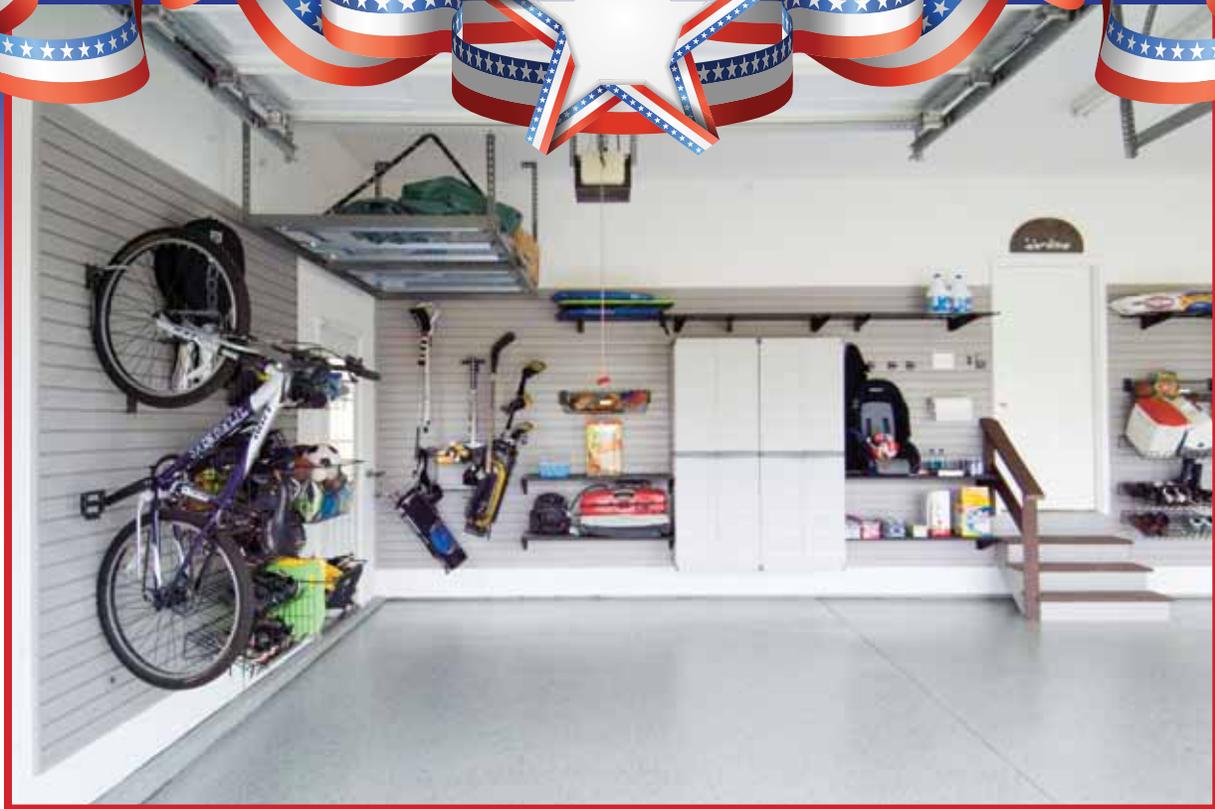


# Bob's Homage to the **GREAT AMERICAN Garage**



A collection of my tips, thoughts, and musings about an oft overlooked yet important component of your home and mine

By  
Bob Carr  
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## Introduction

The garage.

Is there any portion of the average family's home that receives *less* attention than the garage? In some respects, you might even say that the garage is the Rodney Dangerfield of rooms: it "don't get no respect!"

And yet when you think about it, you'll likely agree that your garage is pretty important to your family's life. It may not be the star of the show, so to speak, but it's an integral component of the day-in, day-out routine of life in your family.

That's why I decided to put together this little ebook that focuses solely on garages.

This book consists of select entries that I've supplied for my blog and email subscribers over the past several years. I've selected some of my favorite pieces that provide useful tips. I've also selected some pieces that are a bit on the whimsical side (but hopefully entertaining!).

I offer this book as a gesture of appreciation for your interest in my business. I hope that you find it to be both informative and a little bit entertaining. Consider it to be a foretaste of the content you'll be receiving from me in the future as a valued subscriber to my email list.

Warmest Regards,

**Bob Carr**

## Chapter 1: Garage Organization Tips

Mess and clutter - they are natural byproducts of the neglect with which most of us treat our garages.

They are also a reflection of the importance of garages to our daily lives. That's why the typical homeowner's garage tends to be jam-packed with 'stuff' from every aspect of life:

- Kid's toys
- Gardening equipment
- Car care equipment (and maybe the car itself, if there's enough room left to squeeze it in!)
- Lawn care and landscaping equipment
- Pet-related sundries

And the list above is only the beginning!

As the years roll by, an indescribable accumulation of stuff and junk gradually reduces the useable available space in the typical homeowner's garage to nearly nil. Eventually, many garages end up as little more than glorified storage sheds.

And that's a shame. Because when that happens, a family is robbed of the life-enhancing utility that the typical garage is capable of offering.

The solution to the problem, of course, is garage organization - a specialty of [TLC Inc.](#), and the topic of this chapter.

Let's begin this chapter with a little essay I published a couple of years ago about the life value that an organized garage can offer...

## 1.1: Garage Organization Can Offer a Priceless Payoff

OK, be honest: Is your garage a neat and tidy island of efficiency, everything where it should be, with lots of nice, open space available? Or is it a cluttered-up, junked-up, nightmarish mess that takes an effort akin to a deep-jungle safari just to navigate from one end to the other?

No finger pointing here, but if you're like most of us, your garage is more likely to resemble the latter than the former.

"What's the harm?" you might be thinking. Isn't that what a garage is for - storing things? So true. But it's not *what* you store that counts; it's *how* you store that matters.

And it DOES matter. Because your cluttered-up garage can rob you of the most precious commodity you own.

### Your Most Precious Commodity

What is that most precious commodity?

It's something that you alone own - but only in a limited supply. It's something that you are constantly losing - some is slipping away from you as you read this ebook. And once it's gone, you can never get it back.

It's your time.

It's so precious that no amount of wealth can buy back so much as a single second. No power on earth can slow the ticking of the clock. It's truly more valuable than all of the gold on earth.

### Back to That Garage...

Think back to the last time you needed something out of your garage. Maybe it was something you hadn't used in a while, so it was buried under several layers of clutter.

How much time did you waste? (Including time for temper tantrums and cussing breaks!)

Five, ten, fifteen minutes? That time came out of your personal stash, gone forever. Bet you would have preferred to spend it on something more enjoyable than garage rummaging!

Every second you waste in your cluttered-up garage costs you something so valuable that Bill Gates himself couldn't buy it back.

### **Garage Organization: An Investment in a Better Life**

Imagine your garage neatly and efficiently organized. Imagine being able to instantly lay your hands upon any item in your garage. Imagine lots of open space available for fun projects.

Imagine being able to navigate from one end to the other without having to suck in your stomach to squeeze between the piles of junk!

What you're imagining is a better life, one in which you waste less of your most precious commodity. Priceless value gained from the admittedly menial but vitally important task of organizing your garage.

Isn't it interesting that the simplest things in life can sometimes pay the highest dividends?

## 1.2: Garage Storage: it's Not *What You Store*, it's *How You Store*

If your family is typical, you've probably got lots of stuff stored in your garage. That's OK; that's one of the purposes of a garage.

If your family is like most, though, it's likely that all of that 'stuff' stored in your garage has taken over the place. It might even be that your garage has become so hopelessly cluttered that it's not good for much of anything else.

