

How to make a laundry room a more functional space

Functionality is important when designing the interior spaces in a home. Homeowners who redesign their interior spaces can emphasize functionality to help reduce clutter and create a more efficient and even calming space.

Laundry rooms may not be the most glamorous rooms in a home, but they do get lots of usage, particularly in homes with children. Because laundry rooms tend to be well trafficked areas, it makes sense for homeowners to make them as functional and user-friendly as possible. With that in mind, homeowners can consider these tips to make laundry rooms more functional spaces.



Add a countertop work space. If you already have ample storage and won't be placing the washer or dryer atop a laundry pedestal, then installing some countertop above the appliances can add function and aesthetic appeal. A countertop workspace above a dryer provides an accessible space to fold laundry the moment it dries, reducing the likelihood that clothes will become wrinkled and ensuring you won't put off folding.

Install floating shelves. Floating shelves won't cost a lot of money, but they can be ideal in cramped laundry rooms. Shelves provide a space to store detergent and other items that may not fit inside laundry pedestals, including baskets.

Install hanging storage. Some articles of clothing should not be dried in a dryer for fear of shrinking the fabric or destroying the item. In such instances, some readily accessible hanging storage capacity can make the laundry room more functional. Items can be hung on hangers or over a hanging rack suspended from the ceiling if space is minimal.

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Three ways to get more use out of a garage

Even though no two homes are the same, rooms have a tendency to take on similar characteristics regardless of which property they're a part of. Kitchens tend to be popular gathering spaces, while basements have become go-to spots for game rooms and watch parties.

Garages also tend to share certain characteristics between homes, and one notable attribute is the tendency to become difficult-to-navigate dumping grounds for a wide range of items, including lawn and garden tools, children's toys, sporting goods, and seasonal home decor. Though there's nothing wrong with utilizing a garage as a storage space, the following are three simple ways homeowners can get more out of these spaces.

1. Utilize the wall space. The walls in a garage have lots of potential. Effective use of walls within a garage can ensure garden tools, small toys and other items do not accumulate on the floor. Such accumulations contribute much to the reputation of garages as dumping grounds for miscellaneous items. By clearing the floors of clutter, and utilizing wall spaces to store items, homeowners can open up the spaces to serve any number of functions, including home gyms, art studios or even parking spaces to protect vehicles from the elements. A storage organizer system with various hooks can be mounted on a garage wall to free up floor space, while shelving can be hung to store paint cans, power tool batteries and other items.

2. Look upward. If garage ceilings extend several feet above the height of homeowners' ve-

hicles, then the spaces above where cars might be parked can be converted into storage space for large recreational items, like canoes or kayaks, or seasonal decor that does not need to be accessed on a regular basis. A simple kayak hoist utilizing a pulley system clears floor space and allows kayaks to be stored overhead. Lifting storage racks work in similar fashion and make for great additions for anyone who needs to store containers full of seasonal decor but does not want to do so by stacking items on the floor. A hand crank system for a lifting storage rack makes for easy and safe access.

3. Install new lighting. Without ample lighting, garages may not be conducive to recreational pursuits like painting, crafting or even exercising. A lighting upgrade is a relatively affordable renovation that can make a big difference, illuminating spaces not exactly known for brightness, especially if there's no windows. If you want to spend time in the garage during winter and stay warm, then some new lighting can make that possible.

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Options to consider for exterior audio

Outdoor entertaining areas are increasingly coveted by homeowners looking to blend the comforts of indoors with the accessibility to nature backyards provide.

Homeowners do much to enhance the comfort and functionality of backyard spaces, and one way to elevate these spaces is through the installation of audio capabilities.

The ability to listen to an audio book while floating in the pool or stream a party playlist while hosting a barbecue enhances outdoor spaces. Individuals have various options to consider when seeking to upgrade their outdoor sound capabilities.

Portable Bluetooth speakers. Bluetooth technology revolutionized the way various devices exchange data. Bluetooth utilizes short-range radio waves to connect and share information without a need for wires. That means it can connect devices like smartphones and computers to items like headphones and speakers. Homeowners who want a simple way to bring audio outdoors can look to portable speakers, which range in size from tabletop versions to larger, tailgate-style speakers. Many offer quality sound that is easily queued up when needed.

