



HOW-TO GUIDE *closet cleanout*

CLEANING OUT *your closet*

Start!

Label five large boxes or plastic bags with the following categories:

- Off-season
- Donate
- Sentimental
- Altering or mending
- Trash



Donate it

Feel good about cleaning out, give gently used items to a local nonprofit. Help your closet by helping someone else!

DECIDE WHAT TO KEEP

FASHION DOUBT? THROW IT OUT!

Rid your closet of clothing that you swear will someday be back in style, but you wouldn't be caught dead in today. Even if similar styles come back, the materials and color combinations are never quite the same. Donate these items!

USE IT OR LOSE IT! Just ask yourself, "If it's too good to get rid of, why am I not wearing it?" If you don't feel confident and comfortable wearing it, or it no longer conveys the image you wish to present to the world, get rid of it.

STILL GOT A TAG? THROW IT IN THE BAG! We've all purchased an item that looked great in the store, but later realized it looked better on the hanger. Take it to a consignment store or give it away.

BUTTON LOST? GIVE IT A TOSS!

Store clothes that need repairing or altering in a separate location. Make repairs a priority.

BIG OR SMALL, NO GOOD AT ALL! Do you have one wardrobe for before the diet and one for after? Keep clothes that you believe may fit in the next year (be honest!), but remove them from your primary closet.

MISSING ONE? THAT'S NO FUN! Did your dryer eat another sock? Still looking for that missing glove? Stop fooling yourself — get rid of orphaned items!

OUT OF SEASON? IT'S CLOSET TREASON! Store out-of-season clothing in labeled boxes somewhere else.

ARE YOUR SHOES SINGIN' THE BLUES?

If the toes are curled up or the surface is too scuffed — even if you spent a bundle on them — get rid of them. The same applies to purses and other accessory items.

SENTIMENTAL? THE SOLUTION'S ELEMENTAL! If it makes you happy and gives you pleasure, it's not junk. So keep your letterman jacket, wedding and/or prom dress, but store it in a labeled box elsewhere.

OVERFLOW? SOMETHING'S GOT TO GO!

The best way to avoid clutter is to get rid of one old item every time you add a new one. If purses are your passion, choose a sensible number of them to keep — and stick to it.



GETTING *organized*

DIVIDE AND CONQUER

Follow these steps to create a space where things are easy to see, easy to reach and easy to keep clean!

1. Divide your clothes into groups: Short (blouses and shirts), Outfits (suits, etc.) and Long (dresses)
2. Now that they're grouped for easy match-ups, file by color light to dark, then again by sleeve length and casual versus dressy.
3. Hang everyday items on space-saving, non-slip velvet hangers. Use heavy, shaped hangers for suits and jackets. Make sure all clothing and hangers face the same direction.
4. Separate your suits and outfit pieces — this allows you to see more coordinating combinations.
5. Fold sweaters (to maintain shape), T-shirts and jeans, and store them on open shelves in

the shelf tower where they can be seen. If you can't see it, you won't wear it.

6. Fit more shoes on each shelf by alternating the toe-heel direction. Sort shoes by height and adjust the shelves accordingly.
7. For men's dress shoes, invest in shoe trees. Shoe trees extend the life of your shoes by holding their shape (and cedar shoe trees help eliminate odor).
8. Label out-of-season storage containers to ensure you find items easily between seasons.
9. Keep a bag or basket in your closet for when you find items that don't look good or no longer fit. When the basket is full, donate the clothing.
10. In kids' closets, try using labels to teach your children to put things where they belong. If they're too young for written labels, use pictures instead.



80/20 Rule

You wear 20 percent of your clothes
80 percent of the time — the rest just
take up valuable space.

STAYING *organized*

MAINTAIN YOUR NEWFOUND ORDER

FINISH YOUR LAUNDRY

Fold clothes when they emerge from the dryer, iron them while they're still slightly damp, and take clothing up to the bedroom if you're going there anyway. If your clothes are wrinkled when you remove them from the dryer, use the appropriate hanger from the closet but hang the garment out to air and "de-wrinkle." Staying on top of laundry is much easier when the clothing items are returned to where they belong immediately after being washed.



MAXIMIZE YOUR STORAGE

Remove clothing from dry cleaner's plastic bags and transfer them to your personal hangers when you put them away. The plastic bags can damage clothing if used for long-term storage, and wire hangers can cause clothing to lose shape. Maximize closet space by storing running shoes and outerwear, such as jackets and sweatshirts, in the closet near the front door or entryway. Space under the bed, or in the garage or basement, works best for seasonal and long-term storage of sentimental items.

MONITOR YOUR HABITS

If you have a hard time deciding what to get rid of when it comes time for seasonal closet cleaning, simply turn all of your hangers the opposite direction at the start of the season — when you wear an item, flip your hanger. At the end of the season you will know what to keep and what to donate, making space for next season's purchases.



Everything else

There are dozens of closet organizational products for storing accessories such as scarves, jewelry and ties. Investigate what works best for your space and budget. Below are a few that are easy and inexpensive to implement!

- Put empty wall space to work. Attach towel bars for ties or scarves. Install a hook to set out tomorrow's outfit. Scarves can be hung on a peg rack ("accordion" coffee mug rack).
- Use gift boxes and empty shoeboxes in drawers to separate undergarments and leggings.
- Necklaces and bracelets can be hung on a peg rack in the closet. Or, if you have wall space or any empty door back, use adhesive hooks to store necklaces. Earrings can be easily stored and separated in plastic ice cube trays — one pair per "cube."



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