But unless you've got some world-class obsessive-compulsive hoarders in your family, it's likely that your garage *could* accommodate all the stuff you've got stored and still be useful in other ways. Because utilizing your garage for storage is less about *what* you're storing, and more about *how* you're storing.

### Hooks and Nooks...

Every garage, obviously, only has so much interior cubic footage available for storage. But one storage resource that's sometimes overlooked is the massive amount of square footage available on the walls, and even on the ceiling.

You can make use of *all* that space with hooks and wall-mounted shelving.

Storage hooks are great for hanging items that are awkward to store because of their size or shape. Bicycles, for example, or big loops of extension cords, or yard tools like rakes, hoes and ladders.

A quick scan of your cluttered garage will probably reveal many items that could conveniently be hung from hooks, off the floor and out of the way. Installed properly, hooks can be used to store items of considerable bulk and heft.

Wall-mounted shelving also makes use of all of that wonderful vertical square-footage by creating lots of custom-sized storage nooks. Shelving of various widths and depths can be installed on your garage walls to accommodate a massive amount of 'stuff,' while encroaching upon very little of your interior space. And just as with the hooks, shelving can be used to store heavyweight items - assuming that the shelving is properly designed and installed.

The combo of shelving and hooks can offer a tremendous amount of storage capacity, while preserving most of your precious interior cubic footage.

### Store-Bought Storage

If the hooks and shelving just aren't enough, you can bump up your storage capacity by selecting from a wide array of storage cabinets. Garage storage

cabinets can be wall-mounted or freestanding. They can double as workbenches. They can be made of wood, metal or plastic.

And though cabinets certainly intrude into your interior space more than hooks and shelves, they offer in tradeoff a *massive* amount of additional storage capacity.

### **Store Smart, Not...Well, You Know!**

As with many problems in life, the problem of inadequate garage storage can be solved by just utilizing the proper equipment, and by employing a common sense, organized approach.

But allowing an out-of-control, unorganized overflow of stuff to continue to render your garage useless for anything but storage...that, shall we say, is just the *opposite* of smart!

### 1.3: A Great Grab-N-Go Storage System For Your Garage

Has this happened to you?

Something comes up last minute: maybe an opportunity to go fishing with a friend, or a short-notice invitation to go on a camping trip. People are waiting for you. And the stuff you need - fishing rod, backpack, sleeping bag - is in your garage. You just need to grab it and go.

There's only one problem: you have to 'find' before you can 'grab.' And you can't find. Bummer. Maybe your friends will wait, and maybe they won't. But one thing's for sure: your 'fun' activity is starting out as a real pain in the...garage.

Of course, that same scenario can be replayed in many variations.

Maybe you've finally talked yourself into doing that hedge trimming you've been putting off for ages. So, all psyched-up, ready for action, and eager to get the chore underway and over with, you march into your garage, grab the hedge clipper, and...um...let's see...grab the hedge clipper...grab the hedge clipper...grab the hedge clipper...where IS the miserable thing!?

There's nothing that kicks a bad attitude into high-gear like having to hunt for something before you can even get *started* on an unpleasant job. (Those poor hedges are going to be trembling in terror when you finally come at them, long-lost clipper in hand and anger in your eyes!).

#### A Simple, Elegant Solution...

There's a wonderful garage storage system that can transform the above scenarios into problems that *other* people have, not you. It's the storeWALL system of wall-mounted storage attachments. And it's an ideal system for garage storage.

Here's how it works:

- You mount the storeWALL panels on your garage walls. They are decorative and durable, and are available in many color options, including a number of simulated wood grains. (They're attractive enough to be a great choice for finishing your interior walls - even without consideration of all the storage options they'll provide.)
- You then attach any combination of hooks, baskets, shelves, bins or totes to the storeWALL panels. Mount as many or as few storage attachments as you wish. Position them on the wall in whatever pattern you desire (the options are virtually infinite).

- Mounting the storage attachments to the wall is fast and easy. That's because of the patented CamLok mechanism that's used to attach the storage attachments to the paneling. Just a simple twist of the CamLok secures the storage attachment to the wall paneling. No need for drilling holes or driving screws every time you want to install a storage attachment. And just a simple twist unlocks the storage attachment for removal or repositioning.

### **Whether for Work or for Play, There's No Need for Delay**

Mount storeWALL panels on your garage interior walls, and you'll have a MASSIVE amount of storage space available to you. And every item stored using the storeWALL system will be off the floor, easy to organize, easy to find.

You'll be able to put your hands on anything you need quickly and easily. Procrastination may continue to be a way of life - as it is for so many of us - but NOT because you can't find what you need.

Now, if you could just get those invitations to fishing and camping trips to start rolling in...

## 1.4: Use Garage Storage Baskets for Clutter Control

If your garage is awash with clutter, odds are good that much of that clutter is difficult to store. Things, for example, that aren't easily hung on a hook or kept on a shelf.

No need to let the mess turn *you* into a basket case. But that mess does make a great case for *using* baskets.

### Wall-Mounted Baskets to the Rescue

Storage baskets are great for:

- Big and bulky items
- Items that won't stay on a shelf (basketballs and volleyballs, for example)
- Items that are fragile or breakable like bottles and jars
- Items that are just difficult to store any other way

Storage baskets can be used to store almost *anything* conveniently and securely.

The very best storage solutions for garages are manufactured by the StoreWALL Company. The wall panels are strong, durable and long lasting. They're available in a large selection of colors and finishes, including simulated natural wood finishes that offer the look of wood wall paneling.

And the panels incorporate a tongue and groove design to hide the joints between panels for a seamless appearance. The installation of these panels can lend a truly refined look to your garage interior.

But the genius of the system is the CamLok mechanism that's used to attach the storage baskets to the paneling.

You can install a storage basket anyplace you want on the paneling, and with just a simple twist of the CamLok the basket will be secured. No need for drilling holes or driving screws every time you want to install a storage basket.

### Baskets *AND* Bins

Several different sizes and shapes of storage baskets are available. They're made of stainless steel, so they're strong enough to hold heavy items. And the baskets are powder-coated - a finish that's much more durable than paint, and that offers superior protection.

If a storage basket isn't quite right for the job, consider a wall-mounted storage bin. Storage bins are available in multiple sizes, from very small to very large. As with baskets, the storage bins can be mounted anywhere you desire on the wall paneling. And since the bins are solid, they're perfect for storing smaller items that might slip between the steel wires of a basket.

### **You Wouldn't *Believe* How Much Your Garage Could Hold...**

The walls of your garage represent a *massive* amount of storage capacity.

By installing the StoreWALL system of wall paneling along with wall-mounted baskets and bins (and hooks, too), you can tap into a wealth of storage area. You can transform your garage from a cluttered-up mess to a roomy oasis of storage efficiency.

Let your garage be a basket case - but in a *good* way!

## 1.5: Does Garage Clutter Make You so Angry You Just Want to Shout, "Hang it All"?

Let me guess: You've got lots of, shall we say, 'stuff' in your garage. Your garage has become a catchall storage area for all those things that you don't want to throw away, but don't really have a good place to store. Along with the tools and utensils that you use on at least a semi-regular basis: shovels, rakes, hoes, hedge clippers, etc.

There's certainly nothing wrong with using your garage as a storage area; that's what most people do. But here's something else that most people do: they let all that 'stuff' in their garage take over the place. They let it accumulate and pile-up until they've got a chaotic mess on their hands.

Is that you?

If so, I'd be willing to wager that at times you get so frustrated with the mess that you just want to scream something like, "Hang it all!"

And you know what? That's exactly what you *should* do.

