

Household and Family Information Binder



Our Household/Family binder is one of those tools that provides me with peace of mind. We've all asked ourselves, "if I had to leave my house suddenly, what would I take?" I would definitely grab this binder. With technology, you could put all this information on your computer. But I'm still not convinced our data is secured. Our Household/Family binder is packed with pertinent information organized into tabs. This is an active and working tool in our everyday lives.



Reason Behind Creating this Binder

In 2001, the great tragedy of 911 shocked our nation and the world. Suddenly, terrorism was at our doorstep and the way we proceeded with life changed drastically. At that time, I have a 9 month old, and two toddlers. My husband is traveling domestically and internationally. And we are attending large, heavily crowded events. The feeling of vulnerability forced me to think about all the "what ifs."

In October 2001, we are scheduled to take an international trip and a trans-Atlantic cruise. This is our first trip ever without the children. Plus we would be completely out of touch for periods of time. A rotating set of trusted caregivers will be watching the children. How will they know about all the ins and outs of the house? And God forbid, what if something happened to us? Or one of the children?

It is very much my nature to focus during unsettling times and create working solutions as a way to feel a little more in

control. This is when I developed this binder.

A Well-Used Binder



Fast forward to 2020 and the binder is somewhat laughable. In its current condition, the binder is falling apart. All updated information has been shoved inside. You can tell by the cover photo that it was last officially updated in 2009. It is covered in stains and spills too, but obviously well used!



What is currently happening in our country is disconcerting. For me, it is reminiscent of the fear and chaos of 2001. And in the last 19 years, our life stage has changed. Our children are older with two of our 3 children living independently. Some of the information is now obsolete and outdated. So it is time to refresh and clean up the binder.

Making the Binder/Tabs



Find a binder that you like with the proper size spine. Mine is an 1.5" 3 ring binder with clear plastic cover. It is simple to make a spine label using Word. The tab inserts are made using [Avery Label](#) downloadable template.

Tabs in the Binder



Here is a list of the tabs I have in our binder. Obviously you can tailor this to fit your family and lifestyle.

- Emergency Information

- Children Information
- House Info/Contacts
- Auto Info
- Insurance (house, auto, life)
- Animal Information
- Security Procedures
- Paint Colors/Filter Sizes

What Goes in Each Tab



Since we do have house sitters to look after our animals and home, the emergency section includes pertinent information for someone who doesn't live here on a regular basis. We also have a separate binder for house sitters with daily instructions on mail, garbage, how to work the television, when to feed the pets, etc.

Emergency Info



- Water Shut Off instructions
- What to Do in a Power Outage
- What to Do if a car is stolen
- Who to Contact if something were to happen to us (with their names, addresses, phone numbers, relationship, etc.)
- List of immediate neighbors and their contact information
- Police Emergency and Non-Emergency #s



Children Info

- Doctors contact information
- Each child's DOB, SS#, Contact Info
- All vaccinations
- Copies of Passports, Credit Cards, Global Pass, Medical Insurance

Home Information/Contacts

- Our House Street Address and phone number
- List of all contractors/maintenance personnel and their contact information
- All Utility companies account #s and phone numbers



Auto Information

- Insurance Identification Cards
- Make, Model, VIN#, License Plate to each car
- Names and Addresses for Car Repair
- Auto Insurance Information
- Road Side Service Information
- Onstar Information
- Copies of Drivers Licenses, Recent Auto Repairs

Home/Auto/Life/Medical Insurance

- Summary of Residential and Auto Coverage
- All current insurance policies for home(s), car(s), life, umbrella, travel

Security Procedures

- Alarm Instructions
- Fire Alarm Instructions
- How to Operate Gates

- Legend for Alarm Codes
- Programming Guide



Animal Information

- List of animals, their breed, description, age
- Veterinarian/Groomer contact information
- Animal Control License #s
- Microchip Information
- Current pictures of each animal
- Vaccination Certificates
- Recent Medical information



Paint Colors and HVAC Filters

This section may seem a bit out of line with the others, but I cannot tell you how many times I reference our paint colors. Plus the filters are replaced every month and we have several vents. This is a great section to add items like this.

- Current paint colors for exterior and interior of all buildings
- List of sizes of filters for each area of the house



The House/Family information binder is a time saver too. If I need a copy of a passport or medical identification card, it is readily available, without me having to search. When the children were little, I would have current photos with their height, weight and descriptive information readily available. Who can remember all of that, especially in the middle of a crisis or emergency?

My theory is that if you plan and prepare for the worst, then

the worst will never happen. Do you have a Household/Family Binder? With an active and busy life, it is comforting to know that there is a place where important information is kept and can be accessed easily.

Mary

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