How to Detox Your Closet



Live Larger

HOW-TO GUIDE

Introduction

When it comes to feeling lighter, clearer, happier and more intentional about life, I think it's hard to beat a good, thorough closet detox.

I understand that the amount of clothes, underwear, shoes, bags, jewellery and other accessories someone owns can vary enormously from person to person.

As such, if you have a lot to detox then chances are this project could take you more than a day to complete. Bear that in mind before starting so that you can pick a window of time where ideally you can take care of the entire project in back-to-back days so that you do not have to content with unsorted piles all around you!

WHY DO A CLOSET DETOX?

There are lots of (great) reasons why someone might choose to do a closet detox. These include:

- The changing of season.
- Having too much closet clutter.
- The feeling of 'so many clothes yet nothing to wear'.
- Making a fresh start.
- Stepping into a new level or identity.
- The desire for a "boutique" style closet – i.e. minimalist, quality items only and lots of space.
- Being part of a bigger detox project.

THE LIVE LARGER APPROACH TO CLOSET DETOXING

This guide has a bias towards dressing for the life that you want.

Whether you see it as dressing for your next chapter, your next level, a new identity or a new much bigger, much different future, all of these will require you to make some decisions about what stays and what goes.

In order for you to be able to make quick and easy decisions you will need to clarify up front which of these is the case for you and then create some criteria for yourself to make decisions by.

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You are bound to come up against more than a few items where you waver back-and-forth about whether to keep something or not. You can make it so much easier for yourself AND get way more powerful, aligned results if you list your criteria out ahead of time.

My Closet Detox Project

Why are you doing this closet detox?

How will you know that you've achieved what you set out to achieve? Specifically, what will be true? E.g. 'My closet will look....'; 'My closet will feel...'; "My ____ will be beautifully organised.'; 'I will be able to see everything I own easily.'

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With your reason and desired outcomes in mind, what criteria must each item meet in order for it to be a keeper? E.g. No damage; aligns with your new identity of _____; aligns with your Style Blueprint (refer to ECLL Magazine Issue 22, Playsheet 2.)

Any other notes to yourself that you want to bear in mind

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Preparation Checklist

It's never a good idea to just dive into a closet detox.

Detoxing a closet is always a messy and time-consuming job and the more thought you put in ahead of time, the easier and more efficient it will be.

Here's my recommended checklist for getting set up for closet detox success:

- ☐ A large clear space to spread things out and/or hang removed items on.
- ☐ A clear space to lay/hang KEEPERS. (It's great if you have a free-standing hanging rail you can use.)
- ☐ A box or bag for each of the following:
  - ☐ WASHING
  - ☐ DRY CLEANING
  - ☐ MENDING
  - ☐ TAILORING
  - ☐ KEEP FOR FUTURE USE
  - ☐ SELLING
  - ☐ GIFTING
  - ☐ DONATIONS: COLLECT
  - ☐ DONATIONS: DROP OFF
  - ☐ RECYCLE
  - ☐ TRASH
- ☐ Notebook & pen to jot down any notes, including things you want to buy or replace.
- ☐ Cleaning products & cloths for the inside and outside of your wardrobe and any other storage or related items.
- ☐ Standing stool for reaching hard to reach places.
- ☐ Timer if you want to stop yourself from taking much longer than necessary.
- ☐ All drinks and snacks already in the room so no need to get distracted by going to the kitchen.
- ☐ Some fun music to listen to that keeps you engaged and moving. Better still if this music plays into your Future Self vision.
- ☐ The bathroom reserved for the end of the day so you can enjoy a nice long

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bubble bath!

If there's anything else you think or know you'll want, write these here:

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Introduction to Closet Detox Process

When it comes to the process that I'm about to share with you, I recommend that you go through it as follows:

- Start with just your **clothes**. So when I reference "your closet", take this to mean whatever is holding whatever aspect of your style you are currently clearing and sorting. So in the case of clothes, this might be your closet and some additional drawers, perhaps.
- Next up, I recommend that you move to **underwear**. I see underwear as quite different to clothes and think they need separate time and attention spent on them, personally. So I would recommend that you turn your attention to these next.
- After underwear I recommend **footwear**. As these may live in your closet then you'll have them already out on the floor of your bedroom/dressing room because of emptying it to sort your clothes, so you'll want to take care of these sooner rather than later.
- Next up I recommend **bags**, partly for the same reason as footwear. You'll be ready for bags after doing footwear because some things may have been purchased as a set.
- After bags, I suggest moving to **belts and scarves**. It's good to see which belts you have that may go well with the footwear that you're keeping, and similarly which scarves will be best for the clothes that you're keeping.
- Finally we come to **jewellery**. This is a little more relaxing because you're not dealing with such bulky items as before, however, jewellery can present more issues emotionally if you have a lot of items that have sentimental value.

