

# Cupboard *love*

Clothes in chaos? Show your closet some TLC, says personal stylist **JULIE HURST**

**GAZING INTO OUR WARDROBES**

longing for a spark of inspiration is an all too familiar routine. But such dilemmas are not surprising – studies suggest we typically wear just 20% of our clothes 80% of the time, and are notoriously reluctant to get rid of those we don't wear.

Our relationship with clothes is complicated. Consider the fabulous designer dress that hangs proudly in the closet awaiting its first outing; those trousers that are now a little snug; or the killer fashion purchase that's well past its sell-by date.

We are probably all guilty of at least one such wardrobe woe, but holding onto pieces we don't wear is a misguided strategy. Our wardrobes should be filled with pieces that make us feel good, are constantly being worn and are working hard for our money.

Consider whether ill-fitting pieces or relics from fashion eras past can be altered. A good tailor is essential for maintaining a wardrobe that truly works, and can breathe new life into your clothes. Otherwise, store them elsewhere. If after a month you haven't given them a second thought, let them go.

If rarely worn pieces are rendering your wardrobe unworkable it's time for a little

sartorial soul searching. Avoid making these costly mistakes by considering your lifestyle needs and shopping accordingly – aspirational dressing is not such

a worthy strategy if it involves amassing a collection of evening gowns more at home in Vogue!

Many have undoubtedly donned the "wrong" outfit in the morning rush, or resorted

to a well-worn favourite time and again. But a lack of time is rarely the cause of such dressing

distress – these are symptoms of a wardrobe in crisis where the best pieces are fighting for space with garments that have outstayed their welcome. A cluttered closet also makes it hard to identify what is missing.

The solution? A simple wardrobe edit. A couple of hours pruning out the deadwood, re-hanging and reorganising your clothes is time well spent. Once everything is clearly visible you can select outfits much more quickly and dressing is far less stressful.

However, undoubtedly the most rewarding outcome of an editing session is the rediscovery of hidden gems, and the number of different looks and new outfits you can create from your existing wardrobe. ●

**For a personal style consultation call Julie Hurst on 020 7357 0511 or see [www.signaturestyleconsultancy.com](http://www.signaturestyleconsultancy.com)**



**Wardrobe essentials:**

**Purple jumper £19.99, jeans £40, grey card £24.99, all from South of the River, 56 Westow Street SE19 3AF; 020 8653 1669. Black and white dress £60 from Wallis, call 0844 984 0266 for stockists**

*Shopping strategies*

**Make a list** Think about what you need beforehand and make unnecessary purchases a thing of the past.

**Avoid impulse buys** Items bought on a whim often go unworn. Shop with your long-term wardrobe in mind.

**Buy fewer, but better quality clothes** Look for the best value in terms of quality, versatility and updating your look. Less really is more in the style stakes!

**A cautionary word about sales** The lure of the discounted price tag can be irresistible, but that bargain will probably never be worn.