

# G.O. Girl!

(Get Organized!)



## Breakin' It Down

Life is so busy...so much to plan...so much to do! Why not make things easier? Being organized is the first step—starting with your own space. The "G.O. Girl!" Interest Project will help you get organized. If your environment is organized, then *you're* organized—and organized people tend to be less stressed, which means they lead healthier lives.

## HERstory

The popularity of shows like TLC's "Trading Spaces," ABC's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," and MTV's "Trailer Fabulous" was echoed in e-mails we received from girls like Tami R. of Miami, Florida. Tami, a high school freshman whose favorite shows include "Trading Spaces" and "Cribs," wondered if there was some way for Girl Scouts to recognize her bedroom's recent makeover. She had spent most of the summer cleaning, organizing, and redecorating—and wished for a new Interest Project that would recognize her hard work transforming "random piles of junk" to a "Van Gogh's 'Starry Night.'"

## You've Got MAD Skills

In partnership with the International Association of Professional Organizers, Girl Scouts of the USA has adapted activities for "G.O. Girl!" so that girls like you across the country can:

1. Discover and practice simplifying your already-busy life
2. Feel good in your space
3. Improve your space by reducing the amount of clutter in it (and in your mind, too)
4. Live a healthier, more organized life—save time, lower stress and frustration levels

## Helpful Links

There are several organizations and online resources that would be helpful for researching and doing the activities in this IP like:

International Association of Professional Organizers ([www.organizingtheworld.org](http://www.organizingtheworld.org))

National Association of Professional Organizers ([www.napo.net](http://www.napo.net))

[www.organized-living.com](http://www.organized-living.com)

[www.onlineorganizing.com](http://www.onlineorganizing.com)

[www.fastfengshui.com](http://www.fastfengshui.com)

## Need Help?

No problem. Read the [Intro](#) before diving into "G.O. Girl!" Just want a quick refresher on what to do? Okay, in order to earn any of these Interest Projects:

Do the one REQUIRED activity

Do ONE activity of your choice from each of the THREE categories (LEARN, DO, SHARE)

Design and do ONE activity of [YOUR OWN](#)

Create a short [REFLECTION](#) after you've completed [all the activities](#)

**Food for Thought!** Often, an activity in the "LEARN" category will help you build a skill that you'll have the chance to try in the "DO" category and then share in the "SHARE" category. Make connections between the "steps" when planning which activities you'll do. For an example of a skill-building connection, check out the fourth activity of each "G.O. Girl!" category.

## G.O. Girl!



**Required:** Clutter occurs naturally (fall leaves are a good example of nature's clutter); our ability to manage clutter doesn't usually come as naturally—it takes practice. Cluttered space often means a cluttered mind: lack of focus and clarity; feelings of being academically, creatively, spiritually, and/or romantically stuck; insufficient time and attention for self and family; increased stress, irritability, and depression. Wouldn't it be great to be free of all these?

Your first step toward being organized is to clear your space of clutter. Assess yourself: Identify one section of your personal space that's cluttered (a desk, a closet, a bureau, backpack, etc.); next, think about how that space can be better used. Make three piles: keep, recycle or trash, and donate. Sort clutter into the piles and remove piles 2 and 3 (be sure to follow up on the "donate" pile by giving items to charity). Rearrange the original space with the "keep" pile items. If you've been realistic about which items are truly worth keeping, you should now have a significantly better, more organized, and functional space. It's hard to clear clutter sometimes because we're afraid of parting with sentimental things or throwing away something we end up needing—but the benefits of clutter clearing are infinitely more valuable.

### LEARN

1. Being organized is half the battle for being prepared; planning ahead is the other half. Plan and organize what you'd bring with you if you were going to two of the following places: 1) one week at the beach in summer; 2) one week in the mountains in winter; 3) two weeks at camp; 4) five days at your family's house for the holidays; 5) a one-day school trip to a theme park; or 6) a one-night sleepover at a friend's house. Make a list of what you'd bring to each. What helps you determine what you'll bring? Some of these factors might include: how much room is available to transport and store the items; any weight restrictions; the weather; how long you'll be there; whether or not you'll have access to laundry facilities, etc.

2. Create a tip sheet of "5 Ways to G.O." (Get Organized) and share the sheet with friends, family, and your Girl Scout group. For example, "Keep only the supplies you need on a daily basis on your desktop or dresser." Use books or the Internet ([http://tlc.discovery.com/fansites/cleansweep/tips/tips\\_index.html](http://tlc.discovery.com/fansites/cleansweep/tips/tips_index.html) or [www.napo.net](http://www.napo.net)) to find out ways that people can organize their lives.

3. The ancient Chinese art *feng shui* (pronounced "fung shway") is often called "the art of placement," or "the art of flow." Feng shui (feng=wind; shui=water in Chinese) aims to maximize the flow of energy, or chi (pronounced "chee"), through an environment. Chi can be blocked or weakened by clutter and poor placement of things. In your bedroom, use basic feng shui principles to improve the flow of chi and kun gua (love and relationships energy) by drawing a bagua grid (ba= eight; gua=area), a map of the energetic world. First, draw a square outline of your bedroom on a piece of paper. The wall that has the main entrance to your room should be at the bottom of the square. Divide the square into nine equal squares (three rows by three columns). Now, compare your bagua with the bagua chart below. Make notes about where the layout of your room matches the chart and where it is lacking.

