# The Busy Writer's Book of Checklists

## Checklist 11 – Organize Your Work Space

| | Aspects of Your Work Space |
|---|---|
| **Done** | *To organize your work space, you first need to understand your needs and your work flow. Then you can organize your work space to accommodate those needs. Check off each of these as you consider it.* |
| ☐ | Do you need to move your work space somewhere else? (Two contrasting scenarios: you might need to move your work area somewhere closer to the kids' TV/play area so you can supervise them while you're working, OR you might need to move your work space AWAY from family noise.) |
| ☐ | Do you need to negotiate with family to give your writing a higher priority? (E.g. is it more desirable for you to have office space than it is to have a rarely-used guest bedroom?) |
| ☐ | Do you have to share your work space with someone else? (School-age child, spouse, parent, friend?) If so, is there a fair division of space? Stake your claim to YOUR share of the space and enforce it - no overflowing files/mess! |
| ☐ | How much space do you have available? (If necessary, measure it so you know better how to place your furniture and/or files.) |
| ☐ | What are the things you can't do without? (E.g. laptop computer and portable file box.) |
| ☐ | What things DON'T you have that would make your work space more efficient? (Desk - chair - lighting - printer - filing cabinet - storage cupboard etc.) |
| ☐ | Write down the list of things you have that you want to keep. |
| ☐ | Write down a list of things you need to buy/acquire to make your writing space work better. |
| ☐ | **Start pruning**. For optimal use of space, **digitize** as much as possible. If you have a computer file, throw out the paper copy. If you don't have a computer file of a document, consider scanning it. Save all digital files a) to your computer and (b) to a backup disk. |
| ☐ | Get rid of unnecessary furniture. (Don't hang on to a set of shelves or filing cabinet simply because you 'paid good money for it'. If you no longer need something, give it to family, friends or charity.) |
| ☐ | Start organizing (or re-organizing) your work space according to your work flow.  Ensure that tools you use all the time are close at hand (stapler/sticky tape/pens/note cubes), and the used-only-occasionally things (reference books/software manuals/fan or heater etc.) are stored neatly nearby. If you store things in boxes, LABEL those boxes. |
| ☐ | Storage: Establish an organized system that works for YOU. (Do you want a couple of storage trays, or do labelled suspension files work better for you? Do you use notebooks or is everything on the computer? What size notebooks work best? Where will you keep them?) |
| ☐ | *Other Aspects of Organizing My Work Space:* |