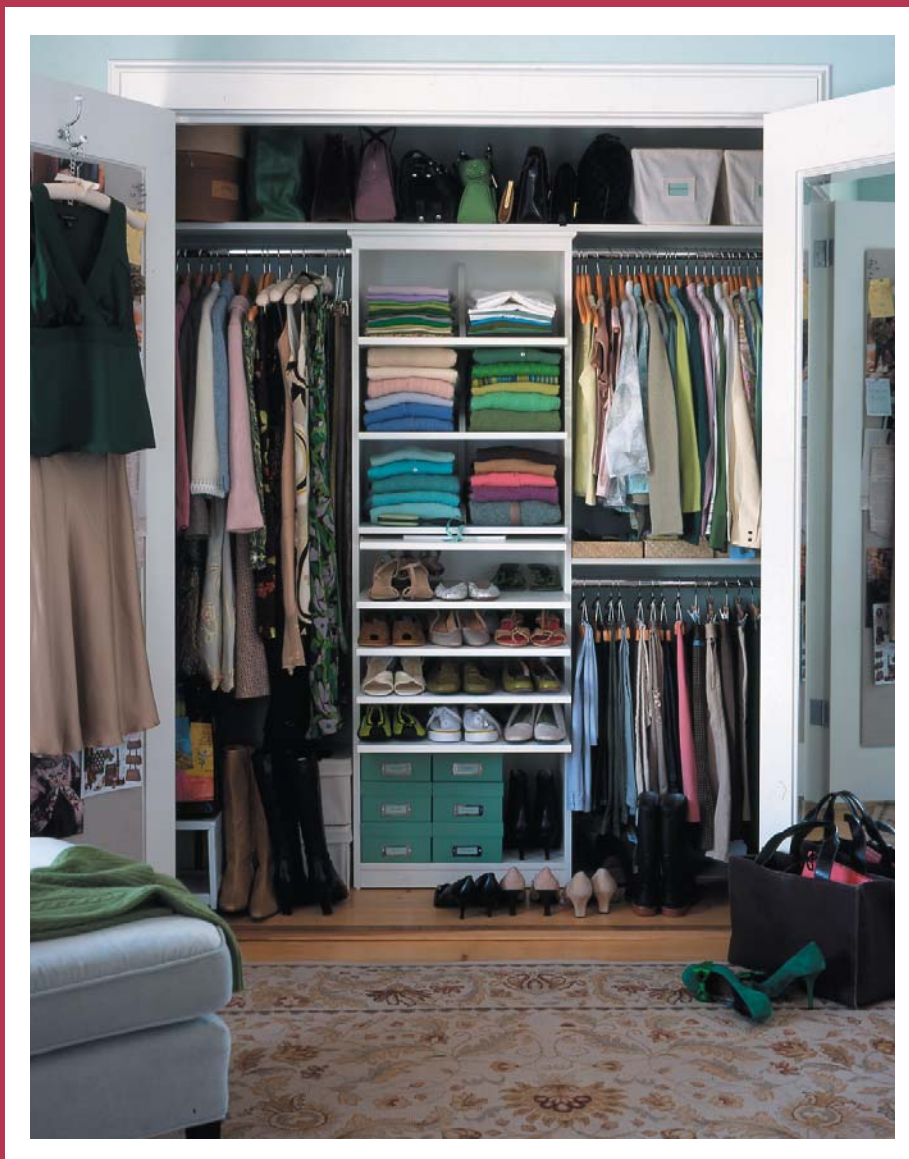


Wardrobe Care 101



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WASHING, DRYING, IRONING, & MENDING CLOTHES
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Ten Tips for a Perfect Wash

1. **READ THE LABELS:** The tags sewn into most articles of clothing advise about specific treatments.

2. **TEST FOR COLORFASTNESS:** Labels often indicate whether a garment is colorfast. If you're unsure, dampen fabric in a discreet spot (like an inside seam), wait a minute or two, and blot with a white cloth; if the cloth takes on color, the garment is not colorfast. Wash noncolorfast clothes alone until they stop releasing dye (include an old white sock in the wash each time; once it emerges untainted, you can add the garment to the rest of your wash).

