

QuickTips

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Your Technology Team

Get Cords and Cables Under Control

Years ago, the average office desk used to have just one thing on top of it: a typewriter. Now you've probably got a phone, a computer, and a monitor at minimum. Chances are you have a laptop as well, and occasionally plug your cellphone or iPod into an available USB port for charging or downloading. In a home office you'll likely have connections to a backup hard drive, a wireless router, and a printer/fax as well. Add it all up and that translates to a big pile of loose cords and cables gathering dust under your desk.

There are plenty of options besides leaving your cords in a snarled heap around a power strip on your floor. Here's just a few:

1. Use an [under-desk cord tray](#) like this one from Ikea. It keeps cords hidden away, and separates cables that are sensitive to interference.
2. Turn an attractive box into a [charging station](#). Keep the power cord in the box, and cut holes in its side for all the cords you use most frequently: phone charger, iPod connector, USB cord, and so on. You may encounter some heat and ventilation issues here, so this isn't a great solution for always-on use.
3. Use [nylon cable ties bundle and classify](#). Stores like Office Depot and Radio Shack carry these adjustable ties so that you can neatly bundle up the cords you don't use often and more easily identify the ones that do. Office Depot also carries a [cord management system](#) that lets you bundle your cables and wires and then stow them in a 40" tube.

As with any DIY project, you should make sure your de-cluttering project doesn't result in fire, electrocution, or widespread destruction of office property -- so take the proper precautions and be sure to ask before you start drilling holes in community equipment.

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