

Organize

chapter 5

Organize Your Papers

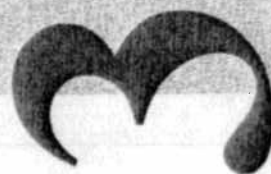
chapter 6

Organize Your Space

chapter 7

Organize Your Time

section



Organize

Check all statements below that apply to you:

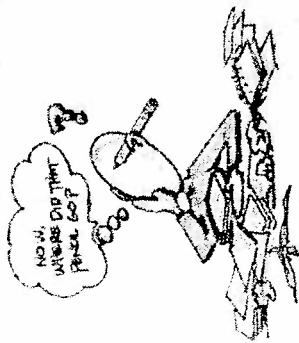
- ☐ Have you ever brought the wrong notebook or folder to class or home for homework?
- ☐ Have you ever misplaced a homework assignment that you know you did?
- ☐ When you look inside your bag and locker, is there a sea of randomly stashed papers staring back at you?
- ☐ Do you have a hard time keeping your room neat and organized?
- ☐ Do you ever feel rushed and frustrated getting ready for school?

You will find solutions to these problems, and much more, in the following section.

*For every minute
spent organizing,
an hour is earned.*

What are some terms you might associate with someone who is *disorganized*? Scattered, confused, forgetful, puzzled, bewildered, overwhelmed, frustrated, messy, jumbled... Do any of these words paint a picture of an effective and successful student?

Absolutely not!



Being organized is the vital foundation for achieving success in school. Contrary to popular belief, organizing skills are not something you are either born with or without; they are skills that are learned and developed over time. Certainly, some people are more inclined to being organized than others, but *anyone* can learn strategies to create some order in their lives.

As always, the goal of this section is to share some easy strategies that will only take a short time to do, but will save a lot of time and hassle in the long run. In this section, you will learn about a great system for organizing all of your papers and notebooks for school. It is simple, cheap, and easy to use. You will also learn some tips for keeping your room, book bag, and locker in a neat, functional order. Finally, you will review many different ways to organize your time by developing simple routines. The more organized you are, the more you simplify your life. The more you simplify your life, the more efficient you become.

What are some terms you may associate with an *organized* person? Neat, orderly, go-it-together, calm, accomplished, capable, successful, prepared... These words can all describe YOU!

chapter 5

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Organize Your Time



One of the most common problems students complain about is managing all of their papers, folders, and notebooks. Many parents and teachers would agree: they get frustrated when their students cannot keep track of assignments, find completed work, or keep their folders and bags in order.

Do any of these scenarios sound familiar to you?

- ☐ "I know I did my homework, but I can't find it now!"
- ☐ "Oh, no...I brought my science notebook home instead of my math notebook!"
- ☐ "My bag is so heavy, sometimes I think my back will break!"
- ☐ "My spiral notebooks get caught on everything; the bottom of my bag, my clothes, each other...they are very annoying."
- ☐ "I get so many papers and don't have any time to put them away, so they all fall to the bottom of my bag and get crushed."

If you can relate to any of these comments, you are not alone!

Most students simply have too much "stuff" to deal with. Typically, students will have one folder and one notebook for each of their classes. That can be up to 8 folders and 8 notebooks...16 items combined! No wonder papers end up all over the place! Wouldn't it be nice if you could condense all of your papers, folders, and notebooks down to one easy-to-manage binder? ...You can!

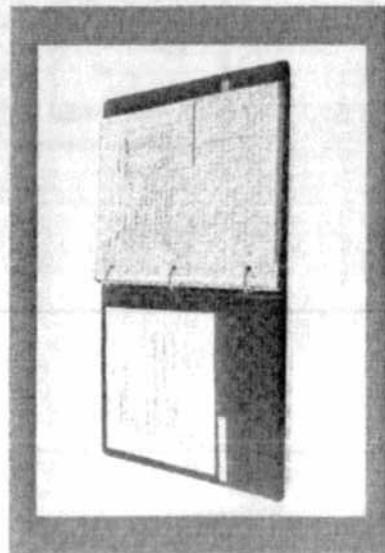
The S-O-A-F™ Binder System

The SOAR™ Binder System solves all of the problems described on the previous page; it is a very simple and easy way to keep school-work organized! It consists of one 1-inch binder that houses folders and notebooks for all of your classes.

You are probably wondering:

"How can I keep seven inches of notebooks and folders in a one-inch binder? It'll never work!"

It may seem unlikely, but it is possible. This system has made a significant difference for hundreds of students, from grade school to grad school.



I can't believe how much easier it is for me to keep my papers organized. Since I started using the Binder, I have not lost one assignment! My parents are so excited and I feel so much better about school. -Thank you!

- Michael Zabik, 9th grade student

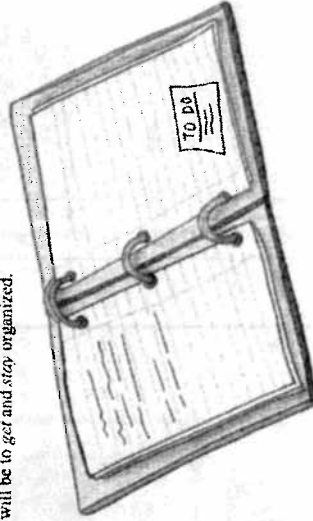
"How does it work?"

