

## 4 Professional Secrets for the Organized Closet

By Dawn Roth

Here's how an organizing consultant would tackle any standard closet. You can get the same results by following each step.

1. **Find Free Money.** The closet must be cleared of things that are past their usefulness. Most people keep things 3 years longer than they should. All this clutter represents found money for you if you can do one of three things. Take the items in the best shape to a consignment shop where they will resell them and split the income with you. If you are industrious have a yard sale where you can sell almost anything for a price. If neither of these work for you, work with a charity organization so you can experience the priceless act of giving and get a tax deduction at the same time. The square footage you clear alone is a cost savings.
2. **Sort Only the Best.** Your closet should be the home of your present day wardrobe and its trappings. Don't treat it as a storage locker or a hope chest. Make a place for things that meet these criteria: current style, good condition, easy to care for, love to wear, feels comfortable, worn in the last year or planned to wear within the next year. If you are having trouble with this decision ask yourself how many times you have considered releasing the item vs. how many times you have used it.
3. **Get Creative.** Before you spend your found money on snazzy storage gadgets, take a good look at things you already own with an organizer's eye. Could you turn a box or bin on its side to create a quick shelf? How about double hanging slacks? If you used a step stool, could you now place high-use items on the top shelf? If you find you do need a certain item you do not already own, measure carefully and wait until you are done purging before purchasing.
4. **Order and Classify.** To make dressing easy, putting away a snap and shopping focused, use categories for your clothes. Group them by season (winter, summer) or style (career, casual). Put all suits, slacks, pants, blouses, short sleeved shirts, sweaters, shoes and accessories together. For even greater order colorize them. Why do you think retail stores sort by color as well? It makes it simple to find, return or reorder any piece.

You go in your closet everyday. Doesn't it make sense to spend some time to ensure it is a pleasant, satisfying experience?

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