### **Hang It All!**

We've helped many frustrated homeowners get their garages under control with a fabulous system of hooks and hangers manufactured by the StoreWALL Company. The system utilizes wall panels designed to hold a wide array of storage hooks.

The wall panels are tough and durable, and are available in a huge selection of colors and finishes. They're even available in several tones of a simulated natural wood finish, just like wood wall paneling. The panels are designed with a tongue and groove system to hide the joints between panels for a seamless appearance. You'd be amazed at the refined look that the installation of these panels can lend to your garage interior.

But the genius of the system is the CamLok mechanism that's used to attach the storage hooks to the paneling. You can install a storage hook anyplace you want on the paneling, and with just a simple twist of the CamLok, the hook will be secured. No need for drilling holes or driving screws every time you want to install a hook.

## **Hooks Galore...**

Storage hooks are available for every conceivable need, ranging from small single hooks to massive heavy-duty cradle hooks. There are universal hooks, heavy-duty tool hooks, utility hooks, J-hooks, and many more. For anything you'd like to hang on the wall, there's a hook design that will handle it.

And all are quickly and easily installed, removed or repositioned with the CamLok system.

## **You're Off the Hook!**

Installing a system of wall panels and storage hooks on your garage walls is a great way to clear the clutter in your garage. And it's a great way to get you *off* the hook of having to deal with the frustration of a garage gone bad!

## 1.6: Garage Storage Cabinets Can Help Eliminate Cluttering Muttering

Cluttering muttering.

Though you may not be familiar with the term, you've probably experienced it many times. Especially if your garage is like most garages: a cluttered mess!

Think back to the last time you were searching for something in your garage; something, perhaps, that you hadn't used in quite a while.

Was it buried in the clutter?

If so, you likely wasted lots of time sorting through all that 'stuff' cluttering your garage. Probably frustrated you so much that it set you to muttering under your breath. That's cluttering muttering, and we've all experienced it far too many times.

### Take a Cue From Your Tidy Kitchen

Let's step away from your cluttered garage for a moment, and step into your kitchen. Now imagine emptying all the contents of your kitchen cabinets, dumping it all on countertops, tabletops, and even the floor.

What a mess that would be!

It would take you an eternity to find *anything*. Just simply preparing a meal would be an unbearable nightmare. And there'd sure be lots of cluttering muttering going on!

Admittedly that's a bit of a ridiculous scenario. After all, none of us would tolerate such a disorganized mess in our kitchens. Isn't it strange, then, that many of us willingly put up with *exactly* that kind of a mess in our garages?

### Garage Storage Cabinets to the Rescue!

There's a wonderful array of purpose-made cabinetry just perfect for eliminating the cluttering in your garage. They're available in steel for durability, wood for beauty, or plastic for thriftiness. They can be wall-mounted or free-standing.

You'll be amazed at the amount of storage space offered by a set of garage storage cabinets. Getting all that clutter off the floor and into the cabinets is also a great way to increase the usable floor space in your garage.

And imagine walking into your garage and instantly laying hands on anything you need, just as quickly and easily as fetching a utensil from your kitchen cabinets!

### **There Might Still Be Some Muttering Going On...**

The next time a certain somebody shoos you into the garage to get started with some dreaded chore such as mowing the lawn, you might still be doing some muttering. But if you've installed your storage cabinets, any disgruntled muttering occurring won't be because of the cluttering.

And it'll take more than garage cabinets to eliminate that *other* kind of muttering!

## Chapter 2: Garage Tips for Homeowners

As you probably know, our specialties at TLC Inc. include garage [makeovers and organization](#) and [garage floor refinishing](#). And so these topics, naturally, are subjects that we write about quite frequently.

But our garage-related services - the makeovers, organization, and floor refinishing - all have one common overarching goal: making your garage a more pleasant and useful place. That's why I'm interested in most any topic that's related to making garages safer and better maintained for homeowners.

After all, I'm a homeowner with a garage, too!

And that's why I've published many articles about caring for and maintaining garages, even though the topics might not be directly related to our core service offerings.

We'll be publishing many more general-purpose garage-themed articles in the future. But this chapter offers some of the more useful articles focused on this topic that we've published in the past.

Perhaps the single most annoying garage problem that homeowners regularly encounter occurs when the garage door malfunctions. So let's begin with a piece that provides some troubleshooting tips for that unfortunate occurrence.

## 2.1: Troubleshooting Common Garage Door Problems

Garage doors are one of those oft-used items that we rarely think about until something goes wrong. But when something *does* go wrong, a garage door that won't open or close properly becomes an instant major headache.

Just like any other piece of equipment, though, something *will* eventually go wrong with your garage door. Below is a listing of some of the most common garage door problems, what causes them, and what to do about them.

- **The Door Won't Move At All (open or close).** If your garage door won't budge at all when you're trying to open or close it, there are a number of potential defects that could lie at the root of the problem. These are the most common:
  - Remote control isn't working. That's easily verified, of course, by manually pressing the open or close button on the control panel.
  - If the problem doesn't lie with the remote control, there's a myriad of potential problems that could be causing the malfunction. You may need to call upon a professional for help, but if you have some knowledge of your system, here are a few items to check:
    - The safety beam sensor
    - A problem with the opener gearing or drive chain (stripped gear or broken chain, for example)
    - A short in the wall switch circuitry or a damaged circuit board
    - A broken spring
- **Uneven Movement or Shimmying as Door Opens or Closes.** The most common cause of this problem is debris lodged in the wheel tracks. Clear out any debris from the tracks and see if that solves the problem. If not, the problem may lie in the condition of the springs.
- **Loud Squealing or Grinding Noises.** Most likely caused by debris in the wheel tracks, or lack of lubrication within the tracks. Clean the tracks and lubricate with a standard household lubricant.
- **Door Falls Too Fast When Closing.** This problem is most likely caused by springs that no longer provide adequate tension, or by broken cables. In either case, repair of this problem is a job that's probably best left to a professional garage door repair service. Garage doors are extremely heavy, and cable or spring replacement can be a hazardous job for the unknowledgeable.

## **Preventative Maintenance Will Help**

Keeping your garage door well maintained will help to reduce the likelihood of sudden service issues. Whether you perform the chore yourself or enlist the services of a professional, plan on servicing your door once every year.

This should include cleaning and lubricating all moving parts, checking and adjusting the tension of the springs, and assuring that all fasteners (bolts and screws) are secure and tight. Be sure to also inspect the cables, rollers and hinges for excessive wear.

## 2.2: Troubleshooting Common Wintertime Garage Door Problems

Those of us that have celebrated quite a few birthdays sometimes have a tendency to become a bit creaky, cranky and slow-moving during the chill of winter. And the same is often true of our garage doors.

If you're going to have a problem with your garage door, odds are it will happen during winter. That's because the frigid air of wintertime can be detrimental to both man and machine.

Below are some of the garage door problems more commonly encountered during wintertime, and some tips for fixing them.

### Whining and Complaining

When you hit the open or close button, does your garage door vigorously protest? Does it generate a cacophony of groaning, moaning, creaking and shrieking as it opens or closes?

These are the most common causes:

- **Improper lubrication.** Though you may keep your door well lubricated, it might be that you're not using the right *kind* of lubrication for winter. Cold temperatures cause many types of lubrication to thicken and become less effective. Shop for a lube that is labeled for cold weather. Generally a lighter weight oil will be better for winter.
- **Contraction distraction.** Sometimes a loudly protesting garage door has been thrown slightly out of alignment. Frigid temperatures can cause metal to contract. When that happens, the rollers can become slightly misaligned in the tracks. Unfortunately there's not much you can do about this particular problem, unless you want to make multiple adjustments throughout the year for seasonal changes.