3. **SORT AND SEPARATE:** Put whites and light colors in one basket, darks in another. Use additional baskets for extra-dirty garments or items that produce a lot of lint, such as terry-cloth towels and flannel shirts. Divide heavy clothes (like jeans) and lighter sheers and permanent-press items. Zip zippers, tie drawstrings, empty pockets, and unroll cuffs. If you see a loose hem or a split seam, fix it, or it will worsen in the wash.

4. **PRETREAT STAINS:** Tackle any stains (see our Stain Removal Chart on page 7) before loading the washer. Presoak clothes from the "very dirty" basket for a half hour in the washer, a large bucket, or a sink.

5. **POUR IN DETERGENT:** Powdered detergents are better on mud and clay and in hard water; liquids have the edge on greasy stains. Use the recommended amount: Too much detergent won't rinse out, too little won't clean well. Never use more than one additional product—fabric softener or bleach—at a time.

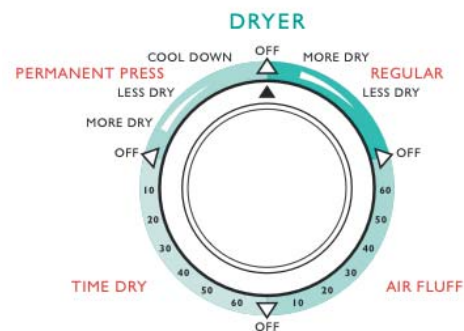
6. **LOAD THE MACHINE:** After adding detergent, add the clothes, distributing them evenly and loosely. Even a large load should be only about three-quarters full, so clothes can move.

7. **SET THE TIME:** A short wash time of about six minutes is usually sufficient for all but the dirtiest clothes.

8. **CHOOSE A WASHER CYCLE:** Regular—for sturdy or heavy cottons and very dirty clothes; washer agitates and spins at high speed. Permanent press—for most average loads; easier on clothes in general. Delicates—for lightweight, sheer, lacy, and loosely woven fabrics; washer agitates and spins slowly, approximating hand-washing.

9. **SELECT WATER TEMPERATURE:** Use hot water (120°) to keep whites white and to clean very dirty colorfast clothes—in separate loads, of course. Warm water (90° to 110°) is good for most average loads. Cold water (below 85°) is best for bright colors that are likely to fade and for delicates. Detergents are less effective in water below 65°. Shrinkage is caused by heat—either from the dryer or hot water in the washer. To avoid it, wash items in warm or cold water, and hang to dry.

10. **CHOOSE DRYER SETTING:** Most dryers have a setting called Electronic or Automatic Dry, which lets you choose how dry you want the clothes to be rather than how long you want them to dry. The Permanent Press setting has a cool-down cycle at the end to reduce wrinkling. On Air Fluff, the dryer circulates air but adds no heat; this is good for freshening pillows and reviving clothes that have been packed in a suitcase but don't need to be washed.





IRONING BASICS

Before you get started, keep these guidelines in mind:

- Your ironing board should never be wobbly.
- A good-quality iron will have reliable temperature settings and a powerful steam, be less likely to drip, and glide smoothly.
- A nonstick soleplate glides beautifully when new, but will almost inevitably get scratched.
- Always use as much moisture and steam as the fabric can take, and use a pressing cloth to reduce shine on fabrics like wool or to reduce heat on delicates.
- When choosing the temperature setting, start at the lower end of the range, and increase if necessary.

IRONING A SHIRT

Ironing a shirt may seem like a frustrating chore, but it doesn't have to be difficult. Here are tips for making it a simple, manageable task:

1. Begin with a well-laundered, damp shirt. For best results, cotton and linen should be almost wet. Spray the shirt with water, roll it into a ball, and keep it wrapped in a towel for about 15 minutes. Try using spray sizing instead of starch—you'll end up with a shirt that is neat but not stiff. Allow the sizing to be absorbed into the fibers for a couple of minutes before ironing.
2. Using a heavy iron on a high setting and an ironing board with a terry cover, begin ironing the inside of the cuffs and up the tabs of the sleeves.
3. Turning the tab side of the sleeve upward, iron up the inside of the sleeve. Repeat with the other sleeve.
4. Next, fit the shirt smoothly over the end of the board and iron the yoke.
5. Iron the inside-front panels. You can iron right over the buttons and the pocket from the backside of the fabric; the buttons will be protected from the heat, and the pocket will come out smooth.
6. Next, move on to the right-front panel, the back of the shirt, the side seams, and around to the left-front panel.
7. The final step is the collar. Spray first with a little sizing, stretch it taut, then iron over each side. Fold the collar neatly down, and press along the seam. Hang your perfectly pressed shirt on a hanger, buttoning the top button to hold it in place.