Please note, the above ordering is just my suggestion. If you feel you want to do it in a different order, you do you!

The process that follows will take you through the cycle once. When you reach the end of Step 5, you'll want to circle back around and move to the next style area and repeat the entire process for those items. Once you get into it, you'll find you can actually move pretty fast.

So when you're ready, here's the 5-Step process that will move you from closet chaos to new you nirvana!

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STEP ❶ REMOVE EVERYTHING FROM YOUR CLOSET

This doesn't just mean take out your clothes... this means take out *everything* that's removable, including any racks, removable shelves, rails and hangers, so that literally all that's left is your empty closet(s) with its fixed shelves and hanging rails.

To begin with simply lay them all out on your bed or whatever other large clean space you have set aside for this purpose. This first step is simply about getting everything out.

Feel the sense of peace, release and possibility as you do this! It's a wonderful feeling knowing that a few hours from now, the only things that are going back in are going to be things that you absolutely love, and that are in alignment with everything you wrote down on page 3.

STEP ❷ CLEAN YOUR CLOSET

Now that your closet is completely empty, it's time to give it a really good clean, because you're going to be putting clothes back in it a very short time from now. As always, I invite you to clean with vigour and passion and be thorough. Avoid the temptation to miss high shelves or back corner crevices, because every area of your closet counts, and all of it is holding energy.

So if that means getting a stool or chair to stand on, so be it!

You'll know if you've been thorough or not, so give yourself the gift of a squeaky clean closet ready for the brand new you to make a home in.

You know you'll feel the difference, and when you *do* come to put those clothes back in, everything will feel different as a result.

STEP ❸ STEP INTO YOUR FUTURE

If you haven't done so already, it's time to start making decisions and taking actions based on what you wrote down on pages 2 and 3. I invite you to re-read everything now so that it is fresh in your mind and you can make decisions quickly and easily as a result.

Once you feel that you are all clued-up and ready to go, then you are ready to begin the real work.

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STEP ❹ DIVIDE & CONQUER

Faced with a huge pile of clothing, sometimes this can feel like a real mountain to climb. However, the more rigorous you have decided to be, the easier you'll actually find it. It's when you are wishy-washy about your intentions, and your vision is unclear that the "should I keep this or not?" becomes a much more drawn out and painful process than it needs to be. It really can drag on and on and on and on... and nothing really changes.

This fourth step doesn't need to be this way at all, even if it has been in the past. It can actually be super-straightforward and methodical.

Thanks to the preparation you did, you have your various boxes and bags at the ready for all the different possibilities for your clothes.

With the clothes that you want to keep and wear this season, it's great if you can hang them back up in the wardrobe as you go, but if you think that you're going to potentially re-design the interior of your wardrobe, such as changing the position of any shelves or rails, then just put them in a separate space, ideally a standalone rail if you have one to avoid creasing.

Clothes to sell will be items that you likely paid a decent amount of money for and you'd like to recoup some of your investment by selling things on eBay or via a dress agency or similar. There are plenty of places to sell good quality clothing online and offline these days, and I really recommend it, as the money you get back can be put towards new perfect-fit items that you know the new you will really get excited about!

Clothes to donate will be good quality items that were not that much money to buy in the first place. We all have different ideas about what "low cost" means, but for me, if an item was originally purchased for around £100 (about $140 US) or less, then I will often donate it rather than sell it, unless I feel that I could get the same amount or very close to it via eBay.

Clothes to recycle will be any clothes that are damaged or stained and basically not fit for anyone to wear. It's the fabric that is recycled, and so it's the actual material that the recyclers are interested in, rather than the style, fit or price tag.

Trash should be anything that like cheap broken jewellery, labels you've cut out, and miscellaneous other that has no value.

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STEP 5 FINAL CHECK

It's amazing how quickly we can work through Step 4 when we know what we're aiming for and why. What used to take me hours and hours to do in the past, now takes maybe less than an hour because I am so clear on what I am aiming for before I actually begin.

So at this point in your making space process you now have your clothes all sorted into different places and it's time to cast that final, slightly more ruthless eye over what you put back in your closet.

Grade yourself out of 10 around each of the following:

- How closely did you follow your own pre-written plan to the letter?
- Does everything in your closet feel just perfect and fully meet your criteria?
- Does your closet look and feel the way you set out for it to look and feel?
- Have you cleared to the level that you originally wrote down?
- How does the next level version of you feel about this new closet?

For any answers where you scored less than a perfect 10, this is where you still have some tweaking to do.

Keep working the plan until you genuinely feel that every answer has become a 10/10 for you. At this point, you can consider yourself officially DONE with this particular area of your style.

Yay!

Now that you've completed this 5-step process, if you still have other areas to take care of, it's time to take a quick break, pour yourself a drink, and prepare to journey back around the process with the next genre of closet items on your to-do list.

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