



# Quick Guide to an Organized Workplace

Simple tricks and tools to transform your facility

# Contents

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Why Bother to Organize?
- 3 What Spaces Need to Be Organized?
- 4 The Toolbox
- 5 The Workbench
- 6 Work Cells
- 7 Shelves & Storage Areas
- 8 Walkways
- 9 The Office
- 10 Conclusion
- 11 Products

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## **In a busy workplace, things can get messy.**

**Many businesses have goals to keep their facilities organized, but may not have specific methods for doing so.**

When there's not a plan in place for organization or visual cues reminding people of how the workplace should look, it's easy for materials, equipment, products, and tools to get lost.

## **Workplace organization doesn't have to be complicated, though.**

You might have heard of philosophies or methodologies for organization, but what you really need is a plan and some practical tools to make the workplace look the way you want it to.

## Why bother to organize?

Getting organized might sound like a hassle, but it makes good business sense to keep things in order.

### Consider the following:



When tools or materials aren't organized, people **waste time** trying to find them or wondering where they belong.



When a space is messy, clutter can **get in the way** of people moving efficiently through the workspace.



When products aren't organized, you **can't get items to customers** as quickly as possible.



When the workplace looks messy, workers are **less likely to take ownership** of maintaining the space. Visitors might think the facility isn't in great shape.

On the other hand, an organized workplace can inspire confidence in employees, customers, and other people who enter the facility.

**Ultimately, having an organized workplace can help your business' bottom line by creating a more functional, better-looking facility that allows people to do their jobs more efficiently.**

## What spaces need to be organized?

The spaces you should focus on organizing obviously depend on your facility. It's worth starting, though, with the spaces people spend the most time in and need to visit often. That isn't to say your out-of-the-way supply closet should be left a mess, but to start out, consider what's most important.

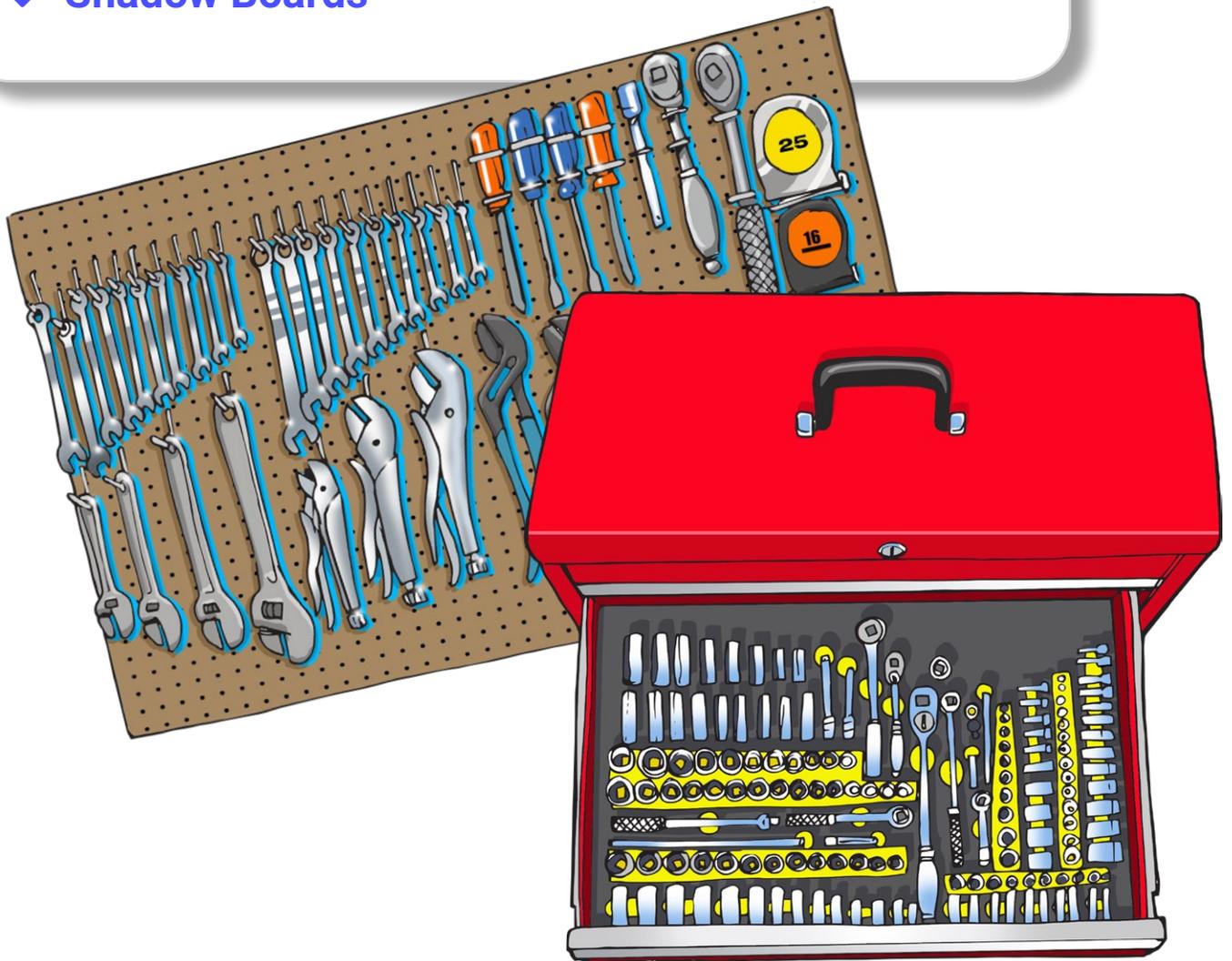
Areas that will benefit from organizational techniques include: **toolboxes, workbenches, work cells, shelves, walkways, and offices**. Entire warehouses or production areas will benefit when you clean up these smaller spaces.