### Door Won't Open

Lots of whining and complaining as the door opens and closes is distracting and annoying, but at least it's not a showstopper. But when you hit the open button and the door responds with sullen silence - that's obviously a major problem. And it seems to occur more frequently during winter than at any other time.

Here are the most common weather-related reasons for stubborn garage doors:

- **Improper lubrication.** Yes, again. As noted above, thickened lubrication can be responsible for noisy operation. But thickened lubrication can also cause *non*-operation. That can happen if the lubrication is thick enough to trip the switch that's designed to stop the door if it's hitting something. Replacing the lube, or a combo of swapping lube and adjusting the sensitivity of the stop switch may be required.
- **Frozen shut.** If your door refuses to open during frigid weather, it might simply be frozen in place. It's not uncommon for an ice bond between the door bottom and the floor to be too much for the opening mechanism to overcome. The immediate solution, of course, is to thaw the ice. To prevent the problem from reoccurring, look for ways to eliminate or reduce the amount of water standing where the door meets the floor.
- **Zapped electronics.** Extreme cold weather can sometimes cause problems with electrical wirings or circuitry. Hiring a qualified professional is the wisest course of action for addressing electrical problems.

### **Winter can be a Challenging Time...**

Winter can be a tough time of the year for both people and machines. For both, making a few adjustments to accommodate the cold can help to ease the inconveniences of that time of year. And that applies to garage doors.

So when it comes to planning and preparing for winter, don't leave your garage door out in the cold - so to speak.

## 2.3: Should You Install an Insulated Garage Door?

What's the largest door on your house? It's the garage door, of course.

What's the only exterior door on your house that's *not* insulated? If your home is like most, the answer to that question is also the garage door.

And that might be a problem.

### **A No-Brainer for Heated Garages...**

If you spend any time at all in your garage during cold-weather months, you probably heat the interior.

You might use nothing more than a small portable electric space heater, just enough to take the bite out of the chill. Or you might have a nice, vented, thermostat-controlled gas heater that keeps the interior toasty warm.

Either way, you're venting money into the atmosphere if your garage door isn't insulated. And a non-insulated door makes it much more difficult to keep the interior of your garage warm.

So if you heat the interior of your garage, the benefits of installing an insulated garage door are obvious.

But what if you *don't* heat (or cool) the interior of your garage? What if you never spend any time at all in your garage, winter or summer? You're not concerned about energy loss through the garage door, since you're not spending any money to heat or cool it. And you have no reason to care about the comfort level in your garage.

So for you, there really wouldn't be any advantages to installing an insulated garage door, right?

Wrong.

### **Fringe Benefits of Insulated Garage Doors**

Whether or not you're concerned with heating or cooling the interior of your garage, an insulated garage door might be worth considering. That's because insulated doors offer some fringe benefits that sometimes go unrecognized. In addition to making a heated or cooled garage more energy-efficient, an insulated garage door will also:

- **Keep an unheated garage warmer.** With an insulated garage door, your garage will stay warmer throughout the winter, even without heating the garage interior. As a very rough average, a garage with an insulated door might go through the winter about 10 degrees warmer than the same garage without an insulated door.

Does that matter enough to justify the cost of an insulated door?

Only you can decide, of course. But depending upon where you live, an insulated door might make the difference between your garage staying below or above freezing for much of the winter. Depending upon what you store in your garage, that might be important.

And keeping the garage even marginally warmer can also provide other benefits, such as making your car easier to start on cold winter mornings.

- **Be quieter.** If you're coming home late or leaving early, do you wince at the amount of racket your garage door generates when you open or close it? Does it startle everyone in the house awake? An insulated door might eliminate that problem.

That's because all of the insulation packed into an insulated door helps to absorb sound. And the insulation also adds stiffness to the door, so there's much less racket-generating shaking and shuddering as the door opens and closes.

- **Be More Durable.** Non-insulated garage doors are wimpy. Insulated garage doors are tough. There are different types of insulated garage doors, built with different kinds of insulating materials. But *any* insulated door is built more solidly than a non-insulated door. So while an insulated door will cost more upfront, you can expect it to deliver a significantly longer service life than a non-insulated door.

### **To Insulate or Not to Insulate?**

That's a question worth considering *only* if you're not heating or cooling the interior of your garage. If you're spending money to heat or cool your garage, it would be penny-wise and pound-foolish not to have an insulated garage door.

But even if you're not heating or cooling the interior of your garage, an insulated garage door might be well worth the investment. After all, not all benefits can be measured by degrees.

## 2.4: Tips for Choosing a Garage Space Heater

Your garage used to be a cluttered, junky mess. It wasn't a particularly pleasant place to be. But then you called TLC Inc. for a garage makeover. And now you have a clean, well-organized garage. There's lots of space for puttering on home projects. There's lots of space for having fun, too.

But now there's a new problem. It's wintertime. And all of that wonderfully organized garage space is c-c-c-cold!

That didn't matter much in the past, when your garage wasn't much more than a glorified storage shed. You didn't spend much time in your garage anyway, summer *or* winter.

It's different now, though. If the arctic nip in the air runs you out of your garage, it's a real loss. But there's no need to wait for the springtime thaw to resume enjoying your garage. Just select the right space heater for your garage, and carry on as usual.

### Choose the Best Space Heater for Your Situation

There are several options for heating a garage. Each comes with its own set of advantages and disadvantages:

- **Electric Space Heaters.** There's a wide assortment of electricity-powered space heaters that might be suitable for your situation.

Small, portable space heaters such as ceramic heaters, fan heaters, and oil-filled heaters are great for quickly heating up a small area. If your garage is partitioned into smaller areas, a portable electric space heater might be perfect for heating just the area you're working or playing in. But if you need to heat the entire garage, a portable electric heater probably won't be up to the task.

Another option is to install electric baseboard or wall-mounted heaters. They're much more effective at heating large areas than the smaller portable electric heaters. But be aware: While electric heat is easy and clean, it can be *very* expensive. If you live in a cold climate and you're relying on electric heat to warm your entire garage, it's going to cost you.

- **Propane, Kerosene, and Natural Gas Heaters.** Space heaters that burn fossil fuels such as propane or kerosene can be very effective for heating garage-sized spaces. And they're reasonably cost-effective, too. But they come with some downsides.

Unless you vent the exhaust to the outside, the by-products of combustion will build up inside your garage. That means that carbon monoxide and moisture will accumulate within the atmosphere of the garage. So you'll have to carefully monitor how long the unit runs to keep indoor pollutants within acceptable levels.

Direct vent heaters eliminate concerns about a build-up of indoor pollutants. Since these units are vented to the outside, you can run them as long as needed without any concern about combustion byproducts. The downside, though, is that these units are considerably more expensive. And you'll probably need to hire a professional to install them.

If you choose a ventless heater, consider selecting a unit that comes with an oxygen-depletion-sensing shutoff system. This safety feature indirectly keeps tabs on the build-up of indoor pollutants by monitoring the amount of oxygen in the air. If oxygen levels fall too low, the unit automatically shuts down - a nice safety feature.

And with all units that use flame to generate heat, you'll need to take certain precautions. You'll want to be sure the unit doesn't run while you're doing woodwork, for example, or while you're painting. Any activity that can generate airborne combustibles like sawdust or fumes could lead to a fire or an explosion.

### **Nothing Like a Clean, Well-Organized, Toasty-Warm Garage**

Make the right choice for heating your garage, and it will be a pleasant place to putter away year round. And you'll reap the full benefits of converting your garage from a junky mess to a clean and roomy place for both work and fun.

After all, it's a shame to have all that free space, and no one but Jack Frost occupying it for half the year!

