

# S O U T H S O U N D

*At home with*  
**VICCI MARTINEZ**

Life after *The Voice* — and why she chose  
to record her new album in Tacoma

**+23** AWARD-WINNING  
KITCHEN AND  
BATH DESIGNS



MAKE HOT CHOCOLATE  
AND MARSHMALLOWS

SNOW DAY!  
FAMILY FUN

HEALTHY WORKOUTS  
AND FRESH BITES

# 25 WAYS TO ORGANIZE

BY LINDA JENKINS

## How to Keep Household Clutter at Bay

### Your kids and their toys

- 1 Make cleaning up part of your kids' evening routine. Waking up to an organized living space helps make the morning rush smoother.
- 2 Have kids choose a toy to donate before they can bring in another.
- 3 Use a label maker, or picture labels for younger kids, to remind them where things go.
- 4 Choose a display wall for kids' artwork, using picture rails or a clothing line with clips. Let kids decide what stays and goes. Try an app like Artkive ([artkiveapp.com](http://artkiveapp.com)) to save and store their artwork.
- 5 Create a school work center with in and out boxes to organize permission slips and homework. Repurpose sturdy containers and jars for fun supply storage.
- 6 Set aside a day to try on seasonal clothes and gear — before you buy, know if outerwear, sports equipment and shoes have another year in them.

*With our busy families and active lifestyles, clutter can be a challenge in many Northwest homes. If you want to get organized but time is short, here are simple tips to keep household clutter at bay.*



### Your kitchen

- 7 Get rid of anything expired, broken or stale.
- 8 Write the date you opened a food item on its lid. Circle expiration dates.
- 9 Don't have duplicates of kitchen tools unless two people use them at once. Invest in good kitchen tools instead of multiples.
- 10 Organize pantry staples in clear, airtight containers. Food will stay fresher, and you may be inspired to use what you have if you can see it.
- 11 Plan weekly meals with input from your family so you're not buying food that will go uneaten.
- 12 Sort and donate unused food. Let kids be part of this — it will remind you what the family is really eating, and help kids gain a good lesson in giving to those in need.



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## Your multipurpose living space

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**13** Borrow the East Coast concept of a mud room. Create a drop-off space with hooks and shelves near the door.

**14** Choose sturdy vintage pieces to create one-of-a-kind storage solutions. Visit the Modern Cottage Company (2225 N. 30th St., Tacoma) for ideas and inspiration.

**15** Use a charging station for the family's electronics. Consider mobile chargers like Halo ([halo2cloud.com](http://halo2cloud.com)).

**16** Pare down pillows and throws to the few that add something to the room or get used often.

**17** Find a decorative box or basket to corral remote controls. Learn how to program one remote, or your mobile phone, so it can control multiple devices.

**18** Avoid floating accents — if you can't find the perfect spot for it, donate or store it.

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## For what's left

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**19** Schedule a donation pick-up from a charity like The Arc of Washington ([donatewa.org](http://donatewa.org)).

**20** Sell your gently used items online at consignment sites like ThredUp ([thredup.com](http://thredup.com)) or Twice ([liketwice.com](http://liketwice.com)).

**21** Join a local Facebook buy, sell or trade group in your area.

**22** Plan a group garage sale to pool resources and increase interest.

**23** Donate used books to a Little Free Library ([littlefreelibrary.org](http://littlefreelibrary.org)) in your neighborhood.

**24** Use a shredding service like Iron Mountain ([ironmountain.com](http://ironmountain.com)) or watch for community shredding days sponsored by cities and civic groups.

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## For more help

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**25** Contact a South Sound professional organizer like Ship Shape Home Organizing ([shipshapehomeorganizing.com](http://shipshapehomeorganizing.com)). An organizer works with you to declutter your space and get you on your way to staying organized.

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**Freelance writer Linda Jenkins blogs about family life and travels in the Pacific Northwest at [twin-mom.com](http://twin-mom.com).** 

