

Wardrobe Planning

The purpose of wardrobe planning is twofold: first, to create a list of outfits that quickly allows you to pick your clothes for the day with a minimum of effort and second, to inventory your wardrobe to be able to eliminate unnecessary items and to more easily purchase items missing from the wardrobe.

This process can be fairly time-consuming but you will find that this one-time investment of a few hours will pay off enormous dividends in time, money and sanity.

Part 1: Wardrobe Inventory

The first phase is to pare down your wardrobe. Open your closet and drawers, take each item that you haven't worn in a year and place it in a box. Don't think about it – just do it. These are probably things you don't need but we'll deal with them later.

Now, see what you have left. First separate clothes into casual pieces and work pieces and then hang like clothes together (skirts, pants, jackets, etc). Now hang similar colored clothing together and then use the Wardrobe Inventory to list the items in your wardrobe.

When creating the inventory, describe the clothing items so you know exactly which piece you're referring to. For example, if you have several white shirts, indicate if they're long or short sleeved and any other unique characteristics. Also, indicate what shade of color a particular item is so you know if the blouse is navy or pale blue. The idea is for you to be able to select an outfit and immediately be able to pick the items from the closet.

Part 2: Creating the Outfit List

This is the fun part. Using the components in the Wardrobe Inventory, make a list of the outfits you have. Organize the Outfit List in any manner that makes sense to you but it might be easier to start with one item (like your navy skirt) and build every outfit you can think of around that skirt. Then move on to another skirt and do the same. An example is provided where the outfits are grouped by the skirt or pants but it can be tailored (no pun intended) to suit (again, no pun intended) your needs.

Unless you have gobs of time, don't stop to try on clothes to create new outfits during this process. Stick with what you've already used and save the new stuff for another day. While you're building the outfit list, however, keep a separate piece of paper handy so you can write down any new outfit ideas that come to mind as well as remind yourself that you've always intended to buy a peach camisole to wear with that black suit.

In addition to the basic outfit, accessories can also be added depending on how much time that would save and how unwieldy your list might become. That last item is important because your outfit list is intended to be a tool to help you and not a burden to use. So, if you're someone who agonizes over what pair of earrings to wear then it might be helpful to add accessories to the list and make the list as complete as possible even if it becomes quite lengthy. But if you're able to accessorize easily then they're unnecessary to include. If including accessories, be sure to remember shoes, scarves, jewelry and belts.

Once you've created the Outfit List, look to see if there are any things in your closet that didn't make the list. Those are probably items you bought because you loved the color or because you're waiting to lose those extra few pounds before you'll wear it. Put those things in the box.

Part 3: Wrap-Up and Future Steps

Once you're done with the Outfit List it can either be typed up or re-written if necessary to make it more organized. Then post the list inside the closet door or someplace that's easily accessible.

When you have some time, go ahead and create those new outfits and add them to your Outfit List and the next time you're shopping, pick up that peach camisole you need. Be sure, however, to create a new outfit with any new clothes you buy and add it to your list. And, when clothes shopping, buy items that will build a new outfit rather than end up unworn in the back of the closet.

Wardrobe Inventory

Pants

Skirts

Shirts & Blouses

Sweaters & Vests

Suits

Jackets

Shoes

Accessories

OUTFIT LIST EXAMPLE

TAN SKIRT or KHAKI PANTS

Cream cardigan
Maroon cardigan
Purple sweater
White long sleeve – Black sweater
White or cream shirt - Peach cardigan
White or cream shirt – Green cardigan
White ribbed short sleeve – Brown vest
White long sleeve – Brown vest
Cream zipped short sleeve
Lt. Blue long sleeve
Navy short sleeve
White long sleeve – Tan jacket
White ribbed short sleeve – Tan jacket
White lycra short sleeve – Tan jacket
Blue ribbed long sleeve – Tan jacket
Green short sleeve – Tan jacket
Black tank – Tan jacket
Lavender blouse – Tan jacket
White oxford – Tan pattern jacket
White long sleeve – Tan pattern jacket
Cream ribbed long sleeve – Tan pattern jacket
White oxford – Black jacket
Cream ribbed long sleeve – Black jacket
White long sleeve – Black jacket
White ribbed short sleeve – Black jacket
White lycra short sleeve – Black jacket
Black tank – Black jacket

GRAY SKIRT

Maroon cardigan
Cream cardigan
Purple sweater
White or cream shirt - Peach cardigan
White or cream shirt – Green cardigan
Cream zipped short sleeve
White crop short sleeve
Lavender blouse
Black tank – Black jacket
White lycra short sleeve – Black jacket
White oxford – Black jacket
White long sleeve – Black jacket
White ribbed short sleeve – Black jacket
Cream ribbed long sleeve – Black jacket

BLACK SUIT

White oxford
Red camisole
White camisole

BLACK SKIRT or BLACK PANTS

Maroon cardigan
Cream cardigan
Purple sweater
White long sleeve – Black sweater
White or cream shirt - Peach cardigan
White or cream shirt – Green cardigan
Cream zipped short sleeve
White crop short sleeve
Lavender blouse
Light Blue long sleeve – Black jacket
Navy short sleeve – Black jacket
Black tank – Black jacket
White lycra short sleeve – Black jacket
White oxford – Black jacket
White long sleeve – Black jacket
White ribbed short sleeve – Black jacket
Cream ribbed long sleeve – Black jacket
Blue ribbed long sleeve – Black jacket
Green short sleeve – Black jacket
Black tank – Tan jacket

TEAL SKIRT

Cream cardigan
Maroon cardigan
White or cream shirt - Peach cardigan
Cream zipped short sleeve
White long sleeve – Tan jacket
White ribbed short sleeve – Tan jacket
White lycra short sleeve – Tan jacket
White oxford – Black jacket
Cream ribbed long sleeve – Black jacket
White long sleeve – Black jacket
White ribbed short sleeve – Black jacket
White lycra short sleeve – Black jacket
Black tank – Black jacket

NAVY PANTS

Cream zipped short sleeve
Maroon cardigan
Cream cardigan
White shirt – Peach cardigan
White shirt – Green cardigan
White oxford – Brown vest
White ribbed short sleeve – Brown vest
White long sleeve – Tan jacket
White ribbed short sleeve – Tan jacket
White lycra short sleeve – Tan jacket
White long sleeve – Tan pattern jacket
Cream ribbed long sleeve – Tan pattern jacket