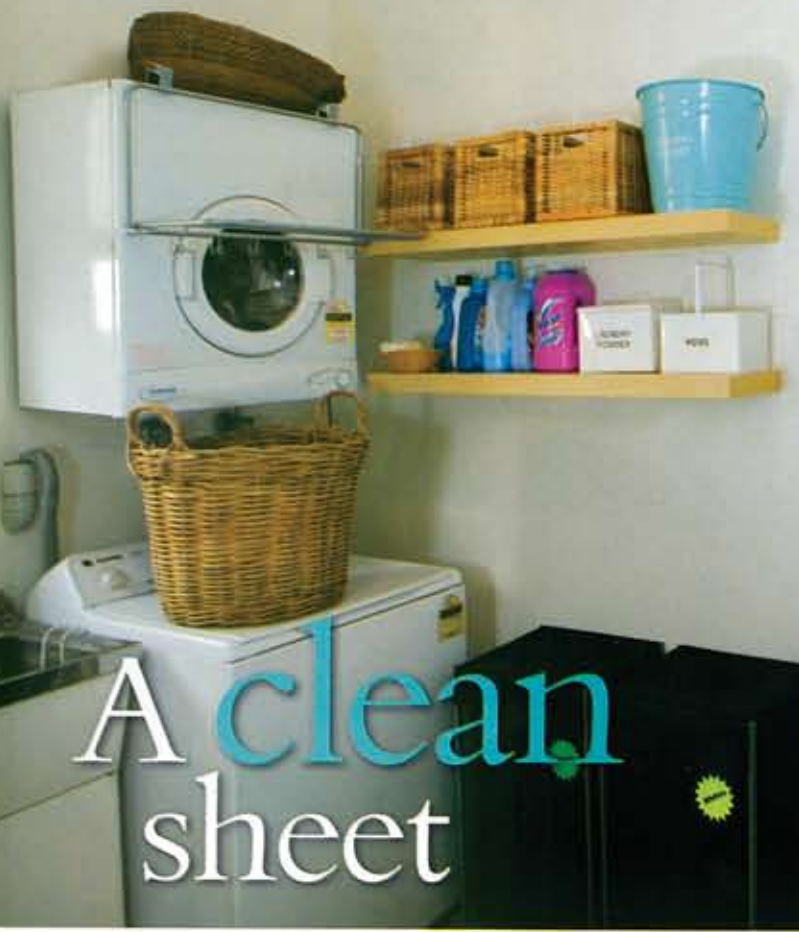


clutter buster



# A clean sheet

Organise your laundry and make a tedious chore a whole lot easier, as our expert demonstrates

Washing clothes is a tiresome task we'd all rather do without. Unfortunately, if you don't have a housekeeper to do it for you, it's a necessity of everyday living. Most laundries are constantly in use, so functionality and good-quality equipment can keep the process ticking over nicely.

With four boys under the age of eight (Sam, 8, Nick, 6, Will, 4 and Ed, 1), Lisa Wright knows all about washing clothes. After moving to their new Federation home 18 months ago, and tackling a minor makeover, their laundry had become a dumping ground for clutter and was in need of serious attention to increase its functionality and storage.

A double-cupboard linen press stored bed linen, blankets, towels, luggage, doonas, pillows, a vacuum cleaner and items normally relegated to the garage. A smaller, stand-alone cupboard blocking the backdoor access was filled with paints, tools, sports equipment and clutter. It was time to sort out the space and transform it into a functional laundry.

To say Lisa and James Wright are busy parents is an understatement, with James's busy work commitments and Lisa's plans to start her own events management business on top of their hectic family life.

The couple had prepared a list of "frustrations" when Carol Posener, *Life etc's* de-clutter expert, arrived to tackle their laundry makeover and "clothes flow", as the Wrights called it.

The one shelf near the washing machine and dryer where washing detergents were stored was too high and too long, so Lisa couldn't reach her products easily — new shelves were a must. Plus, the contents in the linen press were overflowing, so getting this area totally decluttered and organised was top of the list.

Everything was removed from the double cupboard, which reached nearly to the full 12-foot height of the ceiling. The amount of storage wasn't a problem, but Lisa explained she hadn't had time to sort it out since they'd moved into the house because her priorities were with the new baby and other children.