## 2.5: Planning on Selling Your Home? Better Get That Garage in Shape!

In most areas of the country, the real estate market has been going through tough times in recent years. Home values have been down overall, with values plunging to record lows in some regions. So if you're facing the sale of your home, you need every advantage you can get to assure that you get the best possible value.

That, of course, includes making certain that your home is in ship-shape condition and looking its best. That's not news to anybody; it's simple common sense. But many homeowners neglect a key asset of their home during the pre-sale prettification of their property: the garage.

Gussying up your home to get it ready for market is called "staging" in real estate speak. It's an important process that helps your home present its best face to prospective buyers. And failing to include your garage in the staging process is a critical mistake, because garages have become more important to more people than ever before.

According to the National Association of Realtors in their *2013 Profile of Buyers' Home Feature Preferences*, a neat and orderly garage is high on the list of features that help to sell a home.

Here are some key areas to focus upon when staging your garage during a pre-sell prep:

- **Convert Clutter into Storage Space.** If your garage is typical, it's probably strewn hither and yon with lots of 'stuff' that's accumulated over the years. Sort through all the clutter and discard anything that you don't truly want to keep. (You'll have to do that anyway if you're going to move, right?). If the clutter chaos in your garage is daunting, consider hiring professional help to get the clutter cleared quickly and easily. (None better than TLC's [professional garage makeover](#) crews!)

The simple act of reducing the clutter in your garage will make it look so much more inviting and spacious to prospective buyers. And again, it's something you'll have to do anyway when you move. Why not do it *before* the sale, when it will do *you* the most good?

- **Install Storage Systems.** Once you've cleared the clutter as much as possible, consider taking the next step in making your garage look organized and spacious by installing some storage systems. There are many options to choose from, including wall-mounted storage systems of hooks, baskets and bins. (We recommend the StoreWALL system; reference chapter 1.)

- **Floor Finishing.** You've made great progress so far. You've converted your garage from a stuff-filled chaotic mess into a wide-open space offering massive amounts of wall-mounted storage.

But what about that ugly, bare concrete floor? Not exactly a turn-on for prospective buyers. Consider having your garage floor finished with a quality coating. (We recommend [polyaspartic polyurea](#) - ask us about it.) A finished garage floor will offer a quantum improvement in the appearance of your garage in the eyes of prospective buyers.

- **Increased Interior Lighting.** Is the interior lighting in your garage rather feeble? A dim and dingy interior will do nothing to impress prospective buyers. And a bright, cheery, well-lit interior will impress greatly. Even replacing a single bulb with a fluorescent strip can offer a massive improvement.
- **Fresh Paint.** Your garage has likely seen more than its share of abuse over the years, resulting in lots of dings, scuffs, and scrapes. It will be worth the time and cost to repair any damaged areas on the wall and ceiling, and apply a fresh coat of paint over all. Combined with your finished floor, your garage will end up looking even *better* than new.
- **Don't Forget the Door.** All the effort that you've put into sprucing up the interior of your garage will be overshadowed by a garage door that creaks, rattles and groans as it opens and closes. Be sure that your garage door opener is well lubed and working smoothly and properly, and that the door travels smoothly and quietly in its tracks.

### **Put Your Garage Center-Stage...**

Selling your home is a major undertaking, especially given the state of the market in recent years. It's important to capitalize upon every possible advantage that you can leverage to help sell your home faster, easier and for a better price.

A clean, attractive, well-ordered garage is a major plus in the eyes of most prospective homeowners - just as it will be for you when *you* shop for *your* next home. Giving your garage its fair share of TLC during the staging process will help you to proceed smoothly through the selling of your home and into the next stage of your life.

## 2.6: Six Tips For Securing Your Garage Against a Break-In

1 in 36.

That's the likelihood that your home will be the target of a break-in and burglary this year, based on past years' statistics. Home break-ins are rather rampant in the United States. And while the rate of break-ins and burglaries varies somewhat from neighborhood to neighborhood, the risk of a break-in exists no matter where you live.

And it's not just your possessions that thieves are after these days. In many cases thieves are targeting the very infrastructure of your home, smashing through walls to rip out wiring and plumbing. That's because the price of scrap metals such as copper have risen so high.

And one common point of entry for home invaders is through the garage.

### Does Your Garage Make Your House an Easy Mark for Thieves?

Garages often offer thieves easy access to a home. That's because garage security often lags behind that of the rest of the home. But in most cases, once thieves have gained access to your garage, access to your home's interior will be quick and easy.

Here are 6 tips to make your garage more secure...

**Tip #1: Secure your garage against the 6-second break-in.** Did you know that there's a quick and simple method thieves can use to gain entry to your garage in as little as 6 seconds? Fortunately, you can easily protect yourself from this break-in technique. Just wrap a tie-wrap around the disengaging arm of the safety release mechanism on your automatic garage door opener. (reference section 2.7)

**Tip #2: Don't leave garage door remote in vehicle.** If a thief breaks into your car, will he be awarded with your garage door remote control as a bonus? That won't happen if you don't leave your remote control in your car. A great alternative is to swap your current remote for a keychain remote. You'll gain security without the loss of convenience.

**Tip #3: Don't allow prospective burglars visual access.** Do you have windows mounted in your garage, or in your garage door? Consider covering them. Or if you want to allow some light to pass through, just frost them. Don't allow thieves to get a look inside to see what goodies you have that they might want, or to see whether your car is parked inside.

**Tip #4: Going out of town?** If you're going to be gone for a while, physically disable your garage door by tightening down a C-clamp on each of the door tracks. That's an easy and effective method of providing an additional level of security while you're away.

**Tip #5: Keep the exterior of your garage lit-up.** Use exterior [landscape lighting](#) to assure that all sides of your garage are well lit. Murky, shadowy areas that provide thieves with lots of cover often surround garages. If that's *your* garage, it will attract thieves like iron filings to a magnet.

**Tip #6: Get rid of that wimpy garage-to-home door.** Many doors leading from a garage to the home interior are little more secure than any other interior door. If that's the case with your home, and if thieves ever gain entrance to your garage, they'll be in your home's interior within seconds. Stop (or at least slow) them by making the access door from your garage as solid and secure as your front door.

And install a deadbolt on that door. The slight inconvenience of needing a key to enter your home from your garage is a small price to pay for the extra security you'll gain.

### **Don't Let Garage Security be an Afterthought**

The garage presents a point of vulnerability in the security of many homes. Thieves and break-in artists are well aware of that fact. So if a wanna-be burglar visits *your* home, odds are good that your garage will be the first place he checks for an easy access point.

Take steps to make your garage more secure, and send that burglar away disappointed and looking for an easier mark.

## **2.7: The 6-Second Garage Break-in**

Read this next sentence slowly: One, two, three, four, five, six. Probably took you about six seconds to read that sentence. Know what else takes that long? Breaking into your garage.

If you have an automatic garage door opener, there's a garage break-in technique that makes you very vulnerable to a break-in. This break-in method is so simple that an experienced thief can use it to gain access to your home in just a few seconds.

### **A Safety Feature Turned Against You**

All automatic garage door openers provide a safety release mechanism. This is provided so that the opening or closing of the door can be instantly halted in an emergency. If you need to stop the opening or closing of the door for some reason, you can just grab and pull the handle that activates the safety release. That handle is called a 'grab handle.' It's an important and necessary safety feature.

But this safety feature also leaves you vulnerable to a quick and easy home break-in. That's because a thief can simply slide a stiff wire between the top of the door and the weatherstripping, snatch the grab handle with the wire, and trip the safety release with a tug. An experienced thief with a straightened coat hanger can gain access to your garage within seconds.

