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Pendaflex® PileSmart™ Guide to Desktop Organization
For Office and Home Office

FROM TO DO... TO DONE

Pendaflex

Your guide to making working papers easier to work with.

Everyone piles. Admit it, so do you.

Since childhood, we've all piled. One of your earliest memories is probably that of piling blocks. As you got older, you piled some more...fallen leaves, newspapers, you name it.

Piling is something we're all prone to do and the urge to pile carries over to paperwork, both at our company offices and in our home offices.

Piling smarter can make a big difference.

A recent survey found that 48% of people refer to themselves as paperwork "pilers" – and stacking documents is their primary way of managing them. Problem is, most people create disorganized piles of paper on their desktops, making it difficult to find things while leaving little or no room to work efficiently.

Not to worry though. You can still pile, and, stay organized. The key? Going about it in a smarter way.

What you should know, from the people who know best.

Pendaflex®, world leaders in intelligent filing solutions and the brand that has helped millions of people go from to do...to done, is proud to present the Pendaflex® PileSmart™ Guide to Desktop Organization.

On the following pages, you'll get answers to many questions about paperwork piling. You'll also receive timesaving tips, solutions and valuable information, including:

- The importance of keeping piles neat
- How to make piling work to your best advantage
- Why labeling your files clearly is imperative
- How to use color-coding to differentiate piled files
- Piling mistakes you should always avoid
- Unique products that can help you easily manage the ever-growing piles on your desk
- And much more!

The Pendaflex® PileSmart™ Guide to Desktop Organization has been compiled and written by our own organizing experts. And what better people to show you the very best ways to pile your files most effectively? After all, Pendaflex® is the number-one brand in filing and organizing, the product line more people trust than any other. We actually invented the world's first hanging folders...along with many other "firsts" such as color hanging folders and interior folders. Now, we're the first to create an assortment of filing products specifically designed to make life easier for pilers: the innovative Pendaflex® PileSmart™ line!

So read on. And refer back often. The few minutes you spend reviewing this guide will save you hours each week that you might otherwise waste searching for documents among your desktop piles.

FROM TO DO... TO DONE

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Arrange, Manage, Find.
Have a method for the madness.

Why keeping piles organized is important.

If you're like most people who work in a hectic office, dozens of papers enter your personal workspace daily, hundreds per week. And you may think that your approach to piling papers on your desk is a pretty good one. Maybe that approach actually works for you...at least some of the time. But consider this scenario: your boss calls, he's frantic, and he needs this week's status report in 30 seconds because his boss is on the phone waiting for an update. Could you find the report that fast? You know it's there, buried somewhere in the "left pile" on the far corner of your desk. But where?

Arranging and managing your piles for fastest finding of individual documents is just one of the reasons why keeping piles neat and orderly is so important. Another important reason is that if you let them, piles can take over your entire workspace. What starts out as just a small stack of documents can easily and quickly transform itself into several mountains of paperwork that occupy practically all of your desktop – giving you a constantly shrinking space in which to do your job in the office, or, perform routine home-office tasks such as paying bills or reconciling your checkbook.
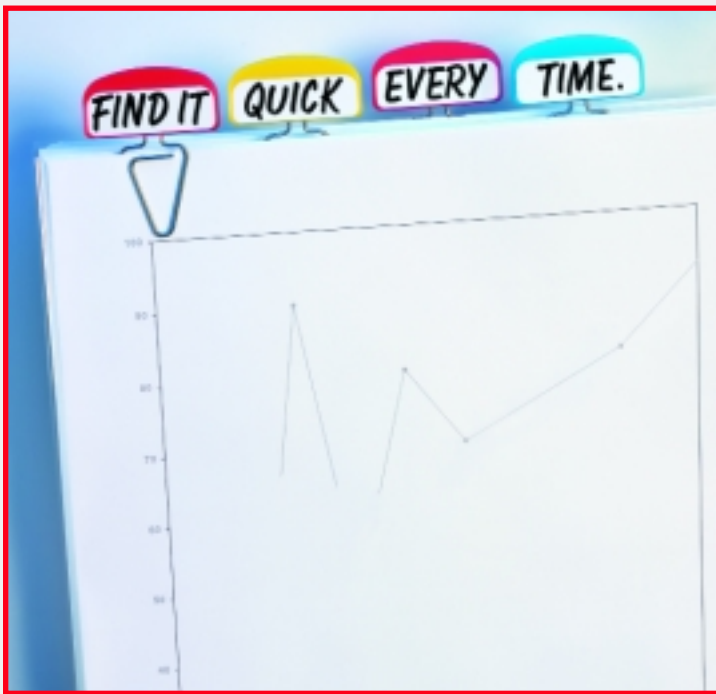
Techniques, Strategies, Approaches.
Turn piles into smiles.

