

organize me



Ornamental Order

by **Cristina Velocci**

Whether it's a pair of dangling chandelier earrings that dress up a tank top for a night on the town or a strand of classic pearls that add elegance to a basic black dress, accessories can bring an outfit from ordinarily plain to outstandingly pulled-together. But chances are most of your jewelry sits out of rotation in the back of your closet in a clunky jewelry box, long forgotten about in the morning's haste to get ready, which leaves you wearing the same easily accessible pieces day in and day out.

If this sounds all too familiar, it's time to break the monotony and get organized—and subsequently glamorous. “If you have jewelry, you're meant to wear it and enjoy it,” says Meryl Starr, an organization expert and best selling author of “The Home Organizing Workbook.” “If it's tucked away somewhere, you won't know what you have.”


Starr suggests grouping like items—silver, gold and colors—together so it's easier to choose when accessorizing an outfit. Just like clothes, certain pieces of jewelry are seasonal and should be rotated accordingly. Store out-of-season items in protective containers and label the contents on the outside with a pen or marker. Starr favors Lucite boxes because you can see everything inside.

Necklaces, especially delicate ones, should be hung to avoid tangling, and there are a number of ways to achieve this. Purchase a hat rack, a belt rack combined with a hanger, or a men's tie rack for ready-made hooks to separate your necklaces. If you'd prefer to do it yourself, you can install hooks found in any hardware store in your closet walls. Doorknobs and drawer handles are also a built-in system to hang and organize necklaces where they are most visible.

Smaller items, such as rings, earrings, watches and bracelets, can be stored in plastic pillboxes or a tackle box with lots of compartments. For a more creative, aesthetic way to store these items, consider using colorful boxes and putting bracelets in one, watches in another, or using clear boxes stuffed with pretty tissue paper or lace that also functions as a cushion. Starr likes to place frequently used items in a crystal bowl or on an antique plate on top of a dresser.

If you are constantly on the go, you might want to consider storing your accessories in fabric jewelry rolls, which have pockets with zippers to keep everything separated. The good thing about these is that their soft lining protects items from scratching, plus they're portable and compact, allowing you to store them in a drawer, under the bed—nearly anywhere. All of these products and a slew of others, such as an over-the-door jewelry organizer, can be purchased at The Container Store, Hold Everything and Target, and are relatively inexpensive.


No matter which method you choose to integrate into your daily routine, it will make life a lot easier and save you time, not to mention keep you looking your best. “Be organized and you'll make good use of your jewelry,” says Starr. “It's fun to change it up.”



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