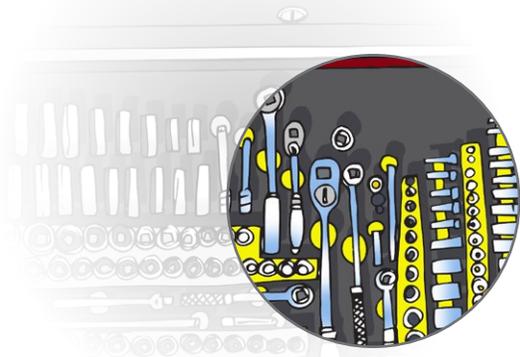
# The Toolbox

Let's start small. Tools are usually stored in toolboxes, in tool chests, or on pegboards. Those are all great places to keep tools if you can keep them organized.

## Tools to help with organization

- ✓ **Foam Tool Organizers**
- ✓ **Shadow Boards**





## Foam Tool Organizers

Foam tool organizers consist of two sheets of closed-cell foam in contrasting colors. You trace the tools on the top layer, cut them out, and place this layer of foam in the drawer on top of the bottom layer. Now you can see when a tool isn't where it belongs because the bottom color shows through.



## Shadow Boards

Shadow boards function like foam tool organizers. Trace the outline of tools on a colored film or paper with a sticky backing. Then stick these outlines to your pegboard where your tools will go.

