

Start with her clothes. Donate items that she has outgrown and remove clothing that needs fixing to the sewing room or seamstress. Separate out of season clothing, box and label, then store elsewhere. Sort the rest according to what they are. Doing this first lets you know how much space you will have left for the rest of the stuff.

Decide if he will have a dresser in the room or shelves and drawers in the closet. Built-ins are the best use of space but don't forget to keep the rods low and use child size hangers so he can manage them. Closet organizers that can be changed as he grows are the best.

Children's clothes are small. To keep her tiny socks etc. organized within the large drawers of a dresser purchase (or make) cloth or plastic drawer dividers.

Pajamas hang up or go under his pillow every morning

Buy a laundry hamper to curtail her dirty clothes or if possible install a laundry chute. Keep a box handy to put clothes that she has outgrown in. When it is full take it to the local charity.

Hang some rounded hooks in his closet or behind the door for items like housecoats and pajamas.

Hang a mirror on the back of the door so she can get in the habit of checking herself over before she leaves.

Purge toys and other items. Give away or sell outgrown or unused ones, throw out broken ones. She will no doubt want to keep the toy that she hasn't touched in six months the minute you suggest giving it away. Go by her age and personality to help you determine why she won't let it go. Before you get into a full fledged argument finish the room and see if there is enough space to keep the item.

Store large outdoor toys in the garage or basement.

Use vertical space by obtaining shelving that has a mixture of closed cupboards and open shelves and is deep enough to house the wide range of objects. Drawers and under the shelf hanging baskets can be added to house small items. Large items and containers can go on the floor. Bookshelves should be deep enough and have adaptable shelving so they will hold the large picture books now and the paperbacks in the future.

Collect all the pieces belonging to toys and games and put them in their boxes. Then sort into categories. Show him how to do this by putting similar things (puzzles, cars, games) together. This makes it much easier to find things. Put them in clear plastic containers so he can see what they are or reclaim shoe boxes, margarine tubs or any other suitable container. Label containers with words or pictures, depending on his age.

Make sure you buy or find enough storage containers to hold everything. Repurpose storage items and use them in new ways. Use containers big enough to house the main items and the little accessories that come with them. What might start out as a small collection may become so large you have to rethink the storage for it. Containers should be easy to open and close.

Start a memorabilia box. This can be a Rubbermaid tote, antique blanket box or a banker's box. (From an archival point of view the banker's box is actually the best) Put artwork, favorite old toys, awards – anything he (and you) wants to keep as a souvenir. Restrict yourself to this box and don't forget to date the memorabilia.

Buy a bulletin board or cover part of the wall with corkboard for temporary display of artwork and other items. Hang it low enough that she can add to it herself. It can be any size/shape you want but show her how to cull it when it gets full. Some items will go in the garbage, others in her memorabilia box.

Frame and hang artwork he is especially fond of, awards he has won or past favorite toys. Skateboards, a toy shield and sword or a ballerina tutu can all be hung as pieces of artwork. If a project turns into many pages, punch the sheets and put them in a binder with his illustration and title on the front.

Make use of under utilized space. A shelf installed higher up than usual can hold infrequently used treasures. Flat items like puzzles, games and Lego kits can be housed in boxes and stored under the bed. Growth charts, magnetic dart board or shoe holders can go on the inside or outside of a closet door. High shelves in closets can be used for out of season clothing, future gifts.

Invest in a night stand with at least one drawer and enough space for a box of Kleenex, a clock and a good reading lamp. The drawer lets them keep personal items like diaries, lip balm or asma puffers handy but out of sight.

Put a garbage can and a small box for recycling in her room.

Keep kits and building sets (i.e. Lego) in their original boxes with the instructions, and then those boxes in larger containers. Don't throw all the sets together because it is frustrating to try to find the one tiny piece he is looking for.

House collections that don't display well in tackle boxes or utility drawers. Others can be given their own space with the larger items sitting out but the tiny ones boxed up near by. If the collection is all miniature buy a printer's box, mount it on the wall and display the tiny treasures.

Always leave room for growth. Whether it is for more clothes, toys or gifts, you should make sure nothing is so crowded that some new items can't be added. Give something away when something new comes in.

Try to get your child involved so they buy into the idea. Devise a game to get them to pick the socks that match or the toys that are the same. Teach them to see how some items are similar and so can be kept together. Get them to pick a spot for their special items. Remember though, they might pick a way of doing things that you might not agree with, but what counts is that they are comfortable and happy in their room.

Playrooms follow the same basic guidelines as a child's room but usually you have more space. Have different areas of the room assigned for different types of activities. One corner could be the craft and art area another could be the games corner. Keep items used for those activities in that area. Separate the areas with couches, desks or large toy items.

Craft or art areas could have a large space for artwork or projects to be hung. Put a couple of hooks on the wall (their height) for paint aprons, etc. Rolling carts with supplies in them can be brought close to the easel or table.

When purchasing a shelving unit for the T.V. make sure it has enough storage space for the videos, DVDs and video games in addition to what you will need for the video and DVD player and the video game systems. Open shelving with all these items on them looks very cluttered so find a unit with doors on it. Allow more space for containers holding instructions and memory cards.

Use a basket or antique tin to house the remotes.

Store items that they are not quite ready for or that need parental supervision on high shelves. Separate the toys and videos meant for the older kids and put them up higher too.

Find a table that a few scratches, paint marks or spills won't hurt and let them use it for their games, craft or building table. If you have not got room for a permanent table use a folding one.

If the playroom is also the family room, keep breakables to a minimum, behind doors or up higher. Have end tables and coffee tables that have storage capabilities.

Bean bag chairs make for relaxed and fun seating and can be pushed into a corner when not needed.

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