And compounding the danger is the unfortunate fact that most doors leading from the garage to the home are not very secure. They're usually more like interior doors, with very simple locks. Deadbolts are rarely installed on doors that lead from the garage to the interior of the home.

So for all but the most inept of thieves, gaining access to the interior of your home is a simple matter once they've gained entry to your garage.

### **The 6-Second Fix**

Fortunately, there's a quick and simple fix you can install to make your garage door nearly invulnerable to the 6-second break-in. All you have to do is wrap a small plastic tie-wrap around the disengaging arm of the safety release mechanism.

The tie-wrap will provide enough resistance so that a thief won't be able to trip the safety release with a wire. But in an emergency, you'll still be able to activate the release by pulling on the grab handle with enough force to break the tie-wrap.

You'll want to be careful not to install a tie-wrap that's too strong, and that will prevent proper functioning of the release in an emergency. Plastic tie-wraps are available in a wide range of sizes and strength. Experiment a bit to find a size that provides good security, but that any family member will also be able to override in an emergency.

The 6-second garage break-in technique is something that every homeowner should know about. So spread the word to your friends and neighbors by telling them about it. Let's make thieves' lives as difficult as possible!

## Chapter 3: Weird and Wonderful Uses for Well-Organized Garages

Back in the olden days, garages were primarily detached, shed-like buildings used mostly for vehicle storage. Think cobwebs, empty oil cans, scurrying rodents, and an ever-present reek of gasoline.

But that was your father's garage (or your grandfather's). Because garages have come a long way, baby.

These days, most garages are attached. They aren't just an extra building thrown up as an afterthought; they're an integral part of a home's design. And more and more people are using their garages to live in, and for family activities - same as all the other rooms of a house.

Garages are often heated and cooled. Wired for cable or satellite TV and Internet access. Aesthetically tweaked with specialized lighting, paneled walls and finished flooring (a [TLC Inc. specialty](#)).

A garage can greatly enrich a family's life with endless possibilities.

### **What Can *You* Do with a Garage?**

What can you do with a freshly cleaned and organized garage? What *can't* you do would be the better question. Because in truth, the sky's the limit!

Once we've completed a garage cleanup and makeover, most of our clients use their garages in pretty ordinary, mainstream ways. And there's certainly nothing wrong with that. But every now and then, I'll hear about someone using a garage in a wonderfully unique and quirky way.

Of course, what might be considered "weird and wonderful" to you and me might seem perfectly reasonable and normal to someone else. Beauty, as they say, is in the eye of the beholder.

But here's the interesting thing: Garages offer such opportunity for each of us to express ourselves in our own unique ways.

### **Think About It for a Moment...**

A garage represents a huge chunk of the typical home. And for the typical homeowner, the garage eventually becomes nothing more than a junked-up, glorified storage area.

That's such a waste, because a garage that's cleaned up and cleared out offers a blank slate of endless possibilities. Once your garage is clean and clear, it might be that you'll decide to just use it for the traditional purpose of sheltering your car.

But no law says that you have to do that.

Once your garage is clean and clear, you have this huge space that you can use for anything you want. You're restricted only by your imagination. And as these following examples demonstrate, some folks have some pretty impressive imaginations!

### 3.1: Umm...Is That a Jet Airliner in Your Garage?

As we're always preaching here at TLC Inc., your garage is a land of opportunity. Cleaning up and organizing a cluttered-up garage frees up a wealth of space to do...well, just about anything you can imagine.

James Price of Pleasanton, California certainly imagined an interesting use for *his* garage. He moved a jet airliner into it. Not the whole thing, of course; it's the nose section of a Boeing 737 airliner, originally delivered to Lufthansa airlines in 1969.

Price converted the nose section - which contains the complete cockpit - into a flight simulator, just like airlines use for training pilots. It's computer-controlled, and uses full-sized projector screens surrounding the cockpit to portray a realistic flight from start to finish. Life-like sounds and vibrations accompany the visual projections, completing the illusion of reality.

Now, James Price can take flights of fancy to anyplace in the world, all from the comfort of his home garage.

And to think - you're only using *your* garage to store a bunch of boxes and stuff. Want to rethink that? You might not want a jetliner in your garage. But you can surely come up with a more interesting, more exciting use for your garage than storing 'boxes and stuff,' can't you?

Pause for a moment to let your imagination take a flight of fancy. Imagine your garage all cleaned-up and organized, with a wealth of space available for anything you desire.

If you could do anything you want with all that space - *ANYTHING* - what would it be?

### 3.2: Could Your Garage Incubate a Billion Dollar Business?

If you transformed your garage from a place of junk and clutter into a clean, neat and orderly working environment, could it become the birthplace of a billion dollar company?

Certainly it could!

And why not? It's been done many times before: a great idea, steely determination, and the cozy confines of a sheltering garage have combined to birth a baby business that grew into a world-renowned, international brand.

You probably already know about the humble garage beginnings of some of these companies: brands such as Apple, Google, and Microsoft. But here are a few more companies that you might not have known were garage-born:

- **Amazon.com.** Yep, the world's largest online retailer was born in a humble attached garage in Bellevue, Washington in 1994. In less than two decades Amazon grew into one of the most powerful and successful companies on the planet.
- **Walt Disney.** "When you wish upon a dream..." And especially, when you do it in a garage! That's where Mr. Disney started his company back in 1923. It was just a small and simple wood-framed garage in back of the house of Walt's uncle. But oh, what magnificent joy was spawned for generations of children from that simple little dream-factory!
- **Harley-Davidson.** HOG central. This iconic American company has survived the Great Depression, company restructurings and revivals, and hordes of competition from Japanese manufacturers. And yet Harley just continues to roar and rumble along in its role as the most well known motorcycle brand on the planet. Harley's birthplace? A 10-foot by 15-foot clapboard garage in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1901.
- **Hewlett-Packard.** 367 Addison Avenue, Palo Alto, California. A detached, wood-framed garage at Dave Packard's home housed the birth of HP in 1939. From there Hewlett-Packard grew to dominate the tech industry, and became one of the world's largest companies. And that little garage is also considered to be the birthplace of an entire industry: the Silicon Valley hotbed of high-tech.
- **Maglite.** Everyone's favorite flashlight, and standard issue for officers in every police department in America. And yes - started in 1955 in a small garage in Los Angeles, with the vision of founder Tony Maglica and a \$125 down payment for a lathe.

- **Mattel.** Can you imagine childhood without Mattel toys these days? It's difficult! That's because Mattel is the world's highest-grossing toy company. Started in a garage in Southern California in 1945 by Harold "Matt" Matson and Elliot Handler, Mattel's first product line was picture frames. They used leftover materials from the picture frames to build dollhouses as a sideline. The dollhouses didn't remain a 'side' operation for long!

### **Your Garage Might Not Have *Quite* So Grand a Destiny Awaiting It...**

Now, it might be that you'll get your garage all spic and span and orderly, and then do nothing more with it than enjoy it with family and friends. Nothing wrong with that - after all, *that's* what garages are for, too.

But if inspiration should strike one day, and the proverbial light bulb above your head set aglow with a world-beater of an idea for a new business, well...you'll know *just* where to get started.

## Chapter 4: Thoughts and Ramblings

As you might imagine, in my role as owner of TLC Garage Works, Inc., I spend a lot of time thinking about garages. And sometimes, well...OK, I'll just say it: sometimes some rather *weird* thoughts come to mind. I guess it comes from having garages on the brain!

So sometimes I like to share some of those thoughts in my newsletter or on my blog. They're just ramblings, mostly. But I think the ramblings contain at least a germ of relevant information.