**These simple changes to storage spaces you already have can:**

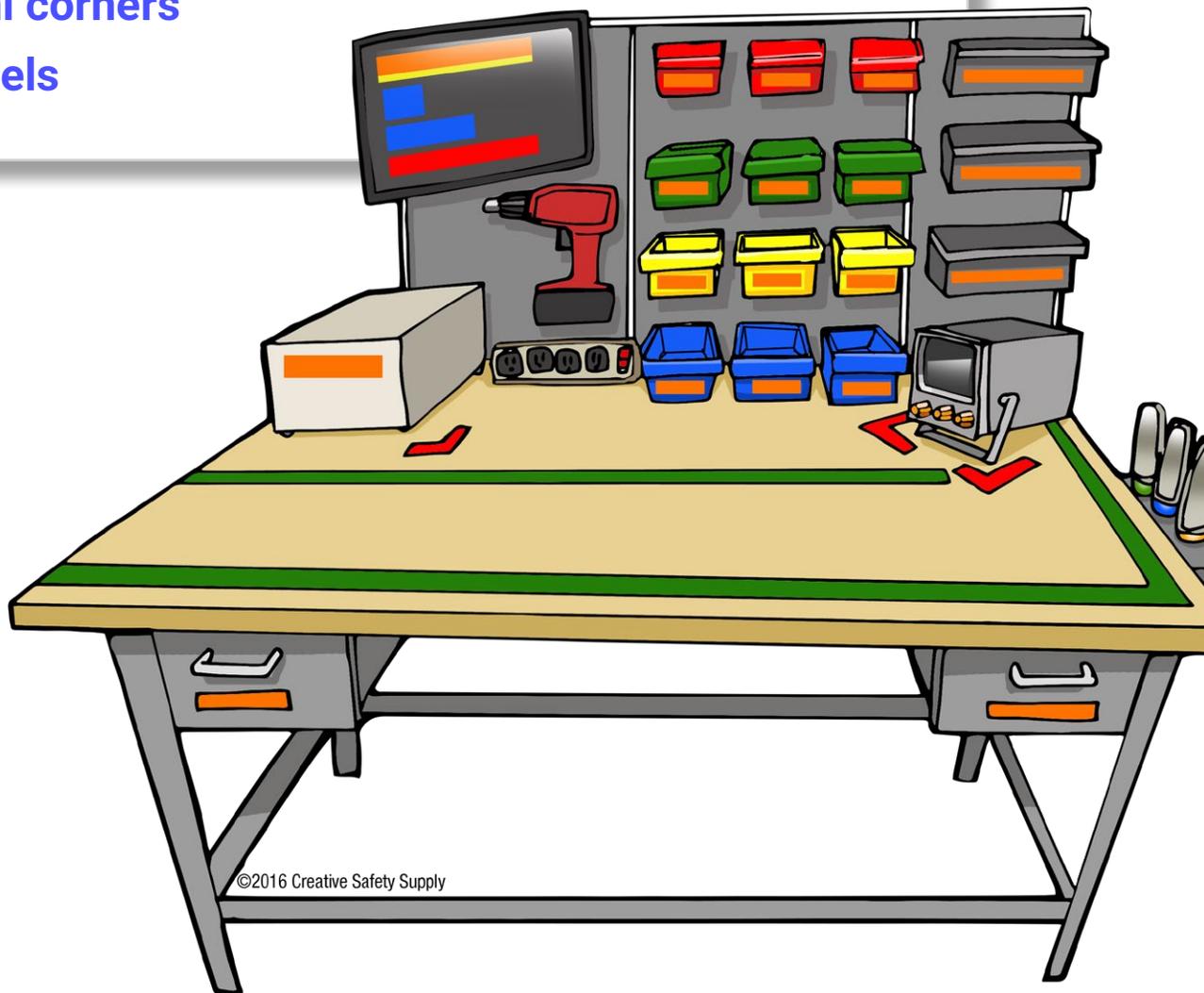
- ✔ Prevent tools from getting lost
- ✔ Protect tools from damage
- ✔ Speed up work, since people won't waste time searching for what they need

# The Workbench

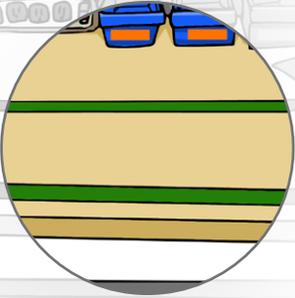
Workbenches or workstations may be used by one person or many people. Either way, clearly marking parts of the workspace to identify what each area is for will be helpful.

## Tools to help with organization

- ✓ 5S Tape
- ✓ Mini corners
- ✓ Labels



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## 5S Tape

5S tape is similar to electrical tape. It's stronger and more durable than masking tape or other tapes commonly used in the workplace. This tape can be used to outline the locations of items such as boxes, bins, stacks, piles, etc.



## Labels

If the function of a space is unclear, a descriptive label can simplify communication. For example, labels might say things like "inbox," "outbox," "finished product," or anything else relevant to the workstation.



## Mini corners

Mini corners are technically a type of floor marking shape, but because of their small size they work well for work surfaces, too. Place them around the edges of the space you need to outline.

### Adding these simple markings can:

- ✔ Reduce clutter
- ✔ Prevent lost items
- ✔ Increase efficiency via color-coding
- ✔ Communicate an object's purpose
- ✔ Help transition a task from one person to another or one shift to another

## Work Cells

In addition to marking the tops of workstations to help with organization, using marking tools to organize an entire work cell or area is also effective. Clear visual cues instruct people about how to behave in an area.

