

How to Organize Your Closet

Written by Written by Ashley Pearlstein

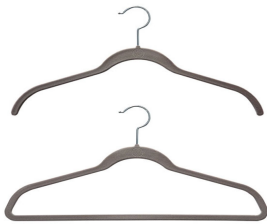
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Though it is still only July, it's never too early to start thinking about changing your wardrobe around for the fall season. We caught up with The Container Store spokesperson, Olescia Hanson, for some tips on organizing your closet to match your lifestyle.



Step 1: Clean it up!

- Abide by the two year rule. If you haven't worn it in two years, you probably won't. If you are keeping it for sentimental reasons, but don't often wear or use it, put it in an archival storage box either under your bed or on high shelves for safe keeping.
 - Invite a friend over. Make going through your closet fun, and invite someone who will be honest with you about worthy garments and those more suitable for the trash.
 - Donate. Remember to donate things you do not need or use anymore, as long as they are still in good shape. Make three piles while organizing your closet: keep, trash and donate.
 - Be realistic with your time. If you have a large closet, it isn't going to get all organized in a couple of hours. Take your time and have fun with it. Also, take breaks if needed or make it a weekend project.
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Step 2: Long Hang

Includes coats, long skirts, dresses, seasonal items and garment bags.

- Split up your clothes. Your clothes can be split up into different categories, the first being long hanging items.
 - Organize. After going through your clothes and getting rid of the excess, organize them into long and short hanging items, then put the long hanging items away first.
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Step 3: Short Hang

Includes shirts, blazers, folded pants, short skirts, etc.

- Clean thoroughly. This section will hold the majority of your clothes, so be sure to go through it thoroughly.
 - Use a double hanging rod. This will allow you to get the most out of your space. (Positioned in two rows)
 - Use slim hangers. For shirts and light sweaters, slim hangers will maximize space. (Specialty tiered hangers are another suggestion)
 - Get rid of the mess of hangers. Dry clean hangers and wire hangers are only meant to be used temporarily and will stretch out your clothes or leave indentations from the hanger on them. Use slim, clean looking hangers to better organize and take care of your wardrobe.
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Step 4: Drawers

Jeans, sweaters, lingerie, swimsuits, etc.

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- Add drawers. Adding drawers to your closet makes getting ready in the morning simpler. This way, you are not running around your room trying to put an outfit together, and everything is easily accessible.
 - Organize. You can organize your intimates, sweaters or just about anything into a category. You can use casual and dressy, or you can organize by color.
 - Drawer organizers. Use organizers specifically made for drawers to organize accessories. This way, everything is right where you need it when you are getting ready.
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Step 5: Shelves

Seasonal or sentimental items go here, ones that are not used every day.

- Stepstool. Vertical space is hard to reach, so you may need a small stepstool for when you need to reach the higher shelves.
 - Use containers. Storing these items in containers will prevent them from getting dust on them or from getting worn.
 - Tip: If items are not stored in translucent containers, label the front so that you do not have to go digging when you need something.
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Step 6: Shoes

- Donate. Donate all the shoes that you do not need. Ask yourself, do you really use these?
 - Divide. Divide your collection into regular basis shoes and special occasion shoes.
 - What kind of person are you? If you are a shoe kicker (come home, kick your shoes off onto the floor) you will most likely need a gliding shoe rack for easy accessibility. If you are a shoe placer (you don't mind putting them away neatly) you can use storage boxes and containers for your shoes.
 - Boots. These along with other shoes you do not use often should go on a higher shelf in a protective container. Do not just throw these on the floor, The Container Store offers hanging boot shapers so they can keep their shape and value. You invested in these, so you want to take care of them.
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Step 7: Accessories

This includes ties, belts, scarves, jewelry, hats, purses, etc.

- Seasonal. If there are certain accessories you use per season, put the ones not in use in a container on a higher shelf. Change out your main accessory drawers with the seasons.
- Use space wisely. Don't forget that under your bed is also a great storage space for out of season accessories.
- Plan for visibility. There are specialty hangers for belts and scarves, hanging jewelry solutions, and much more for organizing accessories. If you can't see your collection, you are more likely to forget about it and buy something similar again.
- Organizers. If you do not have closet space, look for organizers you can leave out on a nightstand or put in your dresser. Use glass cookie jars for tights or headbands, magnets or corkboards can be used to display chunky necklaces or bangles.
- Back of your door. There are plenty of door-hangers for shoes and other accessories, make use of all space!

Above all else it is important to let go and simplify. A cleaner closet will put less stress on getting ready in the morning and will make your day quicker and easier.