



Simple Ways To Organize Your Pantry For The Winter & Keep It Looking Good

Dried beans, shredded coconut, grains, multiple flours, seeds, nuts, dried fruit, tea, spices, and sugars... Guess what? All of these products line my pantry shelves and all of these products could either be randomly stacked or placed, only to be lost in the shuffle, or they could be (and are!) neatly organized in large glass jars, baskets, cool wooden boxes, on trays, and in other designer inspired containers with easy to read labels.

You know how it goes, the winter is coming and the summer's harvest has been canned, many staples have been bought in preparation of the holidays to come and the pantry is getting messy. You walk in there and almost scream - because when the pantry is disorganized making meals becomes disorganized. And, there is nothing more irritating to me than running to the market to buy a long list of items, when come to find out, they were in my pantry after all - just in the wrong places and completely out of sight.

Well, if you want an organized and designer inspired pantry this winter, you're in for a treat - I've got your back here. I'm going to give you a whole list of super simple yet beautiful to look at methods for organizing your dry goods and staples. And, if you follow my

suggestions and dial in your pantry with simplicity and a few elements of cool, you will have a winter pantry to be proud of.

So come along my fellow epicureans, let's get a classy handle on the sundries and make our pantries the place we can all say "Ahhhh!"

Tip 1.

Utilize Mason jars.

Mason jars are practical and they have a basic yet hip design. I take advantage of every Mason jar that passes through my home.

Mason jars are fantastic for storing all things dry, because, by golly, they are glass and you can easily visualize how much supply you have and guesstimate when you'll need more.

I don't mark mine up with indelible markers; instead, I create little tags, using old paper bags. I simply make a tiny slit and weave a piece of burlap cording through and tie around the neck of the jar. Not only is this super cheap and easy to read, but it also looks cool. It lends a classy, earthy and organic-y feel and I just dig the whole twine and paper aesthetic.

Tip 2.

Baskets.

Go out to the thrift store and zero in on baskets that are functional, clean, and nice to look at. I make sure to buy square, oblong and round baskets. Square baskets are great because they sit on flat shelves well and tuck in without overhang. Oblong baskets are great for root vegetables, and sit nicely on lower shelves or on the floor. They look good too. Round baskets are great for bulky items and bottles. Experiment in the thrift store. Lay out the baskets you are drawn to and ask yourself if they'll really work or not. Try to aim for perfect design: form and function.

Tip 3.

Trays.

Look at your pantry shelves. Gunky and oily, right? And who wants to line shelves with paper towels anymore? I don't! I found an awesome inexpensive solution at the thrift store. Trays. I bought a set of gold trays and now my olive oils, vinegars, sauces and marinades are neatly

placed and have a set place to live. From here on out, I won't have to scrub shelves; I'll just have to wipe down a few trays. Did I mention they only put me back a few dollars? Go to the thrift store before you set out to Target, Home Goods, or any other house wares outlet. You will save a bunch of money.

Tip 4.

Wooden boxes and crates.

Again, at the thrift store, I found beautiful wooden crates and small wooden boxes. As soon as I saw them, I knew they would be perfect for tea storage, bottles, large bags of dried foods and canned foods.

If I find wooden crates large enough, I bet I could use them for dog food storage - but that's in the works.

Keep an eye out for wine crates, cigar boxes, and other small wooden containers. I personally gravitate towards the light beachy wood and bamboo. Go with what suits your overall pantry aesthetic.

Tip 5.

Trimmed down cardboard boxes.

Talk about cheap, cool looking and super user friendly. Save a few of the more substantial and well-made cardboard boxes that pass through your home. Simply trim down to the height you desire and label these suckers with black marker, neatly, and your golden.

Trimmed down boxes are perfect for storing root vegetables, individually packaged jerkies, and large items you don't use very often.

Small cardboard boxes work great for loose tea, coffee, packets of sugar, paper products, plastic utensils and the list of uses (for card board boxes and all of the above containers) goes on and on....

Tip 6.

Pantry checklist.

Years ago, when I managed restaurants, I used pantry checklists to guide my purchases and to keep stock well stocked. Pantry checklists are super helpful and practical tools to help keep you organized and streamlined. I recommend a printed and laminated pantry checklist be placed in every pantry and always help my friends, who want to have a well stocked, neat, and tidy pantry, create their own.

The important take away here is this: You can have a beautiful and functional pantry while only spending dimes.

I encourage you to take the time to visualize the pantry you would love to have and schedule in a date with the thrift store. Take a list of how many baskets, trays, boxes and jars you need and have fun with it.

If you don't see anything you like, don't buy anything. Sometimes you score at thrift stores and sometimes all you find is dirty old junk. But, don't get discouraged. Keep going, and, once you have your supplies and design, get to work! Your beautiful and functional pantry will come together in no time.

Happy Thrifting,

Jessa