### Tools to help with organization in work cells

- ✓ Floor Markings
- ✓ Floor & Wall Signs
- ✓ Labels



## Floor Markings



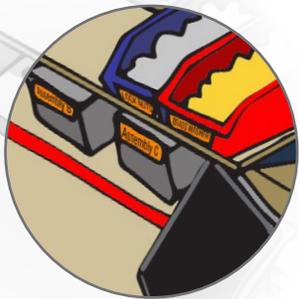
Floor tape and floor shapes are made from durable vinyl and come in many colors. You can use them to outline parts of a work cell or to mark where certain items belong. For example, you might mark the edges around a bin so that bin always stays in place.

## Floor and Wall Signs



A floor or wall sign can quickly get a message across. For example, a sign can be placed on the floor to clearly indicate the correct storage area for a cart, trash can, or other movable objects.

## Labels



Whenever a space needs to be clearly marked with its purpose, labels work well. They can include just text, icons, various colors, and whatever else you need.

### Adding these visual cues can:

- ✔ Keep items where they belong
- ✔ Divide space so people know where to go
- ✔ Make spaces look clean and orderly
- ✔ Help people perform tasks more easily

# Shelves & Storage Areas

Storage areas and shelves can easily get messy, especially if people don't interact with them all the time. Clear signs and labels play a key role in keeping these areas clean.

## Items to help with organization in storage areas

- ✓ Labels
- ✓ Signs
- ✓ Tape





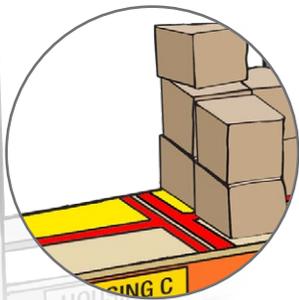
## Labels

The best way to keep shelves organized is to label what goes on them. These labels can just contain text or they can have barcodes, if that's useful for your business.



## Signs

If you're dealing with rows of shelves, signs on the floor or overhead can tell people what each row contains.



## Tape

To keep items from spilling out of their assigned spaces, you can put colored tape on shelves to outline that space. Some businesses also use certain colors of tape on shelves to indicate when supplies are getting low and more should be ordered. The tape is placed under the supplies themselves, and once enough supplies have been used, you can see the tape and tell it's time to take action.

### Using visuals like these in storage areas can:

- ✔ Help people find what they're looking for quickly
- ✔ Prevent clutter
- ✔ Assist with stocking and reordering so supplies don't get too low



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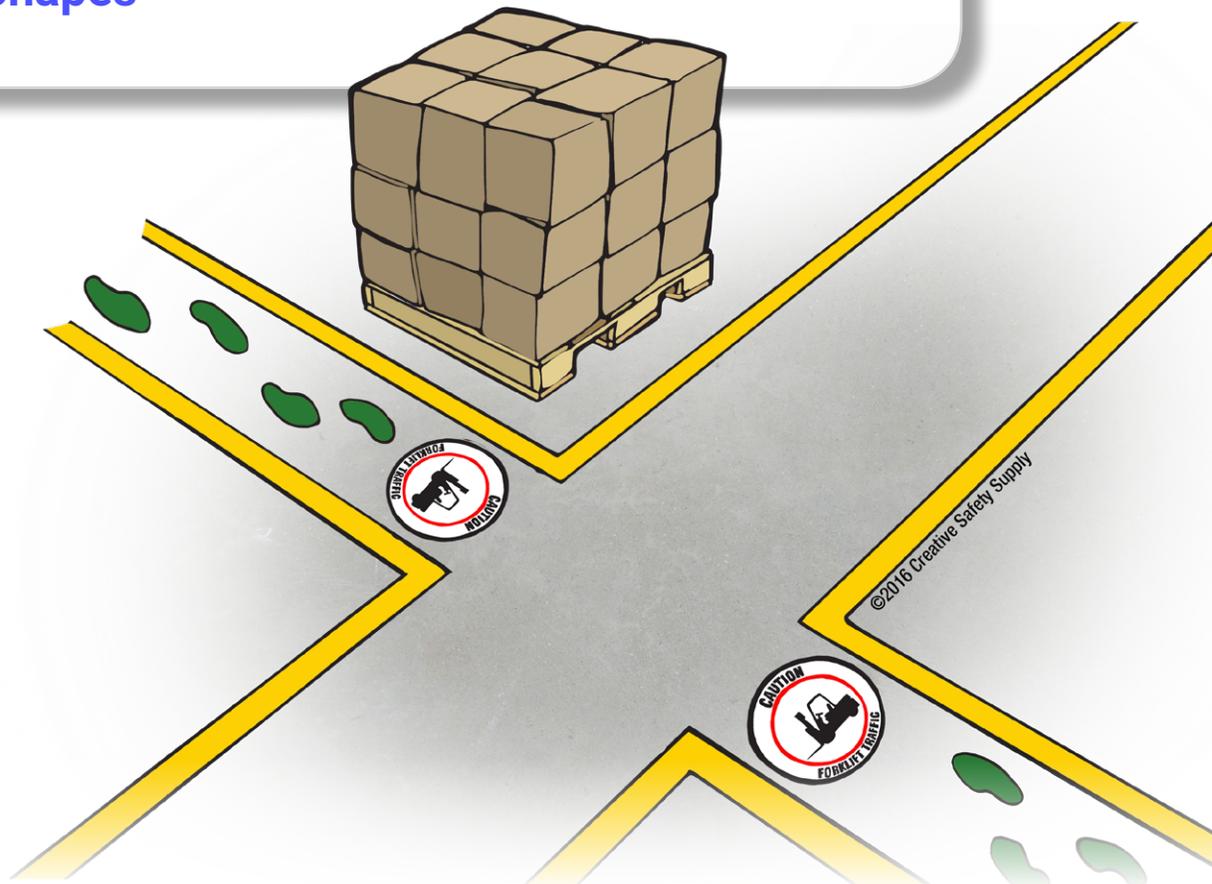
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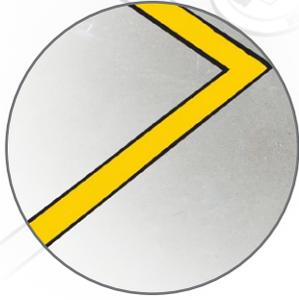
# Walkways

Walkways may not seem like places that could get messy, but it's important that they don't become cluttered. OSHA requires that businesses keep walkways and emergency exits clear. OSHA also recommends that aisles are 3 feet wider than the widest equipment that will need to move through them.

The best tools for marking walkways are

- ✓ Floor Marking Tapes
- ✓ Floor Shapes





## Floor Marking Tape

Floor marking tape can mark the edges of a walkway. Yellow is commonly used to mark aisles, but you can use any color or pattern of tape you want. It's best to choose noticeable colors or to use colors that make sense with your facility's color code, if it has one.



## Floor Shapes

Footprint stickers and other shapes are usually made from the same material as floor tape. They can be used to highlight pedestrian areas and point people in the direction they need to go.

### Visuals that mark walkways can:

- ✔ Keep clutter out of walkways
- ✔ Help people get where they need to go more quickly
- ✔ Prevent accidents such as collisions between pedestrians and forklifts
- ✔ Make it easier to understand the space
- ✔ Make the facility look cleaner and more professional