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WASHING, DRYING, IRONING, & MENDING CLOTHES
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IRONING TROUSERS

Waist first, hems last is the rule of thumb. If you are pressing wool trousers, you must use a pressing cloth. You can find one at a sewing store, but a cotton handkerchief works, too.

1. Iron the inside of the waistband.



2. Turn the back pockets inside out. Iron the pockets so they will lie flat. With the pocket still inside out, iron the outside of the pants where the pockets will lie. Tuck the pocket back into place. Direct the tip of the iron into the pocket. Then iron between, above, and around pockets.



3. Repeat with front pockets, pulling pockets inside out, then ironing into the pockets. Iron in pleats, and touch up the rest of the front.



4. Match up all four seams in the pant legs, and lay the trousers along the ironing board. Fold back the leg that's on top, and iron the inside of the leg that's exposed; iron right up to the seam, but not over it. Fold the top leg back down, and flip the trousers over. Now fold back the already-ironed leg, and iron the inside of the second leg.



5. Lay the folded leg back down, so both legs are together. Iron the outside of the top leg lightly, flip the trousers over, and finish by ironing the outside of the other leg lightly. Hang from a clamp hanger.

MENDING BASICS

SETTING UP

Store your sewing kit in a place where you often find yourself with your hands free. And keep it neat; a disorganized kit becomes a good excuse to postpone a task. Thread isn't expensive, so there's no reason to buy poor-quality brands, which break and disintegrate. Buy cotton or cotton-polyester thread that's mercerized, which means that it has been treated with caustic soda to give it strength and luster. Use heavy-duty glazed thread for winter-coat buttons and silk thread or embroidery floss for darning.

Your kit should also include needles in a range of sizes, scissors, a seam ripper, a tape measure, a ruler, buttons, snaps, hooks and eyes, elastic cord, ribbon and seam binding, and a Knit Picker, a tiny hook used to pull snagged threads through to the inside of a garment. Never use the scissors in your kit for anything but sewing. Dull blades will distort the weave of fabrics, and the slightest nicks can snag threads. Pins and needles crack and dull as they get old, as well, so replace them often.



FIXING A SKIRT HEM

To hem a skirt, sew seam binding to the edge with a sewing machine, press the hem, then stitch it by hand with a whipstitch. Take a tiny stitch through to the front of the fabric, then a larger one through the hem edge. Make each stitch in the opposite direction from the one in which you are sewing, as if taking a small step backward with each stitch before leaping forward for the next one.



SEWING A BUTTON

Use doubled thread to sew on a button. Create a shank of thread by clipping a bobby pin behind the button after sewing one stitch through each hole. To sew a small button on the inside, pass through both buttons for each stitch. After five or six stitches through each hole, remove the pin and wind the thread tightly around the shank. Tie a knot between the button and the fabric, and then pass the thread through to the inside and snip it.



REPAIRING A TORN LINING

Pin a torn lining before it's repaired, at 1/2" intervals along the torn seam (if the fabric is fraying, pull the lining tighter and make a new seam). Then hang the garment to check that the lining falls evenly. Starting beyond the ends of the tear, pass the needle up through the lining and down at a point opposite. Then take a longer, diagonal stitch beneath the lining before coming up for the next.

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PRINTABLE STAIN CHART

The diluted dishwashing-soap solution called for below is made with 1 tablespoon of fragrance- and dye-free liquid soap (containing sodium laurel sulfate, or sodium laureth sulfate) and 9.5 ounces of water. Pour it into a tiny spray bottle. Do not use the enzyme detergent, called for below, on protein fibers, such as silk, wool, cashmere, or angora. Always wash fabric after using a dry solvent (such as mineral spirits or acetone), and do not use acetone on acetate.

