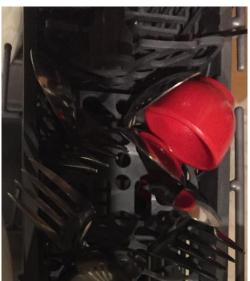# Pre-sort to Save Time, Version 1.1

By R. G. Sparber

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I am often faced with the mundane task of sorting objects. Could be bolts, screws, nuts, or even silverware. The goal is always the same: get it done as fast and accurately as possible.

Sometimes it is possible to do some or even all of the sorting at an earlier time. This can really speed up the chore.
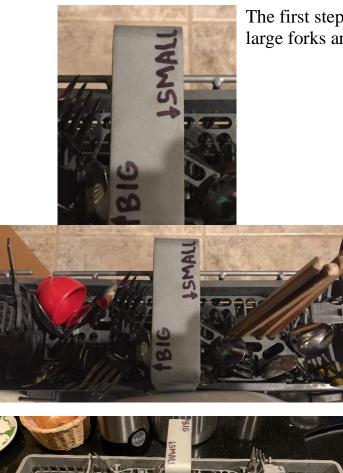

One essential but boring chore is unloading the dishwasher. There I find two sizes of forks and two sizes of spoons. Placed side by side, the differences are obvious.

But when viewed from above in close proximity, the differences are hard to see.

I must pull out all forks and sort them. Next come the spoons which get the same treatment. This process prolongs an already deadly boring chore. There has to be a better way!

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The first step was to define the area to the left of the handle for large forks and spoons. The right is for small forks and spoons.

As people place their silverware into the basket, they know the size of the utensils used. It is just a matter of dropping them in with a little thought.

This simple change to the process greatly reduces the time I burned putting away the silverware.

It didn't take me long to realize the process could be improved. I now have people further sort by type. The large forks go on the far left, large spoons to the near left (close to the handle). Similarly for small forks and spoons. Even when some people forget, I still save a lot of time.

Eventually I realized that the difference in weight between small and large forks and spoons is great enough that I don't need to look at what is in my hand. Holding a bunch of utensils in my left hand, I pick out one with my right hand. I instantly know if it is small or large. I can then keep my eyes on where I want to put the item in the basket.

Now I can get back to my shop where I really belong!

If you wish to be contacted each time I publish an article, email me with just "Article Alias" in the subject line.

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