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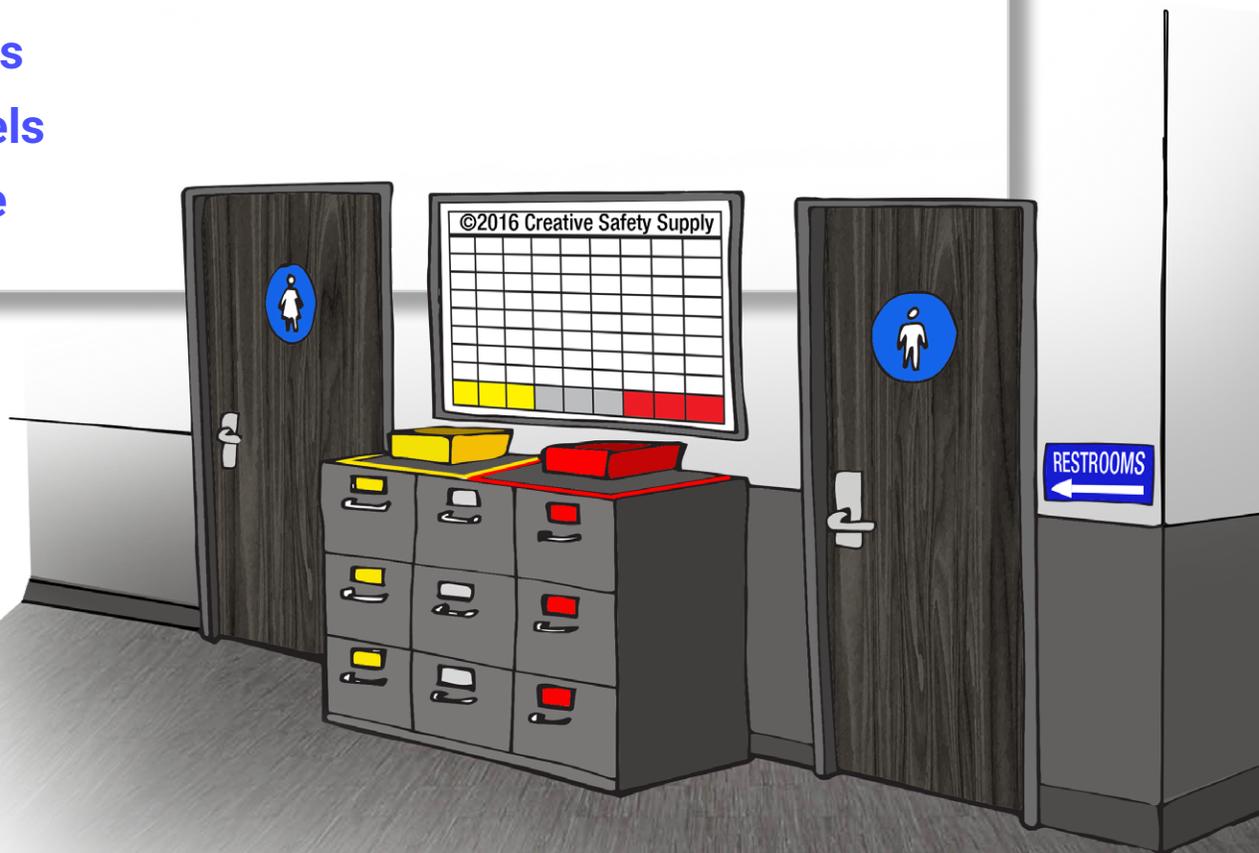
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# The Office

Many of the visual tools discussed in this guide can be transferred to an office setting. If you have an area at your business that receives customers, visuals can help those people find what they need and make your business look good, too.

## Tools to use in the office

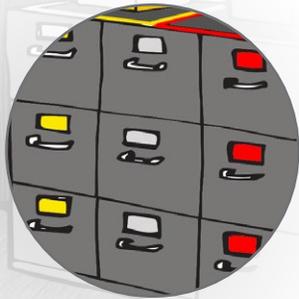
- ✓ Signs
- ✓ Labels
- ✓ Tape





## Signs

You can use signs for anything you need to communicate to employees or visitors. Common signs point people to restrooms, exits, common areas, storage areas, etc.



## Labels

Labels can be used on drawers, filing cabinets, desktops, and any other location where things are stored.



## Tape

Tape can break up space on desktops, on counters, and even on floors if you have aisles you need to keep clear.

### These simple tools help:

- ✔ Get people the information they need
- ✔ Improve the appearance of the office
- ✔ Prevent lost items or other confusion

# Conclusion

So why should you use all these visual cues and markings for organization?

## Because people respond to visuals.

They're an easy way to communicate **fast**. And they're an effective way to make organization **systematic** and **clear**, instead of a vague idea about de-cluttering. When people can see taped lines, signs, or tool outlines, they can quickly understand what they need to do.

## **Start organizing your facility by assessing your space, deciding where to focus your efforts, and getting tools to help you.**

Remember to consider the tasks people perform within a space before organizing. That can help you determine where things should be placed and how they should be marked. Once you have everything set up the way you want, you can work on making your visual organization system a part of everyone's workday.

