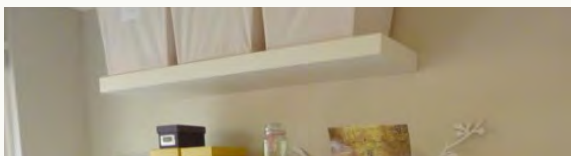
by Shoshana Gosselin

**Magazine files**, which are capable of containing bulkier items, are another great way to corral active projects. In this workspace I might even find a place for the magazine file and printer in the nearby bookcase, thus saving even more valuable desktop real estate. When a printer is relocated to another area, all you have to do is plug in your laptop, and you're ready to print.



by Shane D. Inman

If your desk faces a wall, think about **using the space in front of you** by going vertical. This workspace uses a wire to clip ideas, magazine tears and possible work inspiration. There's even a corkboard wall to the left so you can tack up anything that you reference daily or weekly.



Here is a great example of a DIY shelf going vertical, using apple crates to store items within arms reach.



Extra office supplies definitely shouldn't live at your desk — but they don't have to call a traditional supply cabinet home either. Free up space by housing supplies in containers that match your surroundings. **Label containers** so everyone knows what's stored inside.



Every piece of **paper that comes across your desk should have a home**, even those that end up in the recycling bin or shredder. This is an important step so that your sensitive docs have a place to land and don't find their way into unsearchable piles. Create bins for both recycling and shredding, and don't forget to properly label.



We all need a little inspiration sometimes, so don't forget to give your workspace a much-needed **personal touch**.

But be sure not to go overboard here, as too many tchotchkes will make your desk feel crowded. If you're unsure, take a picture of the space (pics are helpful for seeing things more objectively) and remove extraneous items.

**Tell us:** What currently lives on your desk that you now realize can live elsewhere? Do you have any of your own creative solutions to share?


**More:** [Turn Your Closet Into](#)

- [an Office](#)
- [9 Ways to Enjoy Your Office More](#)
- [Create a Home Office on a Shoestring](#)
- [Create a Customized Office Look without Built-Ins](#)
- [11 Ways to Create a Multipurpose Office Space](#)


[Browse more home office photos »](#)

houzz


HOME PHOTOS PRODUCTS IDEABOOKS QUESTIONS PROFESSIONALS | Sign In Sign Up

Ideabooks 


[UPLOAD !\[\]\(f8e7be3c2bd30232a05cdc54a8b2d22a\_img.jpg\)](#)




More in Storage And Organizing »




[I Just Need Some Space! »](#)



[The Right Built-ins for Your Fireplace »](#)



[How to Work With a Professional Organizer »](#)



[Decorate with Intention: Clutter Clearing 101 »](#)

would you like to comment?

Home  
Photos  
Products  
Ideabooks  
Questions  
Professionals  
Help & FAQ

About Houzz  
Houzz on Your Site  
Press  
Terms of Use  
Copyright  
Privacy Policy  
Jobs

Follow us on:

