

What to Wear: Extending Your Winter Wardrobe

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Here are three easy steps to a more extensive wardrobe.

Take Inventory

1. It's easiest to start fresh. Take all of your winter clothing out of your closet. That's right – all of it.
2. Next, set up five 'stations' – these are areas to place clothing into categories. You can place a sign at each station to indicate the category. You will probably need the following stations: 'Keep', 'Alter', 'Charity', 'Sell', 'Garbage'.
3. Now choose one item. I would suggest starting with your favourite. If you know it works for you and you feel great wearing it, it goes in the 'Keep' pile.
4. Continue through each item, placing it in the appropriate category. As you get past your favourite items, you will probably need to try clothes on to see if they work.
5. Be creative – sometimes items can be re-made or altered for a new image.
6. Remember to follow the above steps for:
 - a) Outerwear
 - b) Shoes
 - c) Belts
 - d) Other accessories
7. When you're through, you will need to follow-through, and actually deal with the items that are not being kept.

Organize Your Keepers

1. Look through the keepers, and group them. To help, create a chart like the following. Notice that the ratio of 3rd layer to bottoms to tops is 1 – 2 – 3. This is the real secret to an extensive wardrobe. The more your clothing can mix and match, the more choices you will have.

Items	Work	Home	Parties
Jackets or sweaters			
Pants or skirts			
Tops			
Shoes			
Bag			

2. Each column would only have items that mix and match. In each box, list each item with a brief description. It might look like this:

Items	Work	Home	Parties
Jackets or sweaters	Jacket - black wool	Sweater - purple	Jacket – black silk
Pants or skirts	Pants - black	Pants – blue jeans	Pants – black silk
	Skirt – black	Pants – black jeans	Skirt – black leather

Tops	Shirt – white	T-shirt – purple	Cami – black sik
	Top – red	Shirt – navy	Shell – silver satin
	Top – black	Top - black	Sweater – black beaded
Footwear	Black pumps	Black casual shoes	Black evening shoes
Bag	Black briefcase	Black tote	Black evening bag

3. You could repeat the above charts for as many times as you need. You will probably need to repeat Work and Home categories once or twice more.
4. If you have blanks in any of the boxes, this becomes your shopping list.

An alternative: Some people prefer to photograph each item for the inventory, for a more visual list.

Shop!

1. Armed with your inventory, you can now decide your priorities. Which items are most necessary to add?
2. On your shopping day, wear clothing that needs to match with new purchases. This will keep you from guessing and making potential errors.
3. Add new purchases to your inventory list. You now have a list that will keep evolving over time.

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