# Products

Learn more about some of the products featured in this guide:

## **Floor Marking Products**

[www.creativesafetysupply.com/floor-marking-tapes](http://www.creativesafetysupply.com/floor-marking-tapes)

## **SafetyTac® Floor Tapes**

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## **5S Tape™**

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## **Tool Organization Foam Products**

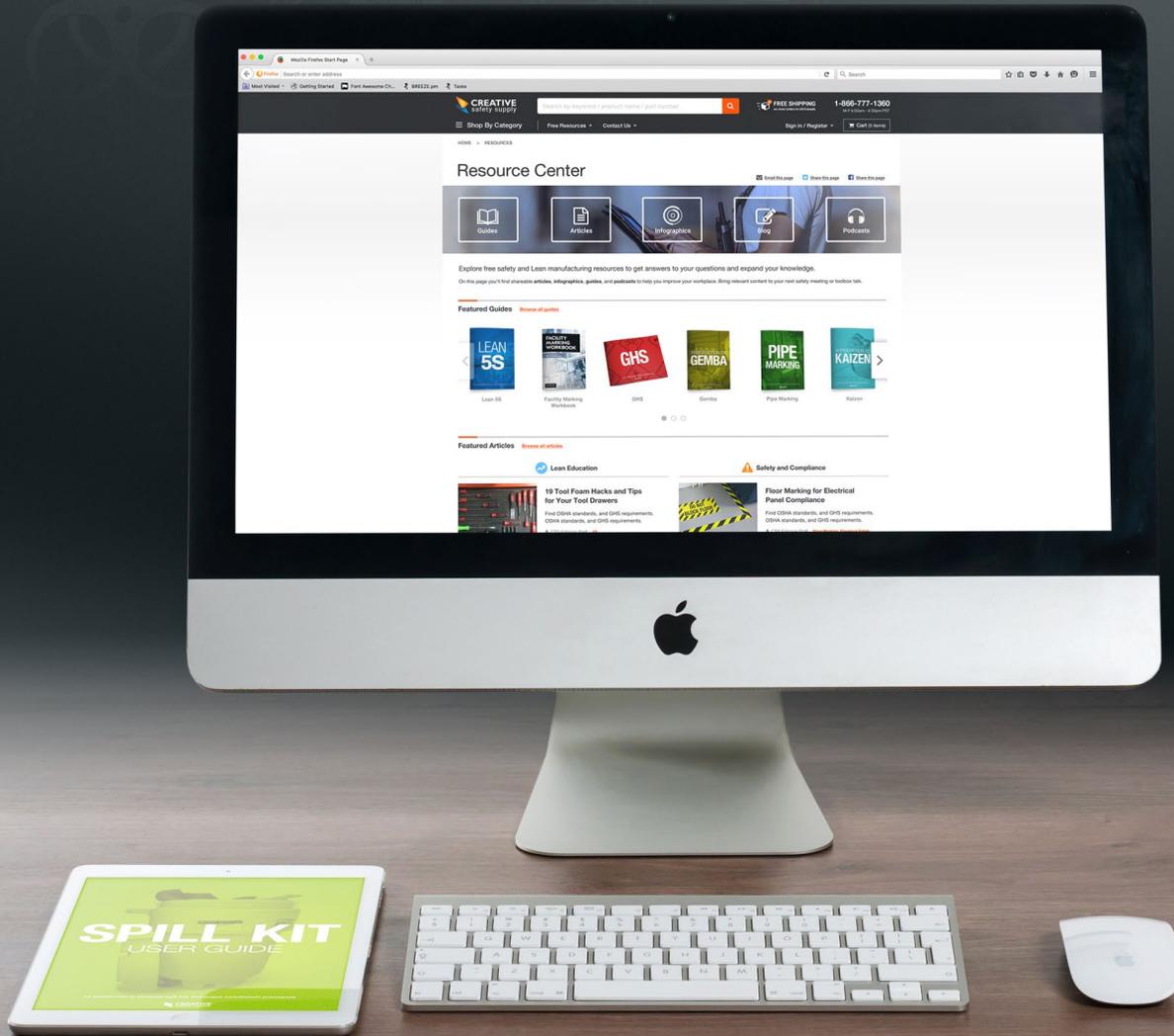
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## **Shadow Boards**

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