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## If closets could talk: from chaos to confidence

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Source: Canva

When you stand in front of your closet each morning, what does your closet say to you? It literally can set the mood for your entire day!

Is your closet a chaotic mess, and after five minutes of rummaging through your hanging clothes, you can't find that blue, sleeveless blouse, give up and wear something else? Then you find the blouse the next day wedged between two pairs of pants? Or are you choosing that sweater you've tried on three times already this month, still don't like the way it looks, but are keeping it anyway because you love the colors and paid a lot of money for it?

Does this resonate with you? Do you end up with a pile of discarded outfit options? Do you dream of a morning where getting dressed is simple?

How can we create an organized closet that gives us confidence and energy when we start our day? The answer is to only have items in your closet that you like to wear, that fit, and you can find.

Where do I start?

There are some organizers that want you to take every item of clothing you own and throw it on the bed. I can honestly tell you that this extreme method would never work for me or any of my clients. Talk about being overwhelmed. ... I suggest a method that has a 100% success rate because it is a manageable process. Follow this "Remove-Sort-Eject" method, schedule it in your calendar, and have a deadline. This process is done with only one category of clothing at a time (jeans, shorts, sweaters, blazers, T-shirts, etc.) so you don't feel so overwhelmed.

Remove-Sort-Eject Method

Before you begin, create boxes with the following labels: Consignment, Donation, Repairs, Recycle, Other Sizes. Start by removing and relocating any clothes that belong in other closets such as coats, rain boots, hats, gloves, etc. Next, bring out one clothing category at a time.

Look at each item and ask yourself these questions: 1) Do I like the way it looks? (If you don't like the way it looks today, you probably won't like the way it looks tomorrow); 2) Does it fit? (If not, pack it in the "Other Sizes" box and put a date on the box for 6 months from now to try them on. Note: Do not keep clothes in your closet that do not fit; they will never make you feel good); 3) Do I have 15 items in this category but only wear four? (Hello black pants!); 4) Does it have stains, holes, or pills? (If yes, it does not go in the donation box, it goes straight to the recycle box.); 5) Is it sentimental? If yes, keep it ... maybe not in the front and center of the closet); 6) Does it need repair? (If yes, put it into the "Repair" box); 7) Is the tag still attached but you have never worn it? (If yes, give yourself a small pity party for overpaying for a bad purchase, then remove it); 8) Is it out of season? (Can you store these in a container under your bed or on the high shelves of your closet?)

After you have completed the category, hang it on the left side of your closet so it's all together. Seeing your progress will keep moving you forward. (Tip: As you are removing the items you no longer want, keep a list of clothes you need to replace.)

When the sorting and ejecting is complete, now you get to arrange the clothes that are hanging.

Your New Organized Closet

There are many, many ways to organize your clothes. Here are the two I use most often: 1) Type of function: work, formal, exercise, casual, comfy, etc., then by color; 2) Type of clothing such as pants, button down shirts, blazers, long sleeve, short sleeve, etc. Then by color.

I suggest that whatever system you use, make it simple. Be careful not to cram more than will fit into your closet, that's when you will start to get into trouble. Remember, your closet can set the mood in the morning and if it's chaos in the closet, it probably contributes to chaos in your mind (maybe that's just me).

Tip: Hang all clothes on matching hangers, it's a bonus if the hangers are thin.

Tip: Fold all of your drawer items like file folders so you can see what you have. We wear 20% of our clothes 80% of the time. Just try to unravel that fact. We also wear the clothes we can see (not the ones at the bottom of a drawer).

Tip: Install a stick-on light inside the closet, it's a game changer when you have enough light to see what you have!

Tip: Separate your navy and black clothes with white clothes in between.

How the Heck Do I Keep it This Way?

Sorry to break it to you, but you have to maintain your closet. I recommend having a donation bag near or in your closet. Some clients turn their hangers to face the opposite direction after they have worn the garment so they know which pieces are worn the most. After six months, you can see the items that were never worn and you can donate them. You can also use the 1-In-1-Out rule to keep the closet from becoming overstuffed. Like any system, it will require adjustments from time to time. You can do this!

This could be the beginning of a brand new relationship with your closet. Watch out, your closet just might wink at you as you leave!

Resources:

Consignment - [www.thredup.com](http://www.thredup.com), [www.therealreal.com](http://www.therealreal.com), [www.poshmark.com](http://www.poshmark.com), Facebook Marketplace, Nextdoor

Donation - [www.donationtown.org](http://www.donationtown.org), [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org), [www.hospiceeastbay.org](http://www.hospiceeastbay.org) Recycling for Clothing - [www.retoldrecycling.com](http://www.retoldrecycling.com), [www.bluejeansgogreen.org](http://www.bluejeansgogreen.org)



Source: Canva



Professional Organizer, Jennifer Raftis, CPOr founded Efficiency Matters, LLC to help you with all of your organizing needs for your home and business. She is a Certified Professional Organizer and an active board member with NAPO, National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals. She is also an

independent representative for The Container Store and has expertise in designing closets, garages, pantries, playrooms and more. In addition, she is a Corporate Organizing and Productivity Consultant and has worked with Fortune 500 companies across the U.S. Another large part of her business is move management especially working with seniors who are downsizing. She and her husband have lived in Moraga for 30 years, raising 3 kids and working countless volunteer hours with many local non-profit organizations and schools. Jennifer@efficiencymattersllc.com, 925-698-3756 www.efficiencymattersllc.com

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[back](#)

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