



Photo by Kate Max Stock

SEPTEMBER 2020: Organizing for Autumn

The transition from summer to fall is my favorite time of year. I love a harvest summer, sea blues and greens give way to rust and terracotta, deep purple and dusty rose, and marigold and magnolia green.

I am NOT a fan of sharing porch pumpkins in August. That's right, I said it! Don't throw your cornhusk at me. I reject the Cozy Snuggles Movement starting too soon. Oh I get it, our favorite design influencers are fabulous at sharing seasonal inspirations ahead of the calendar. Maybe it is because I am a Mermaid and summer is forever or because my birthday is late August, but the Cozy Snuggles need to show a little respect to the dog days and naked nights.

It is just not influencers, it's those darn hurricanes and the dangerous weather that follows them around. They force us to move in our outdoor furniture, sneak away the summer palette, and batten down the garden. We are now in Fall mode instead of enjoying the last days of August and Labor Day weekend.

Maybe it's because we truly want and need 2020 to end and start anew, so let's just rush it along and show it the door. We are still working at home, ordering our groceries online, settling our children back into their virtual desks, scheduling impossible routines, and looking at what is ahead with little to get ahead.

Virginia's summer transformed our yards into super jungles, the thickest grass, the highest dew points, and the greenest lawns. We are confused to whether we can start packing in the garden, clearing out the burned and leggy, or continue to let it go until when, mid-October? Fresh tomatoes and basil for Thanksgiving?

In the midst of the blurred and blistering world, how do we get a handle on organizing for autumn without rushing towards Christmas? We go back to what anchors us and the spaces that empower it. What anchors us:

1. Provide inspired learning spaces for our kids, plenty of open and organized space for curiosity, processing, reflection, and creativity - hang a picture of your teacher and school friends in fun frames or on a [corkboard](#) to remind them that no matter where their classroom is, important learning and discovering is happening together.
2. Refresh the work at home spaces: clear the clutter, file away summer, and add some green for health and wealth - build a terrarium at Kilmarnock's [GROW NNK](#) and give it a home on your desk.
3. Organize the pumpkin spice goodies and stage them in your pantry until you are good and ready for cozy snuggles, plaid shirts, big blankets, and bonfires. Support a local artist by picking up a Pumpkin Souffle candle from [Northern Neck Candle Company](#).
4. Flip your closet and stage your heavier shorts and lightweight long sleeves ahead of your fleece jackets and winter boots. The change in color palette will ease you into this new season. Make sure to keep a favorite summer piece or two to help with the transition. Donate what does not fit or feel good anymore. Support your local small businesses and pick up a comfy new piece or two at Urbanna's [Low Tide](#) and other favorite shops.
5. Clean out your garage / shed and make room for all the summer gear, tomato gauge and watercraft, even though you are not yet ready to move them in. It will be a lot easier when you are ready. Donate to your favorite charities and local relief organizations. The [Cryer Center](#) in Harmony Grove is a great place to donate used and working air conditioners for seniors and they have monthly yard sales that benefit the work of Hands Across Middlesex.
6. Clean out and organize your bathroom. Toss the sunscreen that is about to expire, inventory your supplies, and refresh your vanity with a beautiful soap. We are in pursuit of NNK's [Bird Song Soaps](#)' Breakfast Bar soap that smells like coffee and banana bread.

7. Plan an indoor project that will give a space an instant hug. It may be painting a room, rearranging a bookshelf, or tiling a mudroom. Stop in Kilmarnock's [Tile Projects](#) and pick out a fresh design that will carry you into quiet late-autumn days.

8. Use your five senses to slowly fall into autumn. Organizing is all about touch and sight; don't neglect hearing, smell, and taste. Pre-order the new [Chris Stapleton album](#) and pick-up [Good Luck Cellars'](#) Inheritance and support their tornado damage recovery. Head over to Dug in Farms, Old Farm Truck, Land and Sea Farm Market, and Garners Produce for the latest seasonal veggies.

Remember to wear white jeans and the shirt with the pineapples on it one more time before you pack them up for the season. Restore your spirit in the warm rays of the harvest sun and take the time to reset and refresh your routines.

NOTE: Mermaid is not a paid sponsor for any businesses and organizations listed above.