STAIN REMOVAL BASICS	
STAIN	TREATMENT
GREASE (butter, oil, mayonnaise)	Treat area with a dry solvent (such as mineral spirits or acetone) in a well-ventilated room. Using an eyedropper, rinse with isopropyl alcohol; dry well. Spray diluted dishwashing-soap solution on any remaining residue, and soak the item in an enzyme detergent before washing.
PROTEIN (blood, egg)	Spray diluted dishwashing-soap solution on stain, and let it sit; rinse in tepid water. If stain remains, treat area with an enzyme detergent, and wash according to label instructions.
FRUIT OR VEGETABLE (juice, jam)	Spray diluted dishwashing-soap solution on the stain to remove sugars. Using an eyedropper, flush the area with white vinegar and then hydrogen peroxide to remove any remaining color. Follow up with an enzyme detergent to remove residue before washing.
GRASS	Treat area with a dry solvent in a well-ventilated room. Press with cheesecloth; tamp with a soft-bristled brush. Repeat to remove as much pigment as possible. Flush area with isopropyl alcohol, tamp, and let dry. Follow up with an enzyme detergent to remove residue before washing.
RED WINE	Spray diluted dishwashing-soap solution on stain; tamp with a soft-bristled brush. Flush with water, apply white vinegar, and tamp; let stand several minutes; flush again. If stain remains, apply hydrogen peroxide, and let stand. If stain persists, apply 1 or 2 drops of ammonia to wet area. Flush with water. Treat with an enzyme detergent; wash. If stain is still there, apply a powdered nonchlorinated color-safe bleach, such as sodium percarbonate; rewash.
WHITE WINE	Flush the stain with cold water, and spray with diluted dishwashing-soap solution. Treat area with an enzyme detergent, and then wash.
COFFEE OR TEA	Using an eyedropper, flush area with lemon juice or white vinegar to remove stain; then treat with a stronger bleach, if necessary. To help remove sugar or milk, spray area with diluted dishwashing-soap solution, then wash with an enzyme detergent.
CHOCOLATE	Gently scrape off excess chocolate; spray area with diluted dishwashing-soap solution. Follow up with an enzyme detergent to remove residue before washing.
LIPSTICK	Use a dull-edged knife to remove excess lipstick. Using an eyedropper, apply a dry solvent (such as mineral spirits or acetone) in a well-ventilated room; tamp with a soft-bristled brush. Flush area with isopropyl alcohol, and tamp. Repeat until all stain is removed, and let dry. Spray with diluted dishwashing-soap solution. Treat with an enzyme detergent, and wash.
WAX OR GUM	Use ice to freeze wax or gum, or place item in the freezer; scrape or crack off as much as you can, then remove residue with an oil solvent or mineral spirits. Rinse with isopropyl alcohol; let dry. Treat with an enzyme detergent; wash.
MUSTARD	Using an eyedropper, flush stain with vinegar; then wash with diluted dishwashing-soap solution.
SAUCES (tomato, ketchup, barbecue)	Scrape off sauce; spray area with diluted dishwashing-soap solution. Soak in tepid water. If color remains, apply white vinegar with an eyedropper. Treat with an enzyme detergent; wash. If color persists, apply several drops of hydrogen peroxide; let sit. Rinse; treat again with enzyme detergent, and wash.
SOY SAUCE	Spray with diluted dishwashing-soap solution; tamp with a soft-bristled brush. Flush with water, apply white vinegar, and tamp; let stand several minutes, and flush again. If stain remains, apply hydrogen peroxide, and let stand. If stain persists, apply 1 or 2 drops of ammonia to wet area. Flush with water. Treat with an enzyme detergent; wash. If stain is still there, apply a powdered nonchlorinated color-safe bleach, such as sodium percarbonate; rewash.
VINAIGRETTE	First, treat stain as a grease stain (see grease, above). Then flush with white vinegar to remove any remaining spot. Follow up with an enzyme detergent to remove residue before washing.
FELT-TIP INK	First, build a "dam" around stain with mineral oil or petroleum jelly. Always work within the confines of the "dam". Test the ink with a cotton swab saturated with water and another one saturated with isopropyl alcohol to determine whether the ink is oil-based or water-based. Whichever solvent pulls more pigment out of the stain is the one that should be used. If isopropyl alcohol is more effective, follow the steps for ballpoint ink stains below. If water is more effective, spray the stain with diluted dishwashing-soap solution, and then flush with cold water.
BALLPOINT INK	Build a "dam" around the stain with mineral oil or petroleum jelly. Always work within the confines of the dam. Treat area with isopropyl alcohol using an eyedropper. Remove any remaining pigment with a dry solvent in a well-ventilated room; let dry. Rinse with diluted dishwashing-soap solution, then wash with an enzyme detergent in warm water.
MUD	If stain is a combination of mud and grass, treat grass stain first (see grass, above). Shake or scrape off residue; pretreat stain with diluted dishwashing-soap solution, and soak. Then treat with an enzyme detergent; wash.

