

# Declutter and Organize Your Closet



Handout accompanying the  
presentation by  
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*Is your closet full of clothing but you have nothing to wear? Learn how to effectively declutter your closet and keep it organized. The benefits of an organized closet are many – you'll save time getting dressed, streamline doing laundry, save money by not buying items like what you already own, avoid purchasing yet another organizing gadget that doesn't help, and feel better about yourself when your closet only contains clothing that make you feel great.*

1. *Clear items that you can't, won't, or don't wear.*
2. *Identify what you do wear.*
3. *Store similar items together so you see what you have.*
4. *Create routines that keep your clothing clean and available.*



## Declutter items that you can't, won't, or don't wear

**Method One** - Sort through the items in your closet one item at a time. Examine (and try it on, if necessary) and then return it to the closet if it's something you wear. As you put items back into the closet, group similar items (casual/work/formal; sleeveless tops, short-sleeved,  $\frac{3}{4}$ -sleeved, long sleeve; a combination of grouping methods).

**Method Two** – Remove one group of similar items (for example, tee shirts or pants), compare what you have and keep what you wear. Return items to the closet as a group.

**Method Three** – Set aside four-to-eight hours. Pull everything from the closet; sort into groups of similar items; decide what to keep and what to recycle, sell, or donate.

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### Identify what you do wear

- The items you declutter from your closet tell you what you don't like to wear (yellow, geometric patterns).
- The items you keep tell you what you do wear (red, flowing fabrics, cardigans).
- The outfits you wear for the activities that you engage in all the time tell you what pieces you need in your closet and in what quantities.

## 3

### Store similar items together

Whether you hang or fold items, keep similar items together. For example, items may flow from sleeveless tops to short-sleeved tops to  $\frac{3}{4}$ -length sleeves to long sleeved tops. Avoid dividing a group of items between a drawer and the closet or you'll lose track of what you have.

Don't buy any organizing tools until after you've decluttered. They should help you retrieve and put away an item with ease, as opposed to simply making your closet look neat.

Live with your decluttered closet and note any problems you have retrieving items. Look for organizing tools that eliminate that problem.

- Use double-hang and long hang rods instead of a single rod to get the best use of vertical space.
- Put shoes on a rack to save floor space. Only own what fits on the rack!
- Use shelf dividers to keep piles from slipping and items like purses upright.
- Use multi-shelf hanging closet organizers if you don't store folded clothing in a dresser. These allow you to neatly stack tee shirts, jeans, sweaters.
- Over-the-door pocket organizers are great for scarves, gloves, hats, wallets, evening bags – small, but not jewelry-small – accessories.
- Before buying a hanger for ties, scarves, or belts make certain that you really wear those items. Don't organize what you don't wear.
- If no one at home hangs their coat on a hanger, consider using hooks.



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## Create routines that keep your clothing clean and available.

- Owning less clothing makes it easier to do laundry and put away clothing.
- Get in the habit of hanging clothing or putting it in the hamper as you undress. At the end of the day, do a sweep through your home to pick up and return any clothing, outerwear, or shoes to where they belong.
- Keep a donation box in the corner of every closet so individuals can pop items in there when they find something they can't, don't, or won't wear.

### Ideas for simplifying your laundry routines

- Have two hampers and sort dark from light clothing as you remove items.
- Use a small hamper that holds a single load of laundry.
- Doing one load of laundry a day can be less intimidating than thinking you'll do 6+ loads of laundry on Saturday.

### Takeaways

1. Avoid filling your closet with clothing you can't, don't, or won't wear.
2. Store the same types of items together so you can find what you're looking for.
3. Doing the laundry more frequently makes it easier to put away clothing – it takes less time to put away a week's worth of clothing than a month of laundered items.