Relax, here's how to make piling work for you.

Even though you may be a dedicated piler, you've likely had your share of frustrations in dealing with piles of paperwork.

For instance, there might have been that time when you were entrusted with a one-of-a-kind certificate your daughter had won to recognize her soccer accomplishments. For "safekeeping" you placed the certificate on top of a pile in your home office, and somehow it slid off – landing between two other piles not to be seen again for years.

As we explained earlier in this guide, piles themselves are not a bad thing. The key is employing smart techniques and strategies so your approach to piling works best for you.

To follow are some general tips about piling that you should keep in mind:

• Place related piles in the same proximity.
You might have one pile that contains working documents pertaining to customer orders, and another pertaining to customer deliveries. These two topics probably go hand in hand and usually you'll reference one and then the other. Instead of placing one pile in one location, and the other five feet away, put them in the same relative area (although not too close together) for fastest finding of each.

• Leave room between piles.
Placing piles right next to each other on your desktop, with no space between them, will not enable you to easily access files within each pile. Allow a minimum of 4″ to get your hands between piles.

• Limit the height of your piles.
Believe it or not, we've witnessed paperwork piles that reached the ceiling of an office. This is just inviting trouble because not only will it be nearly impossible to pull a piece of paper from the pile, the pile itself will be very unstable and will eventually tip over.

• Be sure the piling surface is level.
It should go without saying, but you might be surprised how many people place their piles on desktops, credenzas and shelves that slope uphill or down. Or, on desktop blotters that are lumpy, bumpy and uneven. The result could be a tumble of your important papers, or worse, a "domino effect" where several piles fall over in succession.

Identify, Describe, Recognize.
Label yourself organized.

Create custom-labeled files for use in your piles.

One of the most important components of successful paperwork piling is the ability to label your work clearly and understandably for the fastest look-ups.

The Pendaflex® PileSmart™ document organizers are specially designed to both hold your papers and also enable you to easily label your work for fingertip referencing. Each product is intelligently engineered so the labels are visible and accessible, even when documents are stacked in a pile – providing instant identification and retrieval of filed contents.

To follow are several suggestions to consider when creating labels to help you identify, describe and rapidly recognize documents in your piles:

• Put the date on your label.

Whenever you create a new file, be sure to indicate the date that the file was initiated. Putting the date right on the label gives you an immediate timeframe reference point that can be useful in tracking how long a particular project has been going on as well as how efficiently you are staying on schedule.

• Write neatly and legibly.

Labeling your files for quick referencing can only be as good as the readability of the labels themselves. Do not scribble your file headings in such a way that you'll be unable later on to figure out what they say.

• Use enough different headings.

Trying to group too many different kinds of documents into one file is counter-productive. For example, although your home-office files may contain credit card receipts and credit card statements, these are two distinct filing categories and a separate file and label should be devoted to each.

• Rely on your instincts in choosing heading titles.

When labeling a file heading for referencing at a later date, default to terminology you are most comfortable and familiar with. For instance, let's say you're creating files for your "invoices" but you almost always refer to these as "bills." Label the file "bills" because that is the heading you'll probably think of first when it comes time to find the file.

Categorize, Group, Locate.
Divide and conquer.

Separate your piles into specific tasks or projects.