Wireless stationary speakers. Similar to portable speakers, wireless stationary speakers designed for the outdoors employ Bluetooth technology through portable speakers or a networked computer Wi-Fi connection. Each are mounted to deck railings or are placed around the yard. Interference can affect these types of speakers, depending on placement and distance from the device that is playing the music. They may be sufficient for the casual listener.

Wired outdoor speakers. Wired outdoor speakers need to be hooked up to an amplifier inside a home with wires. Although it sounds complicated, typically it's a job a do-it-yourselfer can handle; otherwise, qualified technicians can do it for homeowners. Wired systems may not come with the same hassles of connectivity dropping or even having to replace/recharge batteries, depending on the model chosen. Plus, once they are installed, homeowners have little to do other than utilize the speakers and enjoy their time spent outside with music, sports games, podcasts, and more.

Cone size and wattage matters. Cone size and wattage of the speakers affects the ability of the speakers to provide quality audio, according to Outdoor Speaker Depot. Larger cone size will offer superior, low-frequency response, which helps in large backyards. The larger the cone, the more bass it will provide. A greater wattage range also enables a better volume increase and improved sound quality at lower volumes. For 300 to 500 square feet, wattage of 80 to 100 might suffice.



Larger areas will need wattage of 150, 175 or higher for clear, sharp sound.

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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MICHIGAN CITY COUNCIL March 11, 2025

Mayor Lauri Rysavy called March 11, 2025 regular city council meeting to order at 5 p.m. Council members present: Mayor L. Rysavy, Member T. Laguein, Member N. Flom, Superintendent S. Gilbertson, Member J. Vasichek and Member J. Gilbertson motioned in. Others present: Auditor D. Dalen.

A motion was made to approve

February regular city council meeting minutes by Member T. Laguein and seconded by N. Flom.

Member N. Flom motioned to approve March bills, seconded by J. Vasichek. Motion carried.

Brager Disposal \$2,000.25

Bank of ND 2,250.00

Elan Credit Card 2,568.53

First United Bank 1,704.93

GF Utility 26.00

Hamster Oil 146.71

Hardware Hank

--Lakota 24.99

Lakota American 51.75

Michigan Hometown

Foods 12.69

NC Sheriff's Dept. 1,315.00

One Call 3.85

Otter Tail 2,364.35

Otter Tail 44.95

Polar Communications .. 40.49

Polar Communications .. 181.11

Office of the State

Auditor 1,035.00

Verizon (credit) +44.52

Total \$13,770.60

Superintendent Report -- Water loss for this month is 2.6%. On

2/10/2025 the water tower froze. The freeze caused the water main below water tower to break, and residents lost water use. Naastad Brothers and H & H Coatings, Inc. were called out. Water was restored to residents several hours later.

Auditor Report -- Overdue water bills: Shut-off notices to be sent to M. Anderson, J. Eback, C. Haynes and a second shut-off notice to M. Terrazas.

Old Business -- Utility rate increase: Motion made by Member J. Gilbertson to increase water rate, seconded by Member J. Vasichek.

Water rate to increase to \$34 per 2,000 gallons and \$5 for every 1,000 gallons over the 2,000-gallon minimum.

New Business -- A claim was submitted by NDIFR for the repair costs of the water main break that occurred on 2/10/2025. Motion made by Member N. Flom to use the emergency fund for any bills not covered by NDIFR, seconded by Member T. Laguein.

Change in sales tax distribution was discussed. Letters will be sent to

ambulance department, park board, Duffers Club, Service Club and the JDA requesting a year-end financial report to review the distribution of sales tax.

The new annual agreement with West Shore Services (warning systems) for the city of Michigan siren increased to \$610 a year. Member T. Laguein moved to approve; Member N. Flom seconded the motion.

A resident made a request to purchase Michigan school lots. Member J. Vasichek motioned to deny selling school lots. Member J. Gilbertson seconded the motion.

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Member N. Flom, seconded by T. Laguein.

Minutes submitted by

Dawn Dalen Auditor

New 457 deferred retirement

compensation plan was discussed. Additional details are needed for further decision.

The purchase of a new mower was discussed; funds would be taken out of the cemetery fund. Member J. Gilbertson motioned to approve. Member T. Laguein seconded the motion.

Member T. Laguein motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Member N. Flom.

