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## **Homeowners improve their garage storage and organization**

### **Knowing your storage needs is the key to making a cluttered garage functional again.**

The Orange County Register

If you are looking to get your garage organized, you may wonder: Why spend money on specialty garage organizers? Wouldn't used kitchen cabinets and some cheap closet organizers do the trick?

Trouble is, many of the items found in a garage are much heavier than those stored inside your house. Lightweight closet shelving was never meant to hold full gallon cans of paint or car batteries.

Some of you have to find a place to put away even larger items, such as vehicle wheels or tires and garden tools. Add to this such seasonal things as Christmas decorations, and you have a storage situation that is usually haphazard and inefficient. That's where companies like Garage Envy can help.

Calvin Yap of Laguna Niguel had a disorganized garage for many years. After he moved into his home in 1990, Yap and his family were storing many things in their three-car garage that ended up on the floor, in the way and sometimes forgotten.

"When we went to clean out the garage, there were things that we hadn't seen or used for years," he said. "That's one benefit of finally getting organized; you get rid of the stuff you don't need anyway."

But Yap found he needed help getting organized.

"I wanted a space for my treadmill and weights," he said, "as well as a place to store large kitchen pots that were not used frequently."

"But I also just had to get things organized in my garage. It was getting fat from all the things we've put in there over the years."

So Yap called Garage Envy, which is based in Pasadena but also serves Orange County homeowners. It not only organizes garages but also makes or sells a number of items just for a garage. Among these are aluminum-reinforced shelving for heavy items, modular wall systems, custom cabinets, granite surfaces especially made to be the tops of workbenches and decorative but practical industrial floor coatings.

The first thing Garage Envy did was to send a design consultant to Yap's home. The designer listened to all the things that Yap needed done and suggested a number of the company's products.

Of course, Garage Envy isn't the only garage-organizing company around. Among products offered by Prism Designs and Services of Anaheim Hills are half-inch-thick interlocking cabinet backs. They help keep out dust and insects better than standard cabinets.

Prism also offers 1-inch-thick cabinet tops, bottoms and adjustable shelves that will withstand heavy loads without bending.

If you're at Sears, Lowe's or The Great Indoors, you might come across garage organization products from Gladiator GarageWorks. Its products incorporate features such as tread-plated steel construction, heavy-duty casters and durable maple tops for workbenches.

But don't just rush out and start buying shelves.

"If I could recommend one thing to people who want to do this, take your time to plan," Yap said. "If you try to hurry it or don't give it much thought, you're going to get less of what you really need or want done."

The plan Yap and the design consultant created included such features as a modular wall system. It's like having a giant pegboard storage wall system that permits future changing of storage paraphernalia, such as special hooks and shelving, as needs change.

The basis of Garage Envy's system, the pegboard, is a grooved plastic surface that actually increases the weight capacity of garage walls, said Jaime Dietenhofer, company co-owner. This UV- and fire-resistant surface can accommodate the company's specially reinforced cabinets, he added.

Heavy-duty shelving and cabinetry and what Garage Envy refers to as a "liquid granite" floor resurfacing were among other items Yap had installed.

"Redoing the garage floor is probably the most popular thing we do," Dietenhofer said.

What did it cost Yap?

"About \$12,000," he replied. "That's a lot of money to get your garage in shape, but when you think about how the garage is usually at the front of the house, when you think about what people spend to remodel, then it makes a lot of sense as an investment."

## **RESOURCES**

- Garage Envy, 1260 Lincoln Ave., Suite 1000, Pasadena, 888-249-1766
- Gladiator GarageWorks, [www.gladiatorgw.com](http://www.gladiatorgw.com)
- Prism Design Services, 714-777-9266

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