Organize ANY Space:

- **Empty the space.** *Tip:* You don't have to physically empty the space. Start by listing all the items in your space on a piece of paper or your phone. I do this when I am short on time or need to organize in phases.

- **Sort your items.** Sort the items into like groups. *Tip:* Think of how you use the items to get started. If you are doing this on paper, highlight like items or start making categories in the margins of your list. As you sort, throw trash into a grocery sack that can go directly to the trashcan when you finish.

- **Declutter.** This is the perfect time to see that you have too many of a particular item. (30 pens anybody?) *Tip:* Anything you decide to donate, get it there as quickly as convenient.
  - *Questions to ask:*
    - Do I use this item or enjoy this item?
    - Could I replace this for less than $5?
    - If I had the choice right now, would I purchase it?
    - Do I already own something that can replace this?
    - Can I store this somewhere closer to where I use it?

- **Clean your space.** Start with a clean slate before replacing your items. *Tip:* Organizing in phases will be more difficult to thoroughly clean, but clean as much as you easily can. Some is better than none. :)

- **Contain.** I recommend using bins you already own until you have lived with the space long enough to decide if it works for you. No one wants to spend tons of money on bins and feel guilty if it doesn't work out! *Tip:* This is the time to think outside the box - Could I add a wire shelf or lazy suzan to make better use of my space?

- **Sort containers within your space.** You can only keep what fits in your space. If it doesn't fit, it needs to find a new place in your home or a new home (trash, donate, sell).

- **Label.** This will help you & others using the space in returning items to their home. It also motivates you to keep items that don't belong, out of the space. *Tip:* Use washi tape, masking tape, or post-it notes to label. I used to skip labeling until I was absolutely certain where to put something because I didn't want to waste labeling tape. This temporary solution allowed me to label without feeling wasteful if I needed to move/change something.

- **Try it out.** Live with the new space. Sometimes it takes days or even weeks to fine tune your space. That is perfectly ok! Don't be afraid to go back and make changes (over & over & over) until you love the space.

Remember: The goal of organizing is to make the space functional and EASIER to use. This is how organizing improves your life. You don't need Pinterest-perfect spaces to make living easier! If you love it, THEN consider upgrading your containers and labels.