



Jaclyn Ray with unorganized office clutter. Photo by Lynae Sowinski

Jaclyn, the Clutter Wrangler

Organizing Homes Since 2004

Perhaps it's the dining room table where you would like to entertain guests if it wasn't hidden underneath piles of papers, books, and junk mail. Or the closet you are afraid to open because it houses everything that doesn't have any other place to go.

It's these kind of messes that call out for Jaclyn, the Clutter Wrangler.

Professional organizer Jaclyn Ray has been helping tidy up homes and other places for more than a decade. "I asked myself, 'What am I good at and what do I enjoy doing?' and organizing was it," she says.

How do people get to a point where they need to call a professional organizer? Sometimes, it's just a lack of organizational instincts, says Ray. More often, it's not enough time. "We're all really busy and we all have a little too much stuff and you just don't want to spend a day organizing."

Several situations create a pressing need for help. Family members or other guests coming from out of town generate pressure to clean up and declutter. Other reasons include moving, renovating, downsizing, or facing a life change such as a divorce or a birth. Or, says Ray, "People just get so fed up, and they're ready to bite the bullet."

Ray charges \$35 per hour with a three-hour minimum. A first appointment will start with a tour of the premises. "Don't clean up for me," she warns new clients. Ray asks clients to point out specific areas that work and don't work for them. "Start at the hardest place first — the area that's hindering your daily life," she tells them, adding, "You just need to rip off the Band-Aid."

At that first meeting, discussing problem areas takes 15 to 20 minutes and "the rest of the appointment is just work," says Ray, "and you have to be ruthless." She tells clients, "Ask yourself why is this thing in your life. Do you use it? Do you love it? People realize they can get rid of things and the sky is not going to fall."

When all is done, there is usually a healthy stack of stuff to donate to charitable organizations and another stack earmarked for recycling.

To learn more about Ray's services, visit clutterwrangler.com.

—Rosie Piga Pizzo