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BEAUTY AND FASHION NEWS, DEALS, TRENDS

Beauty, *Simplified*

If your mornings are a race against the clock, give yourself an edge by corralling your toiletries in the smartest possible way. Conquering your cosmetics clutter not only will save you time, but is also the easiest way to start on that other mainstay of resolutions: looking better in the new year. Once you downsize to what you actually use—and use it—2012 will be looking pretty indeed

By Nina Judar



CUT COUNTERTOP CLUTTER

“Even in the biggest bathroom in the world, the prime real estate is the area around the sink, and it’s limited,” says professional organizer Julie Morgenstern, author of *Organizing From the Inside Out*. Speed through your A.M. and P.M. routines by keeping essentials spillproof and within reach.

- **Pump out your potions** Pump dispensers save you the hassle of fussing with lids and tops. (If the pump comes with a clear plastic lid, recycle or toss it.) Even smaller daily necessities such as eye cream come in pumps, like **Borba Age Defying Eye Crème Concentrate** (\$20, Walgreens). And using a pump is more sanitary than dipping your fingers into a tub.
- **Stick to presoaked eye pads** On a late night, eye makeup remover pads make it a cinch to wipe off your mascara. But their true genius is in saving space: Instead of storing remover and a pile of cotton pads, you only need

counter space for one tub. Need more incentive? **Almay Moisturizing Eye Makeup Remover Pads** now come in a taller tub with 50% more pads (\$8, in drugstores this month).

- **Stand dental care on end** Many toothpastes come in flat-topped tubes. (So ends the debate over where to squeeze the tube—from the bottom, of course.) An upright electric toothbrush also keeps your toiletries streamlined: If you don’t want electric cords cluttering your bathroom, try a battery-operated version, like **Oral-B Pro-Health Precision Clean Battery-Powered Toothbrush** (\$16.50, cvs.com).

STREAMLINE YOUR MAKEUP

If you separate your necessities from your nonessentials, applying your makeup should take only minutes.

- **Designate a spot** for your “five-minute face,” whatever products you use every morning to get out the door, advises makeup artist Carmindy, co-creator of *Sally Hansen Natural Beauty Inspired by Carmindy*. A drawer with dividers or a box lets you see everything you need—no digging around—but if you’re tight on space, a makeup bag works, too. (And if you travel a lot, a makeup case keeps your essentials prepacked; slip some small resealable bags into the pocket to pack spillables or to segregate liquids if you’re flying.)

BOX IT UP

Store your picks for your five-minute face in a pretty box or drawer, and you won’t waste time in the morning searching for those basics

Part with the 10th-place lipstick

The rest of your makeup (if you’re like most of us) needs a serious purge. Dump what’s expired, of course (anything you’ve had longer than 18 months, or six months for mascaras or other liquids used near the eyes), but don’t stop there: Hit the heart of the problem by getting rid of your runners-up. “We have so many lipsticks and lip glosses rattling around at the bottoms of our bags because we can’t find the right color, so we keep trying to find that one perfect shade,” says Carmindy. “If you haven’t used it in the last year, toss it.” The same strategy goes for anything else you’re prone to stockpiling, whether it’s eye pencils or night creams. Morgenstern suggests asking yourself, *If all this were gone tomorrow, what would I miss?* Those are the items that you should keep.

- **Be your own editor** If you’re still attached to the 10 eye shadows or 20 lip colors you’ve used once each, put them in a covered box on your bathroom counter or toilet tank and apply a sticker dated three months from now. We like the **Short Acrylic Box** (\$10, The Container Store), which



keeps everything in sight. Try a product every day or week and make a decision—incorporate it into your “five-minute face” or occasional items, or toss it. Dump whatever you haven’t bothered to try by your preset expiration date.

- **Simplify your storage** Anything left, like eye shadows you love for evening looks, can go into a drawer. Tight on space? “Usually two sets of stacking drawers can fit on either side of a J pipe under the sink,” says Morgenstern. Divide items by categories—eyeliners and mascaras, blush and bronzers, extra makeup brushes, etc.—storing them in bins, like the **Stackable Acrylic Drawer Organizers** (\$3 to \$5 each, The Container Store). If you have a pedestal sink, use a clear shoebox, a portable “drawer” that can fit in a nearby linen closet.
- **Stage an intervention** “Often with drawers, people start throwing stuff in, and then it’s not organized,” says

Facial wipes are face-savers, and they’re also sink-savers: Use them to clean up spills

Carmindy. If you’re facing a jumble in a few months, take an extra measure and put every category in small re-sealable bags and then in its designated section or bin. That way, “you’ll be less likely to pile products on top of the bags,” she explains.

MAXIMIZE SPACE

Inventive storage puts every inch to work and tames bathroom chaos.

- **Use door space** Not just your bathroom door, but also inside the door of your vanity cabinet. “That’s the perfect spot to install a blow-dryer holder and hang up your dryer,” says Mor-

genstern. Or consider using your *doorknob* to suspend an attractive fabric-covered caddy.

- **Rethink apothecary jars** They’re pretty, but if you don’t have room, consider travel-size minis instead. **Q-tips Cotton Swabs Purse Pack** (\$1, drugstores) is a sleek plastic case that takes up minimal real estate in a medicine cabinet. You can keep a full-size box in your linen closet for refilling the purse pack. Or a small, square acrylic organizer, also refillable, can hold cotton balls. Another option: Go vertical with **West Elm Stacked Apothecary Jars** (\$34 to \$49, West Elm; three jars in one tower).
- **Cut down on packaging** Corral eye shadows, blushes, bronzers, pencils, and even slim makeup brushes into one compact with the **Unii Cosmetics Palette** (\$29, unii cosmetics.com). For guidance on removing makeup pans from their cases (the term for it is

“depotting”), see the company’s website. You’ll save space, be able to see all your choices at once (for example, by putting all your powder blushes in one compact), and can then tote a wide selection of choices with you.

- **Consider shower storage** Incorporate some of your beauty regimen—like putting on lotion while you’re still damp, or using a face scrub when you suds up—into your daily bathing ritual, and store those items in a shower caddy. You’ll be more likely to stick to those steps, since you’re in the shower anyway, and you’ll cut down on clutter elsewhere.



SORTING TACTIC

Stockpile lipsticks and eye shadows within sight and give yourself three months to try them. Keep what you’ll definitely use and part with the “maybes”

CURB CLEANUP

A few tricks can outsmart dust and cut down on tidying.

- **Keep wipes handy** Facial wipes are face-savers when you’re too beat even to wash your face, and they’re also sink-savers: Use them to clean up spills and to wipe down bottles. Try **Yes to Cucumbers Hypoallergenic Facial Towelettes** (\$6, drugstores).
- **Don’t forget your makeup brushes** You use them on your face every day, but how often do you actually lather them with shampoo or dish soap, rinse, and then let them dry overnight? Carmindy’s time-saving trick: Use a brush cleaner that’s quick-drying, like **Cinema Secrets Professional Brush Cleaner** (\$15, rickysnyc.com). Your brushes will be dry and ready to go in as little as five minutes. Bonus: Clean brushes allow for truer colors and smoother application.
- **Cover up** Lidded acrylic, plastic, or lacquered organizers speed up cleaning—you can simply wipe down the tops. Open countertop organizers, like lipstick holders, look pretty, but can get grimy. The takeaway: Factor cleanup time into your choices. ■