

Mudroom Madness

Is your **mudroom, hallway, foyer or entry way** making you mad?

Do you constantly **trip over** everything on the floor?

Is there **no space** to put anything?

Or has your clutter been like this so long that you just **pass by** and do not really see what your guests see?

You may just spend minutes coming or going but this brief time can definitely **set the tone** for the start or end of your working day.

Nothing says "Welcome" like entering into a space where you feel comfortable and can **easily store** your coat, shoes and outerwear items. Think about your home's entry and **incorporate these ideas** to help keep it in top shape and keep you sane:

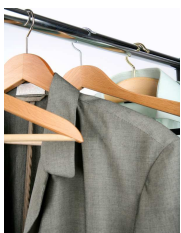


1. **Give each family member a space.** Limit the amount each person can keep in your entranceway (number of shoes, bags, etc.). Locker-like cubbies, milk crates or laundry baskets are great and can work well depending on the space. Allow only items that are **used frequently and for that season** in this area. Have **adjustable shelves** and hooks to **grow with your child**. Think about what is reachable for your child when deciding where to hang hooks and put baskets. Square **cubbies** are great for kids' extra-curricular supplies and equipment; even shallow cubbies are helpful for stashing things away.

2. **Have a place to sit to put on shoes.** A bench with storage under the seat is a great multi-purpose item. A **chest or toy box** can make a great bench/storage option too. Or tuck bins under a bench or chairs. This is a great place to keep **sports equipment**. Be diligent about keeping the seat **clutter-free** so you will always have a spot to quickly sit to lace up your shoes.

3. **Provide enough hooks.** Make sure there is at least **one hook per family member** (an easy alternative to nagging kids to hang up coats). Strong hooks are also great to get **book bags off the floor**. Use big hooks for **heavy coats** and small ones for **umbrellas and hats**. Don't forget the **family dog!** Have a hook for his **leash**. Hooks can also be placed on the **back of doors**. Hooks are a great way to tap into unused storage space the walls and doors. Make sure the kids' hooks are at their level and the adults can use the **upper space**.

4. **Create a specific area for your pets.** In one spot store **leashes, waste bags, outside toys, treats**, a **cloth** to wipe paws and winter paw protector or **booties**. Think about opting for bag holders that attach to the leash, collapsible water bowls and treat or ball bags that clip on your belt to **save your pockets** from an overflow of plastic bags and 'cookie' crumbs. Have reflective bands for you and your dog for nighttime outings



especially important in fall and winter as the days become shorter. You may also wish to consider a place to **stash indoor toys** on your way out.

5. Think up, way up. Build a **custom cabinet** up to the ceiling to maximize storage of out of season items higher up. If you are working with the closet you have, **use labelled bins and boxes** for seldom used or out of season items and store **higher up**. Consider **adding an extra shelf** above the existing ones. You could **double rod** the closet - adults coats on the top, children's below. If you do not have a front closet, you must be particularly **selective** about what you keep in your entrance. Think seasonal - **what do I really need right now?** Keep things for this time of year and store the rest elsewhere in your house.



6. Watch out for wet items. Allow each family member to have **only one pair of shoes** out at a time on a **boot rack**. Once a pair is **dry** it should be **put away**. **Wet mittens and hats** can be **hung by clothes pins** on a line that runs vertically or horizontally-thread line through the pins' spring, spacing them along the line, or use a pretty piece of 1 inch ribbon that they will easily clip to. Hang this mini clothesline close to a **heat vent or heater**. Again, **once dry, these items should be stashed away**.



7. Make a message centre. A **bulletin board** nearby, will help keep your family on schedule. Pin up forms, **invitations, practice schedules**, and a **calendar**. This will help you remember to grab these items on the way out.

8. Check yourself out—add a mirror. Not only does it help make the space appear larger, it is convenient for you to **give yourself a once-over** before rushing out the door. This will help you catch turned up collars, food in teeth, and hat-head. Get a mirror that has a small ledge for lipstick and a comb.

9. Give some careful thought to every item in the mudroom. Use **waterproof paint** and **tile floors** to deal with the moisture that will be coming in. Allow lots of **natural light** in and install a **ceiling light** for night time entrances. If there is something there that **doesn't serve a purpose, remove it**. Space is at a premium in the mudroom, so make sure you have a rationale for all your choices.

It may be a little space, but a little time and thought can rid you of the aggravation and madness of your mudroom.

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