NOTE: This chart is for washable items only.

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DE-CLUTTER YOUR CLOSET & DRAWERS
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We've tackled three familiar closet problems, using three very different approaches. We reimagined an awkward space using custom, built-in cabinetry; addressed the issue of overflowing accessories with an armoire; and found inexpensive, do-it-yourself cures for a roomy closet that has become a jumbled mess.

Of course, no two closets—or people—are alike, so before rethinking yours, identify your needs. The steps below will guide you; our solutions follow. You'll find a well-organized closet is a pleasure to use, no matter its size.

1. START WITH A CLEAN-OUT: Pick a day to sort through everything in your closet. Put clothes, shoes, and accessories that are no longer in style or no longer fit in a giveaway box (discard items damaged beyond repair). What remains should be the wardrobe you actually use.

2. KEEP ONLY WHAT BELONGS: What's in your bedroom closet besides clothes? If possible, find homes for suitcases, vacuum cleaners, sports equipment, and so on in an attic, basement, utility room, or other spot. Store coats in a hall closet or on hooks in the mudroom or entryway.

3. COUNT YOUR CLOTHES: Make a list of what you have, and estimate how much space each piece occupies so you'll know how to configure your closet—how much space you'll need for long hanging (single-rod) items, short hanging (double-rod) items, and shelf items, such as shoes, accessories, and folded clothing. Slim, good-quality hangers also make a closet neat and take up less space.

4. BE FLEXIBLE: Keep in mind that your wardrobe will change with the seasons and over time. Don't plan for a closet that only fits the things you own now—you'll want to have some wiggle room.

5. MAKE A WISH LIST: What features would your dream closet have? Pull-out shelves? Hidden storage? Mirrored doors? Great light? These things aren't unattainable luxuries; they are practical additions, and will go a long way toward making your daily routine easier and more pleasant. You can add some of these details yourself using store-bought components; for larger projects and built-in features, you'll need to hire a professional.



DE-CLUTTER YOUR CLOSET & DRAWERS

Here are some ideas:

SMART SPACE

Three narrow doors open to reveal a surprisingly efficient closet, with custom carpentry that puts every inch to use. One-third is dedicated to shelving and drawers, the rest to hanging and shoe storage. Hinged doors sit flush with the wall; painted to match and adorned with art, they blend in. Custom work, though pricey, becomes a design element of the room.

HIDEAWAY: Built a step up from the room, this closet has extra storage beneath two trapdoors at floor level for items used infrequently.

VERTICAL SPACE: The backs of doors are handy spots often overlooked. Two of the solid-core doors support valet hooks. We hung a mirror on the third. The mirror and artwork, in matching frames, have Velcro dots on the backs to secure them as doors are opened and closed.

HOW ILLUMINATING: Recessed ceiling lights go on when the doors open, activated by a switch on the doorjamb. (Have an electrician install lights, as states have specific safety regulations.)

SHELVING IT: Labels on the shelves ensure that purses, sweaters, and so on go in their proper spots. On a lower shelf, a basket organizes evening bags. A pull-out accessories tray is located near the mirror—convenient for putting on jewelry. Drawers can hold lingerie, or keep seldom-used bags dust free.

THE SHOE FITS: This thirty-two-inch-deep closet is great for shoes; roomy shelves on one side hold them two pairs deep, with space in front for boots and the highest heels.

BOXED IN: Bright canvas storage boxes, on shelves and beneath hanging clothes, offer a neat way to hide out-of-season shoes and clothing.