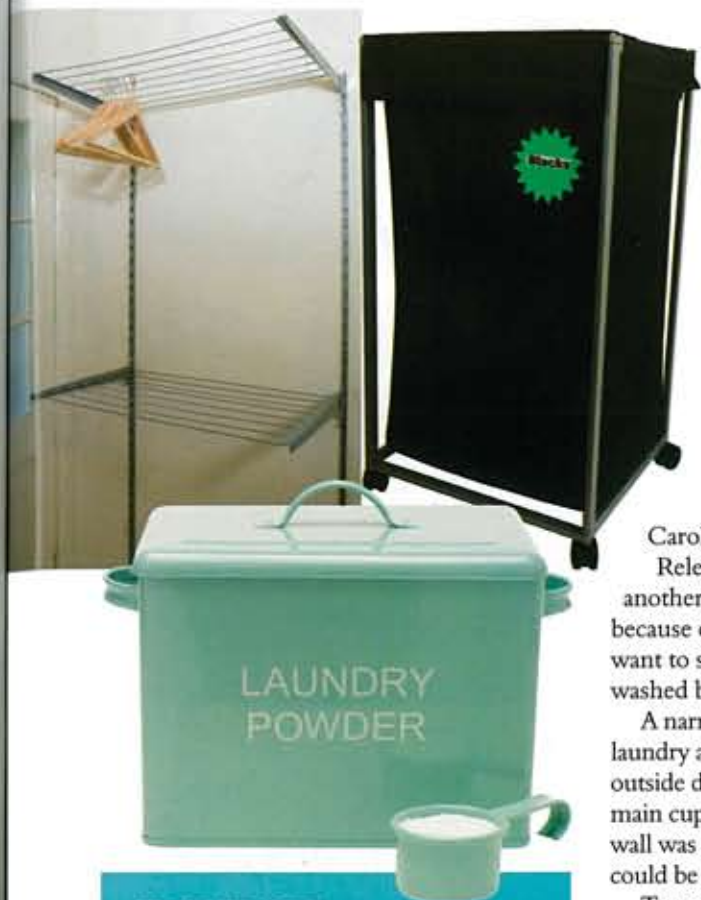


Lisa Wright in her laundry.

Carol sorted through every item and organised piles of bed linen and towels into groups of king single fitted, king single flat, queen fitted, queen flat, queen quilt covers, single quilt covers, cot sheets, towels, and blankets. Sports equipment and tools were moved to the garage. Bed and pillow protectors were stored in zippered plastic bags to protect them from dust and the environment.

Sorting clothes ready for washing was a big issue in this household. Washing needs to be kept up to date each day and if sorting could be made easier, this would save Lisa

Wall shelves and fold-away drying racks are great space savers.



Clockwise from left: IKEA Antonius drying racks; IKEA Antonius laundry bag and stand with Officeworks fluoro star; Howards Storage World laundry powder tin.

from both parents to encourage the children into their new routine, but the effort will be worth it.

"Children can learn to put things away into storage containers from as young as 13 months, so it's important to instil organising routines from an early age,"

Carol says.

Relegating the vacuum cleaner to another area of the home was a must because of dustmite health issues. "You don't want to store a vacuum cleaner near freshly washed bed linen," Carol says.

A narrow cupboard was moved out of the laundry as it had been blocking access to the outside door and was not needed now the main cupboard storage was sorted out. This wall was freed up for two drying racks that could be folded away when not in use.

Two wider shelves were installed near the washing machine and dryer and were positioned lower on the wall so Lisa could now reach everything. A new peg bin, washing powder bin and soaking bucket was purchased to add a little style to the space.

"There are only so many items needed to make the laundry functional and if everything has a place, the laundry process should flow easily," Carol says. "Organising sheets onto different shelves will save time and labelling shelves will eliminate confusion. Folding towels into three and stacking them neatly saves enormous amounts of space and ensures the linen press will always look organised."

A caddy for the iron and ironing board was installed to mount these bulky items behind the door and the linen press shelves were labelled so that size and style of sheets could be allocated and quickly retrieved in the future.

The clutter under the laundry sinks was sorted into categories and storage bins and baskets now stored craft materials, laundry detergents and fabric softener, shoe cleaners, light globes and sunscreen bottles, and were moved to the top shelf above washing detergents for easy access. A new bamboo blind was installed and Lisa was very happy with her newly organised laundry.

"Not only does it look great but now it's functional and I can spend more time on my new business."

### WHAT WE USED

- IKEA: Lack wall shelves in birch, \$49, Antonius drying racks, \$19, Antonius wall upright brackets, \$9, Antonius laundry bag, \$7.95, Antonius laundry stand in steel, \$9, Antonius laundry castor wheels, \$5 for pack of 4. [www.ikea.com.au](http://www.ikea.com.au)
- Howards Storage World: White peg bin, \$19.95, white laundry powder bin, \$26.95, blue laundry soaking bucket, \$29.95. [www.hsw.com.au](http://www.hsw.com.au)
- Closetmaid: Ironing caddy, \$14.50. Available from Ewen's Hardware Ph: 02 9969 5102
- OfficeWorks: Fluoro Star shapes, \$6.98 for pack of 25. [www.officeworks.com.au](http://www.officeworks.com.au)
- Tek's Gifts & Things: Bamboo roll-up blind, \$9.99 Ph: Randwick store 02 9314 5092

time. But how do you enlist four small boys to help Mum sort the washing?

The solution was to install four laundry baskets and label them 1. Whites, 2. Blacks, 3. Colours, 4. Linens & Towels. Bright fluorescent labels were attached to each laundry bin in different colours to encourage the children to help sort their clothes in advance and to make it fun for them.

Carol explained to the boys that it would help Mum if everyone put their dirty clothes in the appropriate baskets in the future. This new habit will need ongoing reminders

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JULIE HOWARD