4. Professional Organizers assist with many areas of organization including residential, business, time management, paper management, event planning, clutter control, space planning, filing, coaching, wardrobes, closet systems, errands, personal shopping, financial management, memorabilia/photographs, packing/moving, records management, training, computers, kitchens/public speaking/seminars/training, home offices, corporate offices, and working with special needs clients (such as children, people with ADHD or chronic hoarders, etc).

Interview or invite a professional organizer to your group meeting to answer questions about getting and staying organized. What education or training do you need to be a professional organizer? What are the average salaries? What other requirements or skills are needed? As a group, you might prepare a few questions in advance about areas in your life, family, or community where implementing organizing systems might help you achieve your goals, build more self-confidence, or help you take action on things that are important to you.

NOTE: Check the costs, if any, for having a professional organizer speak at your meeting. If costs are involved, you may want to consider inviting an event planner from your Girl Scout council, community center, or place of worship instead.



## DO

1. Organize items you use for a specific activity (hobby, craft project, sports activity, putting on make-up) or all items in a collection (CDs, DVDs, videos, stuffed animals). Gather all of the items together and create an organizing system that helps you use, find, or replace items more easily. Organizing strategies might include: putting similar items together; arranging items in the order in which you would use them; or storing items by color, alphabetically, or by size.
2. Room makeover! Rearrange your bedroom to your space and the way you use it (or make it possible to do new things). Create a list of all the things you would like to do in your room. Use measuring tape to find out your room's dimensions. Use a pencil and graph paper and pencil to make a drawing of your room where one inch equals one foot. Measure your furniture and then create paper cut-outs of it that are to size (one inch equals one foot). Using the paper cut-outs, rearrange the "furniture" in your room to see how many different ways you could set up your space. Make a list of what is most useful about each layout and what causes problems. Then, rearrange your real room using the layout that was most useful to you.
3. Room makeover! Arrange your bedroom according to feng shui principles to improve the flow of chi. Use a bagua (map of your bedroom's nine energy areas) to rearrange objects.

Here are some objects that will help you attract more of what you need in each area of your bedroom:

**Knowledge:** Bookcase, books, tools for self-development.

**Career:** Mirrors or water-related items. Images to support your career goals.

**Helpful People/Travel:** Pictures of your helpers.

**Family/Health:** Family photos, heirlooms, plants.

**Creativity/Children:** Art supplies, artwork, computer.

**Prosperity:** Money, jewelry, fish, fountains, anything red, purple, or gold.

**Fame/Reputation:** Candles, awards, plants, anything red, orange, or purple.

**Relationships:** Round or oval mirrors, anything pink, pictures of loved ones, paired objects (like two candlesticks or two flowers).

4. Have you ever thought about the person who designed your backpack? Careers in design and engineering include the everyday realm of organizational products. Design an organizing product for yourself or someone else. The product should answer a need (for example: a purse that holds both school books and personal items). Complete a sketch of your product and list or show what different types of fabrics or materials your product can be made from. Who would use it and how would it answer their need? "Sell" your product by writing or designing an advertisement (radio, print, or TV) highlighting the benefits of your product to those you think would buy your product. (Need help with the advertisement? Check out different types of organizing products in magazines, catalogs, newspapers, or online that are similar to yours).

## SHARE

1. Lead an effort to help a service in your community, school, place of worship, etc., get more organized. Ideas might include: helping to create a new system at the local food bank, animal shelter, or recycling program at school. Invite a professional organizer to help organize the volunteer project and teach you basic organizing skills to use in your own life!
2. Prepare and present a "public service announcement" about the hazards of having too much clutter in your house. Your presentation should identify how clutter can cause or exacerbate fires, accidents, diseases, and allergies. Find out if your community has any laws or programs in place to help people who "hoard" (have homes full of clutter). Create a poster, presentation, or video highlighting hazards and prevention tips and share them with others in your group and/or community.
3. Develop a list of personal organizing strategies you can use to reduce your family's level of stress. Include actions that could help you save time, conserve space, eliminate waste, reduce the number of activities needed to accomplish a task, eliminate clutter, make cleanup simpler or help everyone put things in a specific place, so you can locate things more easily. For example, use colors or symbols to create and implement an organizing system for a younger child's toys or clothes.
4. Event planning is just one of the many careers you could have one day as a professional organizer. Be an event planner for someone's celebration—it could be a friend or family member's (real or pretend) birthday party, anniversary celebration, wedding, Sweet Sixteen, bat mizvah, Quinceanera, graduation, whatever! Watch "Party Planner" on the Discovery Channel for ideas and tips or check out [www.partypop.com](http://www.partypop.com) and [www.party411.com](http://www.party411.com). Research costs of dresses, flowers, photographers, banquet halls, invitations, decorations, and ceremonies. Set a date for the event and develop a budget for saving enough money to cover all costs. Keep all of your records in a folder or scrapbook. When you're done planning her event, share the plan with the lucky recipient of all your careful planning and excellent organization skills!

### Sources:

Paula Langguth Ryan, managing partner, PCC Communications, USA  
IAPO Director of Marketing, for writing some of the activities in this IP;  
[www.fastfengshui.com](http://www.fastfengshui.com) for the bagua grid and background information