Minutes submitted by

Dawn Dalen Auditor

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING & TAX EQUALIZATION MEETING MICHIGAN CITY COUNCIL April 14, 2025

Mayor Lauri Rysavy called the April 14, 2025 regular city council meeting and tax equalization meeting to order at 5 p.m. Council members present: Mayor Lauri Rysavy, Member N. Flom, Member T. Laguein, Member J. Gilbertson; City Auditor D. Dalen. Member J. Vasichek not present and city superintendent not present.

Equalization Meeting -- Michelle Linstad presented the tax equalization information packets. Information was discussed.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by J. Gilbertson, seconded by T. Laguein.

A motion was made to approve the March regular city council meeting minutes by Member T. Laguein and seconded by N. Flom.

Minutes submitted by

Dawn Dalen Auditor

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Equalization Meeting -- Michelle Linstad presented the tax equalization information packets. Information was discussed.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by J. Gilbertson, seconded by T. Laguein.

A motion was made to approve the March regular city council meeting minutes by Member T. Laguein and seconded by N. Flom.

Minutes submitted by

Dawn Dalen Auditor

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING & TAX EQUALIZATION MEETING MICHIGAN CITY COUNCIL May 14, 2025 - 5 p.m.

Mayor Lauri Rysavy called the meeting to order. Council members present: J. Vasichek, J. Gilbertson, N. Flom, T. Laguein.

T. Laguein was asked to record minutes.

Auditor position will be advertised through May 27, 2025. Résumés should be sent to L. Rysavy at icloud.com and contact number is 701-259-2548.

J. Vasichek made a motion to hire Jason Flom in the interim to handle office requirements. By roll call vote: J. Gilbertson--yea, T. Laguein--yea, N. Flom--abstain. By majority vote motion carried.

Next meeting will be May 28, 2025 at 5 p.m. to review any and all résumés submitted.

T. Laguein made a motion to adjourn, J. Vasichek seconded. Motion carried, meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by

Dawn Dalen Auditor

Tips to manage a family schedule with greater efficiency

The average twenty-first century family is quite busy, with each individual family member having their own responsibilities and social lives.

According to Aspen Institute's National State of Play 2024, nearly 40 percent of children in the United States between the ages of six and 17 regularly participated in a team sport, and the average child plays 1.6 sports. Recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics in May 2025 also indicates around 50 percent of all married-couple families are dual income. For all families, including those with children, 67 percent of married-couple families with children are dual income households.

Needless to say, with school, sports, work, and other responsibilities filling up families' days, staying organized becomes an important priority. Keeping schedules straight involves forethought. Efficient and effective time management that incorporates the following suggestions can help schedules feel a little more manageable.

Keep a family calendar

It is important to post schedules visibly so that everyone knows what is going on each day. The type of calendar used will vary depending on what families find most helpful. For some, it may be a traditional paper calendar hung in the kitchen or mudroom. Others may find that a shared digital calendar is most effective, particularly those who rely heavily on phones or other digital devices.

No matter which type of calendar is used, color-code each family member so it is easy to identify immediately which dates are relevant to each family member.

Create routines

Consistent daily or weekly routines can help a family understand what is expected and



when. Providing structure can reduce decision-making fatigue, according to Becoming Minimalist. Dinner can occur at the same time each day, and homework time may be scheduled so kids know when they are expected to hit the books.

Use reminders

Reminder apps on phones or other devices can be very handy for keeping everyone in check. Alarms and reminders will alert the person as to when they are expected to be somewhere. Letting children set their own reminders can set them up for success by being responsible individuals.

Get kids involved

Again, looping children into the process of establishing schedules and an organizational system helps teach them responsibility. Plus, if they are more invested in the process, they may be more apt to follow along. Families can hold weekly chats or meetings about upcoming events and discuss how to delegate or who might be able to attend what and when. Children can weigh in on what is important to them and what can be passed up, such as if school is offering a special bonus extracurricular that is not mandatory to attend. All Pro Dad, a program of the national nonprofit educational and charitable organization Family First, says it is alright to say "no" to extra commitments and prioritize what's important to the family.

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Traci Laguein
Recorder

June 9, 2025: Jay Vasichek made motion to approve minutes as presented. Jay Gilbertson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING MICHIGAN CITY COUNCIL

May 28, 2025 - 5 p.m.