

7 Ways to Finally Organize Your Errands

Get gas for the car. Cash your paycheck at the bank. Pick up milk, bread and fruit. Drop off the dry cleaning. Get stamps and mail a package at the post office. Stop by your friend's place to drop off something that she had left at your house. Whew! Before you know it, the entire morning is gone. And then you ask yourself, "Where did the time go?" You still have to run errands, so let's explore some simple ways to get everything done, and still not get stressed out by planning your day and writing things down as soon as you remember them.

1. **As you think of errands, jot them down immediately.** Just using a simple system of using sticky notes and a pen when there are only one or two errands to run. Some people actually like to use index cards for writing their errands and shopping lists. Whatever works for you, use it.

If you have to stop at the store to pick up a greeting card, simply grab a sticky note and write something like, "Go to mall--pick up card and gift for mom's birthday." Then take that note and stick it to the inside of your front door, so you can't miss it and peel the note off the door as you leave the house or office. Or, if you're going to get the card after running a bunch of other errands, then jot the note down on your errand list--which brings us to the next tip.



2. **Make a list of errands.**

Whenever you have more than one errand to run, it is highly recommended that you make one written list of all your errands. Store or tape your errand list in a prominent place like the front door, until you're ready to run your errands so you see it before you leave.

Be sure to keep the list in your shirt pocket or purse. Using colored paper is best so you know, it's an action item, and it distinguishes it from the rest of your paper you're carrying with you. Be sure not to carry it in your hands as you may accidentally drop it or leave it on a store counter, and cross off errands as you complete them with a pen.

3. **Plan your route.**

Look at your errand list before you leave, and decide what your most efficient route will be. You don't want to waste time backtracking or going out of your way. Gas is expensive, and your time is valuable. Plot your route carefully in which the errands should be done (for instance, going in a circle). Also, pay close attention when the stores open and close and plan accordingly to those times, so you not backtracking in driving more miles than you should.

4. **Set up an errand station/launch pad**

Ever go all the way to the dry cleaner and forgot to bring the pick-up slip with you? Or, perhaps you were in the grocery store, and you forgot your shopping list at home. Setting up an errand/launch pad station near your door will help you stop forgetting these important things you need with you on your errands.

You can hang a cork board on the wall to tack up your lists or items to bring with you, or simply keep a basket with a tall handle by the door to collect items that

need to be returned, or clothes that need to go the dry cleaner, etc. You can take the entire basket with you in your car, and return it when you get home to the same spot. That way you won't have to find another container to bring all these things out to your car, and it's also good to bring, and get things from your car back into the house with the same basket.

It's important to carefully scan your errand list **before you leave** your home or office to determine what you need to complete that errand. You'll be ready to go, if everything is located in one place at your errand/launch pad station, where you go out the door to your car.

6. **Keep your car stocked**

Keep road maps, directions, extra money, rechargers for your cell phone and laptop, baby wipes (not just for babies, but for spills and when you get your hands dirty), and anything else you may need while running errands, so you can avoid making unnecessary stops along the way. All of these items can be neatly stored in a plastic container in the trunk of your car, or will go and leave him Swing Away Over the Seat " organizer at www.organize-it-online.com. I love the fold up rolling carts with the handles. So in case you need to bring the items in the house to replenish them, it's easy to roll out rather than carrying items in your hands.



7. **Bring your cell phone along with you**

Cell phones can be a must for "safety reasons." It can be a lifesaver in case for remote emergency roadside assistance, for instance, or you can keep notes in your phone to keep you from driving all the way back home or to the office to get information. You can also set timers on your phone, so in case you have an appointment for that day while running errands, you will be notified by an auditory reminder and you won't be late. Yippee!