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DE-CLUTTER YOUR CLOSET & DRAWERS
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ACCESSORIES ARMOIRE

It's a common problem: Hanging space is sufficient, but there's no room for shoes, belts, handbags, and folded clothes. We solved it by using an inexpensive armoire—painted and fit with contemporary hardware—instead of a dresser to complement the closet. We added closet-system shelves and a drawer unit, which vary widely in price, depending on the components.

ADJUSTABLE FIT: We purchased closet-system shelving with walnut trim from an organizing store. The shelves, custom cut to the width of the armoire, are attached to hanging tracks, and can be moved up or down as needed. The top shelf houses handbags; shelf dividers attached to the second level keep stacks of tops and sweaters from tumbling down (they're arranged by color so that you can quickly find what you want).

TOP DRAWER: A fifteen-by-fifteen-inch, three-drawer cube matches the shelving and is ideal for stashing scarves, jewelry, and other small items.

HANGING TOGETHER: Add a row of hooks along the top of each door so belts remain within view. Hooks are also great for holding accessories as you put your outfit together.

SEE THROUGH: Two rows of stackable, open-ended plastic shoe boxes keep footwear organized but visible; out-of-season or infrequently worn pairs go in clear, lidded plastic boxes below—also easy to identify but away from the everyday pairs.

OUT OF SIGHT: Tuck undergarments and socks in the deep bottom drawer, and you're all set.



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DE-CLUTTER YOUR CLOSET & DRAWERS
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OVERALL ORGANIZER

Even a generously sized closet can get cluttered if equipped with only a single rod and shelf. We maximized the space in this eight-foot-wide reach-in (and gave it a custom look) using readily available supplies: a bookcase, fitted with extra-deep shelves, hooks, and hanging rods. A do-it-yourself project like this one won't cost you much.

DEEPER SHELVES: We had plywood shelves cut to order for a bookcase from an unfinished-furniture store, extending them from the front—three inches for sweaters; six for shoes. The white-painted unit anchors hanging rods.

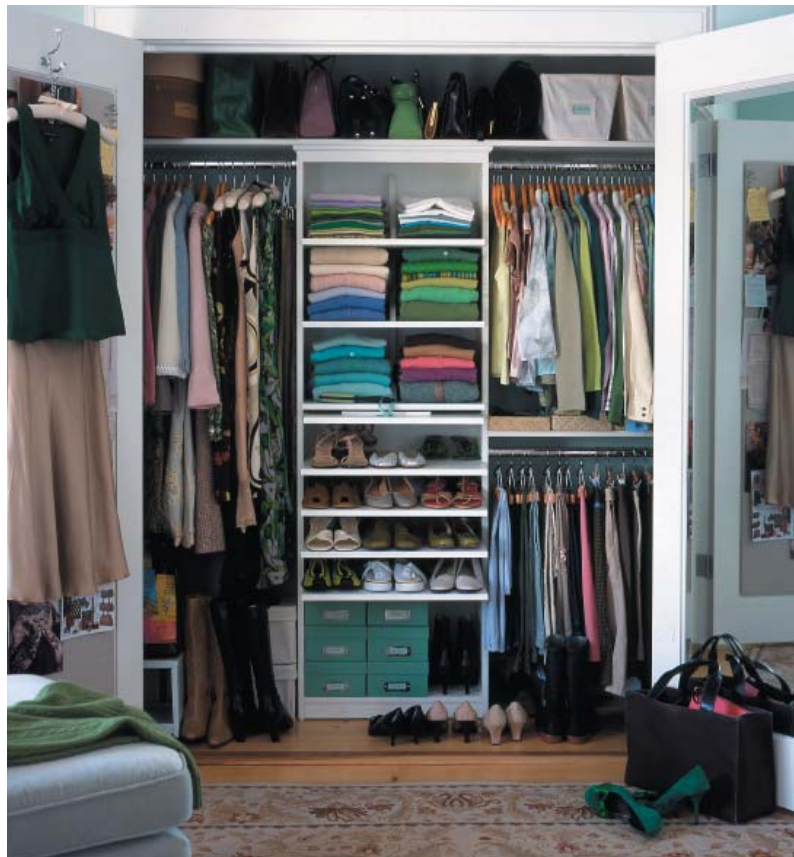
FOLD IT RIGHT: A pull-out plywood shelf for folding clothes was attached beneath another shelf with under-mount glides (from a hardware store). A folding board is a great tool for achieving even stacks of clothes. An eight-and-a-half-inch-by-eleven-inch cutting board makes it easy work.

