SUGGESTED LABELS FOR PAPER & DIGITAL FILES

BANK NAME: BUSINESS

Checking
Savings
Money Market
Overdraft

BANK NAME: PERSONAL

Checking
Savings
Money Market
Overdraft

BANK NAME: INVESTMENTS

Brokerage 1
Brokerage 2

BANK NAME: RETIREMENT

Account 1
Account 2

BOARD SERVICE: ENTITY NAME (*one folder per board*)

Articles of Incorporation
Bylaws
Insurance: Board, Liability, Etc.
Correspondence
Projects
Budgets

BUSINESS NAME

Articles of Incorporation
Bylaws
Contracts
Business Plan
Budget
Correspondence

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Project/Product 1
Project/Product 2

COMPUTER/ELECTRONICS

Receipts
Service Records

CORRESPONDENCE

Personal
Professional

CREATIVE PROJECT: NAME (*one folder per project*)

CREDIT CARDS

Bank 1
Bank 2

EDUCATION

CV/RESUME: Current

Historic, including transcripts

EMPLOYEES/STAFF

Staff 1:
Resume/Application
Contract
Reviews
Financial

EXPENSES: BUSINESS

Bank Charges
Business Development
Charitable Contributions
Dues & Fees
Education
Equipment
Events
Gifts Given
Janitorial
Legal & Professional Fees
Meals & Entertainment
Moving
Office Supplies
Online
Payroll Expenses
Postage & Shipping
Printing
Rent/Mortgage
Research
Subcontract Labor
Telephone
Travel
Vehicle(s)

INSURANCE

Auto/MC/RV/Boat
Home Owners/Renters
Appraisals
Schedules of valuables

IMPORTANT DOCS

Family Member 1:
Birth Certificate
Social Security Card
Important Account Numbers
Wedding/Divorce
Death Certificate

INSURANCE: Health

Family Member 1:
Policy & Bills, Correspondence
EOBs

MEDICAL RECORDS

Family Member 1:
Test results
Correspondence/Recommendations

ONLINE SERVICES

Broadband/Dialup
Web Hosting
Domain Registration

REAL ESTATE ADDRESS: (one folder per address)

Purchase/Lease
Financing
Coop/Condo/POA
Correspondence
House Rules/Staff/Holiday Gift Schedule

REAL ESTATE ADDRESS: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Structural
Plumbing
Electric
Flooring
Appliances
Cabinetry
Roof
Foundation
Driveway
Garden
Hardscape
Landscape

RECIEPTS

Major Purchases
Gifts

ROYALTY STATEMENTS

SOCIAL CLUBS

Club 1
Club 2

TAXES: FY YEAR

1099/W-2
Financial Reports
Charitable Receipts
Tax Returns

TELEPHONE

Landline
VoIP
Wireless/Mobile 1

TRAVEL: LOCATION

Individual folder for any location you'll either return to or did significant research on.

UTILITIES

Gas/Electric/Oil
Sewer & H2O
Cable/Satellite TV

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES: ENTITY NAME

WARRANTIES/OWNER'S MANUALS (can also be stored in an accordion folder for easy access)

One goal of this guide is to unify the names of all your files and folders.

Consistency in how you name files AND making sure everyone who uses the files knows the system and uses the system will save you time and money searching or recreating lost or misplaced documents.

A good filing system should be simple enough that you'll actually use it and specific enough that you can find anything in 30 seconds or less.

Remember that vague is not your friend, then begin with categories. Then subcategories. Then documents.

Ideally, each category will be assigned its own drawer. Each subcategory will have its own folder within that drawer.

Finally, the documents within each folder are there because they belong to that particular subcategory—they are related by topic.

Clearly label your drawers.   Then create a series of folders that are also clearly labeled. Then put the corresponding documents into those folders in chronological order, with the oldest documents in the back and the most recent documents in the front of each folder.

Folders within each drawer are arranged in alphabetical order. The more drawers you have, the farther you can isolate certain kinds of documents from one another. Here's a generic illustration of a filing cabinet's structure:

<div align="center">

DRAWER (Category)
FOLDER (Subcategory)
Document (Oldest)
Document
Document (Newest)

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NOTE: Sentimental objects/papers, etc. need not be stored in files or a file cabinet. Create a container and establish a home for each member of the household's sentimental objects and label it such. This will be where those items all live. Photos should typically live with other photos, even if they have sentimental value.