A SOAR™ Binder replaces traditional folders and notebooks with plastic one-pocket folders and loose-leaf notebook paper. Each plastic folder holds papers for individual classes and acts as a divider for notes, which are placed behind the folder. At the end of each marking period, the folders are emptied into a simple 'home filing system' to keep the binder from getting overloaded. The binder travels with you to each class and goes home with you at the end of each day. You never have to worry about taking the wrong folder/notebook to class or home for homework because you only have to keep track of one item.

The SOAR™ Binder System is a perfect organizing solution when you live in two homes. You never have to worry about leaving a folder or notebook at the "other" house because everything is in one binder, making it easier to keep papers and notes with you, regardless of where you are.

"How do I create a S-O-A-F™ Binder?"

It is easy to put a SOAR™ Binder together. Simply get a few supplies, as listed on the next page, and follow the steps for assembling and using the binder. (You can also purchase SOAR™ Binder supplies by going to www.sourstudyskills.com and clicking on "products".) You can begin using this tomorrow and will instantly notice how much easier it will be to *get* and *stay* organized.



Gather Materials

- One, 1" diameter binder with pockets on the inside covers *
- One plastic folder for each individual class (Avery Binder Pockets work well)
- One file folder for each individual class
- Labels for each folder and binder pocket
- Loose-leaf notebook paper

* Anything larger than a 1" binder is too bulky to carry, and therefore less likely to be used. However, if you are *not* allowed to carry a bag in school, you may want to use a 1½" binder so you have room inside for a zipper case to hold pens, pencils, and other supplies.

Put the Pieces Together

- Place the plastic folders in the binder rings. The plastic folders work better than traditional folders because they are more durable. They also minimize bulk because you typically will only need one pocket for each class.
- Place 20-30 sheets of notebook paper behind the last folder at the back of the binder. As you need to take notes, you will use these notebook papers to write your notes and will then store your notes behind the folder for that class.

Label Folders in the Binder

- Label your folders. It is very important to label one folder for each class so you do not accidentally put papers in the wrong place. A simple label can save a lot of frustration when you are rushed and need to find something in your binder quickly.
- Label the front pocket of the binder "Homework" and the back pocket of the binder "Miscellaneous."

Step 1



Create a 'Home Filing System'

- Label one file folder for each of your classes and store the file folders in a safe place at home. A 'safe place' may be a small file crate, a shoe box under your bed, a specific drawer in your desk, or even in your parents' filing cabinet. The important thing is to determine one specific place so you will not lose them!
- Store binder over-flow in these file folders. Periodically (about 1 or 2 times per quarter), remove papers from your binder and put them in the file folders. Do not throw away any papers until after you have received your final grade for each class; these papers will help you create a good study guide for big unit tests or final exams and will also help you prove your grade if a mistake shows up on your report card.

"How do I use the S-O-A-R™ Binder System?"

The magic of the SOAR™ Binder System is in how you use it! Follow the tips below:

Using the Binder in School

Step 2

- NEVER put loose papers inside your bookbag! Instead of cramming papers into your bag, just slide them into the front of your binder. Later, when you have a few seconds, you can put the papers in their correct folders.



Don't trash your book bag! When you are in a hurry, simply slide papers under the front cover of your binder instead of slashing them loosely in your bag.

Keep your binder easily accessible throughout the day. Like your planner, keep it on your desk or on top of all of your belongings under the desk. Once again, you are much more likely to use it if you do not have to dig through several things to access it.

Put ALL papers that need your attention at home in the front pocket of the binder.

This includes homework papers, notes for your parents, forms that need to be signed, items you want to leave at home, etc. This will save you time at home because you will not have to rifle through several folders to find your homework pages.

Use the back pocket of the binder for "miscellaneous" items. Sometimes you have to hang on to papers that are not for a specific class, so they may not have a specific folder. Items such as school fundraiser information or a health form for P.E. can be placed in the back pocket of your binder for safe keeping.

Using the Binder at Home

Take 60 seconds to put stray papers into their correct folders. If you were rushed in school and had to stash a few papers in the front of your binder, take a few seconds to put them away when you sit down to do your homework. A few seconds each night will save you a lot of time and frustration later.

As you finish homework pages, immediately put them away in the correct folders. Do not wait until you finish *all* of your homework before you put your papers away; this increases the chances of papers getting mixed up with other items in your home, put in the wrong folder, or simply forgotten.

Clean out your binder 1 or 2 times per quarter and put the "old" papers in your file folders. It cannot be emphasized enough...do not throw any papers away until you get your report card! Your old papers are a gem for making study guides and will help you correct any possible errors your teacher may have made in recording your grades.

Some Common Questions about using the S-O-A-R-T Binder System

Q: "My teacher requires a separate folder/binder for her class. I don't think she'll let me use the S-O-A-R-T Binder System."

A: Most teachers request specific materials to help ensure that students have a method for organizing supplies for their class. Once you show her how your binder works, she is likely to allow an exception. In eight years of teaching this method, I know of only one teacher who insisted on a separate binder for her class. If this *should* happen to you, abide by your teacher's wishes, but continue to use the S-O-A-R-T Binder System for all of your other classes.

Q: "What if I can't get all of my papers to fit into a 1-inch binder?"

A: You should have no problems fitting everything you need into one binder. Remember to clean out your folders and notes at least once per quarter (possibly twice). Also, make sure you are only using loose-leaf notebook paper and NOT storing spiral notebooks in your binder.

Q: "My teacher often collects our notebooks. He will want me to have a spiral notebook...what do I do?"

A: Ask your teacher if you can simply staple your notebook pages together and turn in the packet of papers when he collects notebooks. As mentioned earlier, teachers are usually quite receptive to helping students get and stay organized, so you are not likely to have a problem.

