

**The Car as Your Second Purse**  
by  
**Sweet Karen Scott**

*Sweet Karen Scott was a real special feature at a Sweet Monday in my home. I hope this article she wrote brings you a smile and buys you some more sweet time! Kim*

We have a few more days until our two-month journey comes to an end. We've worked on getting rid of "Just One More" thing, keeping tighter rein on our addresses and correspondence, contemplating just what our motivation is for why we do what we do, and several other areas of de-cluttering and organization.

Many of us will be in our cars quite a bit over the next few months—traveling, buying gifts, and running around to sports practices. Thinking about this makes me chuckle because I remember the frequent question people ask when they see my tiny purse, "How can you carry such a small pocketbook/purse?" and my usual response; "My car is my purse."

Now for me, the real reason I carry a small purse is to 1) keep the weight on my shoulder to a minimum to prevent any future neck pain and 2) to make it not-such-a-crisis if I ever lose my purse. To this end, I carry just two credit cards, my driver's license, a couple of grocery store ID cards, the library card, other ID cards like the insurance card, an emery board, one pen, lip gloss, car keys and a tiny cell phone. All total it weighs about 8 oz. Since I only use two credit cards I can call the companies in a flash if my purse is ever stolen—yes, I know where to find the 800 numbers for my card companies at home.

You can see that I need the car and all of its pockets, glove compartment and trunk space to hold everything else!

How is your car doing? On the [www.flylady.net](http://www.flylady.net) site she talks about having UFOs in your car and how dangerous some of them (bowling balls, aluminum baseball bats) can be if we're ever in a crash. So, what do we do about stocking our cars with important stuff and safely keeping everything else in place?

Here's a list of what I think is important stuff for cars:

- ☺ **Up-to-date maps** (when your children ask what you want for Christmas, tell them you want a map of Richmond that costs at least \$12.00)
- ☺ **Tissues**
- ☺ **Roll of paper towels**
- ☺ **Church directory**
- ☺ Last year's white and yellow page **phonebooks**
- ☺ **Roll of quarters for tolls** (keep in ashtray)
- ☺ **Flashlight with workable batteries**
- ☺ **Old laundry basket, heavy cardboard box, or an old, stand-up tote bag**
- ☺ **Plastic gas canister** (empty!)

- ☺ Empty gallon jug (to hold emergency water for the car)
- ☺ Quart of oil you always use (another Christmas present!)
- ☺ Cheap canister of ground cloves or cinnamon
- ☺ Small memo book & pencil (keep in glove compartment)
- ☺ \$20.00 or so in cash (keep in glove compartment, just in case)

Put the old laundry basket in your trunk and keep the phone books, empty gas canister, quart of oil, and empty gallon jug inside of it. If your flashlight is metal and might turn into a UFO then add that to the box.

Of course, we start inside the car by cleaning it out. Bring out an empty basin and fill it with the contents of the glove compartment, side pockets, behind-the-seat pockets as well as anything else that looks valuable. With the trashcan at your side, toss anything outdated and put away items that belong somewhere else.

If an officer asked to see your license and registration, would you know what the registration looked like? Take a minute to figure this out as you put items back into the glove compartment. Toss/shred old auto information. You did wipe out the glove compartment with a damp cloth, right? If you keep your glove compartment fairly empty you can lock your house keys in it when you're shopping; this will decrease the weight of your pocketbook. Make sure you don't have "mystery" keys on your key rings, adding extra weight.

If your maps are small you can put them in the glove compartment; otherwise, put them in the pocket behind the passenger seat so you can reach them easily when you pull over in a neighborhood and have to consult the map. The church directory can go there, too. There is usually room to put a flashlight in a pocket like this.

Save the driver's side door pocket for trash—it's easy to reach when you're at the gas station and have a minute to empty the trash.

If your passengers won't use the paper towels as a paper airplane while you're driving you can keep them in the car. If not, put them in the basket in the trunk.

Tissue boxes don't hold up well in a car so just get a small box and keep it on the passenger seat if you drive alone most of the time.

If you want to keep your car interior nice and unsticky, how about just allowing water to be consumed in the car? You can buy inexpensive bottled water and keep it in the trunk. Just buy as much as you might use in a month or two because the heat tends to make the plastic brittle.

If you enjoy music in the car, how about just having a couple of CDs or tapes at a time in the car? They'll last longer (at least the tapes) if they're usually stored in the house. You might have fewer arguments about what's being played, too.

Unless you have white/beige carpet in your car, use either ground cloves or cinnamon as an air freshener. Next time you vacuum under the floor mats sprinkle a few shakes of spice onto the carpet. Rub it in with your fingers so it disappears. As the floorboards of the car warm up you'll have a nice fresh smell.

During the week my car gets real messy, as does my purse. After a few days of this mess I clean both of them out, putting away receipts, stuff that should go somewhere in the house and finding items I was supposed to return to the store. I have a family member who keeps her car almost immaculate; she just feels better when it looks nice and tidy. Others, like me, have to get to a point of "I can't stand it anymore!" before we stop and clean it up.

Whichever way you handle car clutter, you'll find that cleaning it out and having it stocked with items you will eventually need will help you feel a little more in control, in case the unexpected occurs. If you have little "riders" who rebel about your wishes to keep the space organized or wonder why they can't squirt juice packs at their friends in your car anymore, remember who's the driver.