Keeping track of and accessing piled paperwork is significantly easier when done in segments. By dividing your piles and allocating each one to individual projects you're working on, you'll be able to accurately pinpoint the location of a document.

To follow are some tips to help you categorize and group your paperwork piles.

• Pre-sort before piling.

Rather than just lopping documents onto your piles, take a few moments as papers arrive at your desk to sort them into "mini" piles according to what the papers pertain to. This extra step will be worth the effort, ensuring that the right documents end up on the right piles.

• Keep same-subject files to themselves.

Let's say you have a pile of customer orders. Make sure that pile contains nothing but customer orders. If you put a customer request in that pile, you probably will not be able to find the request.

• Designate a "tickler" pile.

This pile would contain papers that are the hottest of the hot – the projects you're working on today only. Remember that your tickler pile is only temporary, a place to look for immediate information. As documents in your tickler pile become outdated at the end of each day, transfer those documents to a more permanent work-in-progress pile.

• Have a pattern to your piling.

Think logically and arrange your desktop piles accordingly. For example, you might place alphabetical files in the following order: clockwise beginning in the lower left portion of your desk.

• Establish a list as reference for your piles.

Invariably in any piling situation, things can get temporarily out of order or documents can be added to the piles and quickly forgotten, making them very hard to find when needed. Keep a list of what's in your piles, especially the important documents. And continually update the list as new papers are added, providing a written overview or "blueprint" of your piling system.

FROM TO DO... TO DONE

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Code, Sort, Classify.
Color your world.

The importance of using color in your piles.

Color-coding never fails to make any approach to filing work better, whether it's in a drawer or in piles. Assigning different colors to different files distinguishes each one, preventing misfiles and drastically reducing the amount of time needed to locate each file.

Simply put, color points the way, immediately drawing your eye to a certain pile or to a section within your pile. For instance, you might have three piles on your desk in your home office, all relating to your car. One pile contains repair records, another contains auto insurance documents, and the other contains photocopies of lease payments. If you put the repair papers in blue folders, the insurance papers in green folders and the lease papers in red folders, you'll have a color signal that visually separates your piles – and you'll likely never mix them up or inadvertently put the wrong document in the wrong pile.

Pendaflex® PileSmart™ document organizers utilize a broad spectrum of colors to maximize filing speed and efficiency…allowing you to sort and classify your piled documents in color-coded ways that best meet your unique filing requirements.

Name, Subject, Numeric.
All systems go.

Three popular filing systems, which is best for you?

There are certain guidelines that apply to filing in general – whether the files are stored in a single drawer built into a desk, in a separate cabinet, on shelves…or if they are accumulated in piles on your desk.

Below are the three most common filing systems employed in corporate offices and also in home offices. Choosing one of the following approaches for use in your piles will bring structure to your paperwork management while making it quicker to find filed information.

Filing and piling by name.

This is the easiest and most straightforward approach. Files are arranged by name alphabetically, similar to the White Pages of the phone book. When using the name filing technique with your piles, remember to label your files with the last name first, i.e., Smith, John.

Filing and piling by subject.

In this approach, files are arranged alphabetically by subject… similar to the Yellow Pages of the phone book. Subject filing works smoothly in company offices, and it's also great for home filing. Records such as tax receipts, warranties and instruction sheets can be piled by subject for fast, convenient referencing.

Filing and piling by number.

In numeric filing systems, each number corresponds with a name or subject that you list in a separate index. The major benefit of filing and piling by number is security. Your files are more private because actual names and/or subjects are not put on your labels.