This next piece, for example, that I first published a couple of years ago. Garages *are* spidery places, aren't they? And not many of us particularly *care* for spiders, do we?

Hence, a bit of rambling about garages and spiders...

## 4.1: Arachnophobia!

They're creepy. They're crawly. They spin webs that stick on your face and tangle in your hair and absolutely freak you out.

They lay hundreds of eggs at a time in webby sacks the size of their own bodies. Each egg sack gives birth to hundreds of tiny little predators that fan out to infest every nook, cranny and closet in your house, each with the potential of begetting multiple multitudinous generations.

They might be hiding right now in your slippers or shoes, or in the rolled-up newspaper you'll be fetching from your lawn, or in the sleeve of your coat hanging in a dark closet. (Think about *that* the next time you throw on a coat you haven't worn in a while and shove your hands into those deep, dark pockets!)

We're talking about spiders, of course.

If you're like most people, you don't like them very much. If you're like a lot of people, you *dislike* them very much. And if you're like a significant number of people, they scare the absolute bejeebers out of you.

### **They're Not So Bad...Mostly**

Would it help to know that spiders are beneficial creatures for the most part? No, probably not. It's true, though. There are around 4,000 species of spiders that call North America home. Of those thousands of species, only two are considered to be truly dangerous: the black widow and the brown recluse. Experts say the commonly perceived dangers of these two species of spiders are probably overblown. Fewer than 10 Americans die every year as a result of a spider bite. Statistically speaking, you're *far* more likely to die from bee stings, dog bites or lightning strikes.

And spiders actually do a lot of good. They are predators of insects, and having a population of spiders in your home can do wonders in keeping insect pests at bay. If the spiders in your home aren't bothering you, most experts recommend that you just leave them be.

Not buying that, huh? Most people don't.

In fact, the fear of spiders, called arachnophobia, is one of the most common of phobias. In the U.S., only glossophobia (the fear of public speaking) and necrophobia (the fear of death) are more common. And even most people that aren't *irrationally* afraid of spiders prefer not to share hearth and home with them.

## **Your First Point of Defense is your Garage**

Experts tell us that your best chance of keeping down the population of spiders in your home is by keeping them *out* of your home. Spiders are awfully good at hiding, and once they're established in your home they can be *very* difficult to root out and destroy.

And the most inviting entryway into your home, from a spider's perspective, is through your garage.

Most spider home invasions gain the first foothold in the garage - especially garages that are cluttered-up with lots of stuff. A garage loaded with junk and clutter is spider heaven. It gives them lots of places to hide and raise new generations of young. And such an environment also plays host to the insects that spiders eat.

So clearing, cleaning, and organizing your garage should be your first campaign in your counteroffensive against spidery invaders.

Once you've cleaned the clutter out of your garage, stay vigilant for spider webs on an ongoing basis, and use a shop vac to keep your garage clear of any webs and spiders that you happen to spot. Do that on a regular basis, and you'll likely destroy any egg sacs before they're able to hatch their hordes of home invaders.

## **We Ain't Afraid of no Itty Bitty Spiders!**

Getting your garage clean, neat and organized - and keeping it that way - is your single best defense against having an arachnophobic meltdown. But if just the thought of wading into a full-scale cleanup of your spider-infested garage sends shivers down your spine like fingernails screeching across a blackboard, give us a call. One of our crews will be glad to handle your garage cleanup for you.

After all, we're professionals. We clean up spidery garages all the time. You think we're afraid of a few little spiders? Don't be silly; course we're not. They don't bother us a bit. Mostly.

## 4.2: Are You Afraid of Your Garage?

Monsters live under beds. Adults aren't always smart enough to know this, but every kid knows that it's true. Just because you can't see them doesn't mean that they're not there. That's why you don't sleep with your hand dangling down close to the floor. That's why you keep your feet on top of the bed.

Under-the-bed monsters, you see, are not allowed by the laws of Monsterdam to roam around. They must stay underneath the bed. But any body part that comes within their reach - like a dangling hand or a hanging foot - is fair game.

Monsters live in closets, too - especially bedroom closets, at night, with the door left open and providing a clear view to your bed. *Those* kinds of closets are just crawling with monsters. That's why most kids know better than to venture into a dark closet at night with the lights out.

Closet monsters are like under-the-bed monsters in that they're not usually visible. Not *usually* visible. But sometimes, a kid who knows what he or she is looking for can spot them when a closet door is left open and the lights are out. Stare into the murky, spooky depths of that darkened closet long enough, and that monster will sometimes materialize like a ghostly apparition. Not for long - only for an instant. But that's long enough.

That's why you don't tempt fate by leaving the closet door open at night. And if you realize too late that a door was left open after the lights are out and you're tucked into bed, you just stay under the covers and keep your eyes averted from that black hole in the wall. Morning will be soon enough to close that closet door.

### Adults Have Monsters, Too...

Under-the-bed monsters and closet monsters - those are kid monsters. They're not after adults. And again, most adults aren't smart enough to know that those monsters are even there, anyway.

But there's another kind of monster that adults *do* fear. It lives in garages - garages that are cluttered-up, junked-up messes.

And in an interesting twist, garage monsters don't care about kids, and kids don't care about them. Kids can play all day in a monster-infested garage without a bit of concern. For kids, in fact, the more cluttered a garage, the better. It's lots more fun to play in than a neat, clean, and orderly garage. (Not counting all the cool family-play-room kind of uses that a clean and well-organized garage can offer.)

What's that you say? You don't believe in garage monsters?

That's OK; you don't have to believe in garage monsters for them to exist. But if your garage is a cluttered-up mess, those monsters are there. They scare you every time you set foot in your garage. Maybe not a terror-like fear, but a very real sense of discomfort and anxiety, at the least.

It's those monsters that cause the overwhelming sense of anger you feel when you're looking for something that you desperately need, and that you know is in that garage, but that you just can't find no matter how long you look.

*(In case you didn't know, garage monsters take great delight in moving around the very thing that you're looking for. They'll let you get close to the thing, and then they'll snatch it away and cram it under a different pile of clutter. The longer you look, and the angrier you get, the more they enjoy the game!)*

It's *those* monsters that cause you to feel absolute despair about all that junk stored in your garage. Don't you just sometimes stand and stare at everything that's piled in your garage? What can you possibly do with all that stuff? It just seems hopeless.

Garage monsters feed off all that hopelessness and despair.

### **Even Monsters Have to Obey the Rules**

You may not be ready to admit it yet, but I think you know that garage monsters exist. If you have them in your garage, you know it. You don't have to call them 'monsters' if you'd rather not, but whatever you call them, they're there.

But they don't have to be.

You see, monsters are just like the rest of us: they have to obey the rules. And the rules forbid garage monsters from living in clean and orderly garages. That's OK, because they really don't like living in those kinds of garages anyway. Not much fun.

So if you've been living with your garage monsters for a while and have grown tired of them, they're actually pretty easy to drive away. All you have to do is call TLC Inc. to [clean up your garage](#). Problem handled, and monsters banished.

To the unsuspecting public, you see, we're a garage cleanup and organization service. But in reality, we're monster fighters. We specialize in garage monsters.

And just in case you're wondering - no, we can't help you with the monsters in your kid's room. That's a whole different breed of monster. But don't worry; your kid knows how to handle them.

### 4.3: The Last Frontier

What would you consider to be the last great frontier? Is it outer space? Is it the Antarctic barrens? Is it the deep ocean? (Scientists say we know more about the surface of the moon than about the deepest depths of our own oceans!)

What's the last great unknown that's hardly been explored by mankind? Where are the last great reserves of open territory, ripe and waiting for exploration, occupation, and development?

