

Real Solutions is a periodic newsletter produced by Susan Stewart designed to provide practical organization tips to simplify your life.

Saving Memories without losing your mind.

The summer is flying by for Cindy and her family. It seems like just last week when they visited Disneyland. In fact, it seems like last month Nicole was born and now she's 7! Yes, the kids are growing up too fast and yet not fast enough all at the same time. Thank goodness for pictures!

Cindy started scrapbooking when she was pregnant with Nicole. She has the first 2 years of her life documented in a beautiful album which Nicole still enjoys looking at. Then there was Megan....she started a book for Megan somewhere....And Zachary, well, she's lucky if she remembers to take any pictures of him, let alone start a photo album. Cindy longs to have these memories of her children's growing up years preserved, but the thought of dragging out her supplies and sorting out the pictures is truly overwhelming. After all, the pictures from the last 5-6 years are scattered everywhere (in drawers, under piles of paper and who knows where else) and very few of them are dated. The other problem is finding a place to spread out her stuff where Zachary, who is now crawling, can't get into it. Time is also an issue. When in the world could Cindy find an uninterrupted 15 minutes, let alone an hour or two?

A few days later, Cindy's mother in law calls asking for recent pictures of the kids. She is wanting to bring pictures to her class reunion and needs them by next week. Cindy assures her that they just took a family photo at Disneyland in May and she will get it right out in the mail. Unfortunately, finding the picture took over an hour of digging through piles of paper and mail. If only she had some way of organizing all of this photo clutter!



Does this look like your collection of memories and photos? Some easy steps can help you enjoy them.

Tracy walks to the mail box to pick up the prints from their vacation to Disneyland. She sent her film to Snapfish, a company who develops her film, scans them online and sends the hard copy and negatives to her in the mail. When she arrives home she sends a quick email link to view her photos to her friends and family who live out of state.

After dinner the Tell's enjoy looking at the photos together and Tracy tosses any that were blurry or didn't turn out. When they are finished,

she stores them in a photo box labeled 2005. She has an index card subdividing each month's pictures. Negatives are stored in the Negative storage box. Each month has an envelope to hold the negatives of all pictures taken during that month.

The following week Tracy prepares for scrapbooking with Brook and Brandon. She and the kids do this once a month during Alex's nap time. Tracy has a scrapbook area set up in the closet of her office. The doors have been removed, a large table has been placed inside and a hanging system on the wall holds all of her supplies. Brook is able to sit at the table with her and they each create pages for their own albums. Even Brandon can feel a part because Tracy moved his little table into the room with Brook and her. The little table gives him a place to practice cutting scraps of paper left from mom & Brook's scrapbooks.

When Tracy's mother in law calls needing recent pictures of the children, Tracy tells her she can pick the pictures she wants online and either print them herself or pay by credit card to have Snapfish send her the sizes and copies she wants. Tracy's mother in law is satisfied and Tracy is off the hook!

Watch for an article featuring Susan and getting kids organized for school in the Sunday, August 7th edition of the Arizona Republic!

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real solutions for real life • Organizing Photos

Traditional Photo Organizing Tips

- Don't save every picture! When you receive your processed photos, toss all blurry, poor quality photos or photos without meaning right away.
- Sort photos in a photo box and label. Ideas for sorting include: chronological, by event or theme or by person.
- Store photos in a dark, moisture free and acid free environment.
- If preserving memories is important to you, create a workspace specifically for scrapbooking. Think creatively—a corner of a room, a closet with the doors taken off or a craft armoire that closes up.
- Keeping supplies accessible is key. Try keeping supplies on the wall just within reach of a workstation so digging out the tools doesn't keep you from scrapbooking.
- Make a space that is visually appealing. If the space is somewhere you like to be, you are more likely to get the work done and be inspired to create!
- Consider making the space big enough for 2 or more. Older children often enjoy looking through scrapbooks and making their own scrapbooks as well. Invite them to join you and make it a bonding time together.
- If you don't enjoy creating scrapbooks and can't stand the pile of unorganized pictures, check out www.DigMyPics.com. You send them your slides, film or prints, and they send them back to you along with a CD or DVD containing high resolution scans of your photos. Once on disk, your photos can be

shared, enjoyed and preserved for generations to come. Get 2 copies of each CD or DVD- 1 for home and one for a safety deposit box.

- If you have old photos that have faded or discolored over time, Epson's photo scanners with Easy Photo Fix will transform your old photos to their original color, automatically.
- When getting your photos developed from traditional film most developers will give them to you on CD as well as prints for a small fee.

Digital Photo Organizing

- When two or three photos are taken of the same subject matter, save only the best and delete the rest.
- Snapfish prints digital photos for 12 cents a piece as well as organizing them in albums for you online.
- Use a photo organizing program such as Picasa (free software from Google) at www.picasa.com or iPhoto on the Mac. These can be used to sort photos by date, theme or title, as well as simple editing such as removing red-eye or cropping.
- Digital photos can be easily emailed to share with friends and family. When emailing, you don't need to send photos at a resolution more than 72 dpi unless the person receiving it will be printing the pictures.
- Digital photos can (and should) be backed up on your computer or CD.
- Digital photos can be used in slide shows, home movies or sent on CD to relatives.

*If you have any other great photo tips email them to me so I can share them with my other readers!
Send tips to perfectlyplaced@earthlink.net.*



Using a program like iPhoto on the Mac can provide you with many creative and organized solutions for your photos.

If you would like more help getting organized, call me at 623-202-9199 to set up an appointment.