FROM TO DO... TO DONE

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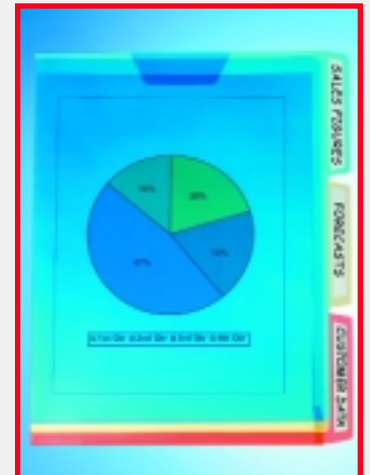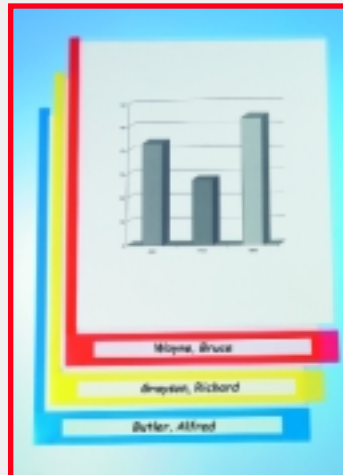
Re-visit, Re-check, Re-examine.
Lost and found.

What if a paper is missing from one of your piles?

It can be exasperating, even downright frightening. That document you thought you put into your project pile is now missing in action. Your immediate thought might be to panic, but don't. In all probability the paper is not really lost, just temporarily misplaced.

Try each of the following steps to find a missing paper among your desktop piles:

• Go back for another look.

Re-visit the pile and the folder where the paper should be. You could have overlooked it the first time.

• Double-check surrounding papers and piles.

You may have accidentally placed the paper into a neighboring pile.

• Inspect for possible confusion.

Perhaps the heading on the label of the file is similar to another heading on a different file and the two have been confused. Under the other heading is where your "missing" paper could actually be filed.

• Ask other people.

If you share an office with co-workers, it might be that someone borrowed the missing paper from your pile and neglected to mention it to you.

Mistakes, Miscues, Misfiles.
The seven sins of piling.

Things you should always avoid.

Whether it's the hectic nature of your business day, the demands of juggling multiple projects, home-office records that keep getting bigger, or any other reason – it can be easy to make a piling faux-pas that could cost you time or lead to a lost document.

To follow are seven piling situations to stay away from:

1. Do not over extend
Be careful not to place piles too close to the edge of a desktop because before you know it, you'll be picking loose papers off the floor.

2. Do not allow papers to stick out too far from each pile.
This can get real messy, real fast. Plus, when papers protrude from the pile they can obscure the labels that identify your file headings, preventing you from finding what you want.

3. Do not overstuff your folders.
We've all fallen victim to this one...the urge to cram as much paperwork as humanly possible into each file folder in our pile. Ignore the temptation to do so. Overstuffed folders do not allow the folder to close properly, compromising the ability of the folder to hold your documents while also making it almost impossible to efficiently reference individual papers.

4. Do not use file folders that are worn and torn.
Besides being unsightly, tattered file folders in your piles can contribute to misfiles and the loss of crucial papers. Pendaflex® PileSmart™ folders and organizers are made of super strong poly material to resist wearing, tearing and moisture – providing exceptional durability while also protecting your documents from such office mishaps as coffee spills.

5. Do not pile papers containing paper clips.
Invariably, papers that are clipped together will catch on to one another, resulting in confusion within your piles.

6. Do not use rubber bands to hold papers together.
Quality folders such as those in the Pendaflex® PileSmart™ line are designed to do a fine job of keeping documents securely inside each file. Rubber bands will only do one thing: waste your energy by forcing you to take the extra step of removing the rubber band each time you reference paperwork.

7. Do not create "miscellaneous" files.
If something is important enough to be saved and then put into your pile, it deserves its own label heading specific to the file's topic. Invariably, you will forget what's in a miscellaneous file, and be forced to dig through the entire pile to find what you need.

Maintain, Update, Purge.

Keep your piles in order.

Ensuring status quo on your desktop.

So, you've read through this guide and now you have new insights about how to best organize and manage the paperwork piles on your desktop and throughout your workspace. However, there's another thing you need to do...maintain your piles.

To follow are some strategies for keeping your piles neat, orderly and current:

• Straighten things out, every day.

Take a few moments, ideally at the end of each day, to make sure your piles are straight and as neatly aligned as possible. This will better prepare you for the next day's work, right from the moment you begin your day.