FOUND SPACE: To ensure that no space was wasted, we installed a shelf just above the lower hanging rod to hold trays for scarves and gloves.

INSIDE STORY: One door was fitted with a bulletin board of fabric-covered Homasote fiberboard; the other door has a mirror. Both are suspended by industrial Velcro fasteners, which are strong enough to support one hundred pounds on their own. A lint remover hangs from the doorknob.

DIVIDING LINE: Wooden shelf brackets, painted white and turned upside down, serve as sweater dividers.

HIGH AND LOW: The floor-level space and top shelf hold canvas boxes and bins for out-of-season clothing; labeled, painted video boxes, contain out-of-season shoes. Totes and handbags are in sight but out of the way on the high shelf.



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CLOTHESKEEPING 'GOOD THINGS'
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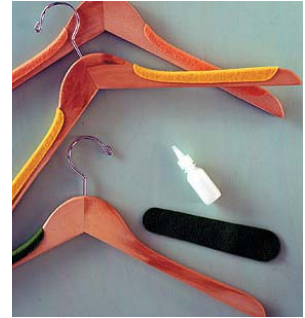


SOAP SACHETS

Some soaps are so intensely fragrant that they can be used like sachets to perfume clothes. Slip a bar or two of your favorite aromatic soap (with the paper wrapping on) into a dresser drawer. Before the sweet smell fades, it will scent the contents for weeks or possibly months.

NO-SLIP HANGERS

Keep your most delicate dresses from falling to the floor with felt-topped wooden hangers. Photocopy the template on the following page at 200 percent, then cut it out. Trace template onto felt with tailor's chalk, and cut out; repeat. Adhere felt with craft glue, wide ends out, to both sides of a wooden hanger.



EVER-OPEN LAUNDRY BAG

A hanging laundry bag saves floor space, but you have to wrestle with the drawstring to deposit dirty clothes. Have it both ways when you prop open the suspended bag with a large embroidery hoop at least 14 inches in diameter.

KEEPING EXTRA BUTTONS

To avoid losing replacement buttons, sew them onto the inside hems of the garment they belong to. The next time you notice a button missing, you'll have another one close at hand.



TRAVEL SHOE BAG

Slip your shoes into something comfortable while protecting them from scuffs: Store them in homemade velvet shoe bags.

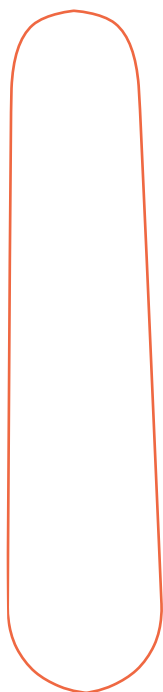
To make a bag, cut a 13-by-36-inch rectangle from thick, soft velvet. Fold it in half widthwise, right sides facing, and sew up the sides, leaving open a 1-inch gap on each side about 5 inches from the top. Fold the top of the bag down beyond the gaps to create a 3 1/2-inch hem. Pin in place; carefully turn the bag right side out.

Next, create a drawstring casing: Stitch two seams around the top edge of the bag, one just above and one just below the 1-inch gaps (don't sew the bag shut). Remove pins from the inside of the bag. Starting at the bottom of the bag, stitch (through both layers, this time) up the bag's center to the bottom of the casing; this will divide the bag into two pockets, preventing shoes from knocking into each other.

For drawstrings, cut two 40-inch-long pieces of cord; attach safety pins to their ends, and run each cord (starting them in the same direction on opposite faces of the bag) one and a half times through the casing. When finished, knot together the two cord ends emerging from each side, fraying them to create tassels.



TEMPLATE



GET A SAMPLE OF
DOWNY® SIMPLE PLEASURES™
& NEW TIDE®
SIMPLE PLEASURES™



GET A SAMPLE

PULL ON A CHANGE
OF MOOD