On a cosmic scale the answer to that question just might be outer space or the ocean deep. But on a more personal scale, might the answer be your garage?

Think about it: could your garage be considered the "last great reserve of open territory" in your personal sphere?

#### **What A Waste...**

Consider the total size of your home in terms of square footage. Your garage is a huge percentage of that total area. Isn't it a shame to leave such a vast potential untapped?

Sure, you're probably using your garage for the storage of tools and equipment. It's probably packed with lots of odds and ends, boxes, and - if we may be blunt - junk. But your garage is an integral part of your home. It could be so much more than just a glorified storage shed.

#### **Consider The Possibilities**

You could transform your garage - that last frontier; that vast untapped resource - into a center of family fun and activity.

Your garage could be:

- A game room.
- A home gym.
- A home theater.
- An extra bedroom or guest room.
- A home office.
- A family room.

The possibilities are truly endless.

And by converting that currently forlorn frontier into one of those many possibilities, you will enrich your family's life immeasurably.

### **Here Be Dragons!**

In times past, when much of our planet was an unexplored entity, it's said that mapmakers of the time often inscribed the borders of unknown territories with the phrase: Here be dragons. And of course, that menacing phrase would be accompanied with frightful drawings of ferocious and intimidating beasties. The message was clear: Journey beyond these boundaries, and woe be unto ye!

But while your garage - *your* vast, untapped frontier - might be an intimidating, nasty mess, it's not unsalvageable. We can help you organize and update it. We can help you tap into that vast reserve of space and render it suitable for whatever development you'd like to pursue.

There be no dragons there, and we'd be glad to take the lead in proving it to you!

## Chapter 5: A Garage Makeover Could Change Your Life

Sound a bit overdramatic? A garage makeover changing your life?

It may *seem* a bit farfetched, but we've seen it countless times: A family calls us to help with a garage that is, shall we say, in a bit of distress. Time and neglect have not been kind to that garage. The garage has become sort of an island of shame in an otherwise beautiful and comfortable home.

And don't think for a second that that distressed garage doesn't have a distressing impact upon the life of that family. It does.

Look at the 'before' photos and you'll see:

- Oil and grease stained floors
- Dingy gray walls
- Disorganized, jumbled piles of 'stuff'
- Scruffy, beaten-up stairs laden with piles of junk just waiting to cause an accident

### **Not a Good Place...**

If *your* garage happens to look more like the 'before' photos than the 'after' photos, then you know that this family's garage had become a less-than-pleasant place to be.

Sure, they could still use the garage for certain garage essentials like storing things. (They could probably even get a vehicle in the garage if they moved and re-arranged enough of the haphazardly stored stuff!)

But a garage can be so much more than just a junk shed on steroids. A garage - a *good* garage - can add so much to the quality of your family's life.

### **What a Good Garage *Should* Be:**

- A clean and cheery place to putter
- A roomy (and safe!) place for fun and games
- Sort of an informal living room, or a hobby room
- A bright and relaxing place to just simply hang out

A garage can be - *should* be - all of these things, just as the garage in the before/after photos became for *that* family.

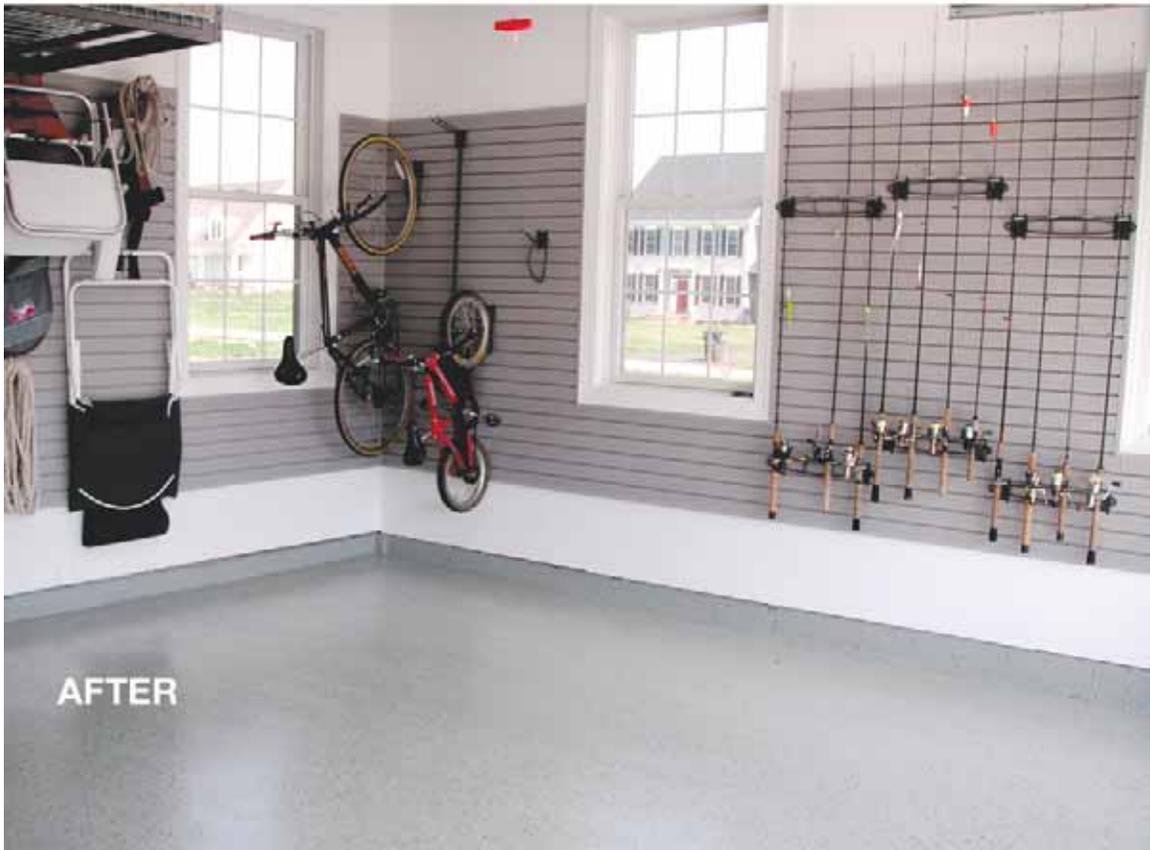
Look at the 'after' photos and you'll see that their garage was transformed from a cluttered, dreary, borderline-dangerous place to a warm, cheery, inviting, *organized* sanctuary. An eyesore was transformed into a beautiful extension of their lovely home.

And that transformation *did* have an impact upon the lives of that family. Their garage was no longer a negative in their lives; it was a positive. Their made-over garage *did* improve the quality of their lives - perhaps not a huge, dramatic improvement, but an improvement nonetheless.

Quite a benefit from so simple a thing as a garage makeover, wouldn't you agree?



BEFORE



AFTER





## **If I Can Help You In *Any* Way...**

I hope you've enjoyed this select collection of articles that I've published in the past. I hope that you've found it to contain some useful information, and that maybe you've even been entertained a bit.

But most importantly, I hope you'll contact me if I can be of help to you in any way. Though this ebook has focused upon garages, we serve clients in several areas under the TLC Inc. umbrella:

[TLC Garage Works](#)  
[TLC Basement Remodeling](#)  
[TLC Lawn Sprinklers](#)  
[TLC Outdoor Landscape and Lawn Lighting](#)  
[TLC Holiday Lighting](#)

My businesses have been built upon providing unparalleled customer service to customers just like you. If you're not already a TLC customer, it will be my honor to add you to our list of wonderful customers and friends.

Sincerely,

**Bob Carr**