### • Deal with each paper upon its arrival.

Defy the urge to "wait until later" to place documents in their appropriate piles. Before you know it, newly arrived papers will build up quickly, covering what's left of your desk space.

• Repair ripped or "dog-eared" papers before piling.

Your piles will not sit well and could be very unsteady if they contain papers that are torn and do not lie flat. A simple piece of clear adhesive tape will usually do the trick.

• Purge your paperwork piles periodically.

On a regular basis, take a look through your piles to see which papers can be removed and either put into a more permanent filing location such as a cabinet...or, thrown out. In addition, when you finish a project, remove its reference pile from your desktop to allow room for new project piles.
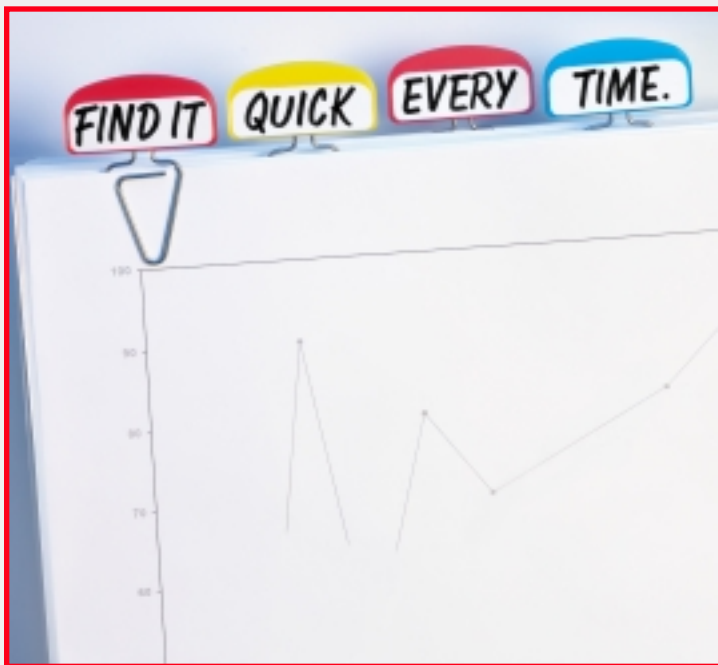
Ideas, Innovations, Products.

Give yourself every advantage.

Pile and file more productively with the right tools.

When it comes to desktop piling, having innovative products to rely on can make things a whole lot easier.

Pendaflex® PileSmart™ document organizers have been created by the world's foremost experts in office and home office filing. What's more, they represent the culmination of years of research among dedicated pilers – who told us the products they wanted and the features they needed to make their piles better organized and their desktops neater.

Choose from five great product ideas, each designed to complement the others. Combine them all for the ultimate in piling organization!

Pendaflex® PileSmart™ Label Clips.
The only product of its kind...so simple, yet so brilliant. Versatile PileSmart™ Label Clips hold documents together and at the same time, enable you to label them for immediate referencing.


Pendaflex® PileSmart™ Quick View Jackets.
Clear design so you can view at a glance what the jacket contains. Two-sided to hold a generous amount of papers, and, featuring color bars for color-coded organization as well as write-on labels to identify document piles on your desktop.

Pendaflex® PileSmart™ View Folders with Write On Tabs.
Quick, convenient and very, very smart. These clear poly folders make demanding desktop filing an absolute breeze. Includes write-on labeling tabs for creating customized category headings in seconds.
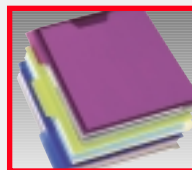
Pendaflex® PileSmart™ View Folders.
The perfect project folders. Translucent, allowing you to view the folder's contents...plus, several different colors so you can assign a separate color to each project you're working on and locate every document in no time at all.

Pendaflex® PileSmart™ Project Sorter.
Organize your desktop, and also have a smart way to transport your work to meetings, trade shows and more. Clear cover design, with six or ten multi-color sections for categorizing different (but related) project documents in the same place. Sorting tabs and a bright color-coordinated index enable quick labeling and even quicker file identification. Elastic closure keeps important documents safely inside when carrying.

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