

FREE PRINTABLE • TIDBITANDCO.COM

The Pantry Reset Checklist

A pantry reset that survives past week one. Work one shelf at a time, in this order. The whole thing takes about ninety minutes, or fifteen if you do the first three steps on one shelf and stop there.

1 Clear one shelf, not the whole pantry • 10 MIN

Emptying everything at once is how a reset turns into a three-day project living on the kitchen floor. One shelf, start to finish, then the next one.

2 Toss on sight • 10 MIN

Expired, stale, opened over a year ago, and the specialty ingredient bought for one recipe you never made again. Stack duplicates together so you can see that you own four bottles of cumin.

3 Wipe the shelf while it is empty • 5 MIN

Crumbs and sticky rings are why a pantry smells like a pantry. This shelf will not be empty again for a long time.

4 Sort into zones, not categories • 15 MIN

Group by when you reach for something, not by what it technically is. Breakfast, snacks, baking, dinner starches, cans, oils and vinegars, overflow. A zone that matches your actual morning beats a shelf that photographs well.

5 Put each zone where your hands already go • 10 MIN

Eye level for daily. Waist to eye for weekly. Top shelf and floor for bulk and rarely. Put the kids' snacks somewhere the kids can reach, or you are the snack dispenser forever.

6 Contain only what actually spills • 20 MIN

Flour, sugar, rice, pasta, cereal, loose snack packets. Anything already in a sealed box or can does not need a second container around it. Decanting the entire pantry is how a reset gets expensive and then gets abandoned.

7 Label anything you cannot identify by sight • 10 MIN

Flour, powdered sugar and cornstarch are the same white powder at six in the morning. Add the date to anything you decanted, because the original expiry went in the bin with the bag.

8 Set one “use first” basket • 5 MIN

At eye level, holding whatever expires soonest. This is the one step that keeps the reset alive, because it gives everything odd a place to go instead of drifting to the back.

The fifteen-minute version

Do steps 1, 2 and 3 on a single shelf, then stop. One clean, sorted shelf tends to pull the rest along behind it over the next week.

An entire pantry emptied onto the counter at nine at night does the opposite.

The seven zones

- Breakfast • cereal, oats, coffee, tea
- Snacks • split adult and kid height
- Baking • flour, sugars, leaveners
- Dinner starches • pasta, rice, grains
- Cans • tomatoes, beans, broth
- Oils, vinegars and condiments
- Bulk and overflow • top and floor

CHECK BEFORE YOU SHOP

Pantry Inventory

Tape this inside the pantry door. Tick it on the way past, not on shopping day, and you stop buying a fourth jar of something you already own.

COMMON STAPLES

ITEM	HAVE	LOW	OUT
All-purpose flour			
Granulated sugar			
Brown sugar			
Baking powder			
Baking soda			
Salt			
Olive oil			
Neutral cooking oil			
Vinegar			
Rice			
Pasta			
Canned tomatoes			
Canned beans			
Stock or broth			
Peanut butter			
Cereal			
Oats			
Coffee or tea			
Honey or syrup			
Spices to restock			

YOURS

USE FIRST • WHAT EXPIRES SOONEST