

## Capsule Re-Cap(sule): How my New Wardrobe is Going

It's been about four months since I started my [capsule wardrobe](#) experiment. I've gotten a lot of questions, such as how do I decide what clothes to keep? How do I decide what new clothes to buy? Don't I get bored? Happily, there are an equal number of questions I have not asked myself over the last few months, such as what should I wear today? How do I have so much stuff in my closet yet nothing to wear? Where the @%\$# are my favorite pants?

Based on this last bit if nothing else, I am calling the capsule experiment a tremendous success.

Logistics-wise, I started out by following the conventional advice to take everything out of my closet and on to the bed. Every. Single. Thing. There was, unsurprisingly, a whole bunch of stuff I never wore, didn't like, or was holding on to for vague, mostly sentimental and largely irrational reasons of "maybe someday" or "that was a fun wedding" or "but my sister/mother/friend/ex gave me this."

I divvied everything into piles by category: work pants, casual pants, jeans, shorts/skirts, work dresses, casual dresses, cardigans, pullovers, long-sleeve tops, short-sleeve tops, and sleeveless tops. (I didn't not include under garments or [activewear](#) in these piles, though I did tackle those separately.) Then I went through each pile and narrowed it down to my three favorite of each item. I tried to strictly limit it to three of each, though I did allow myself to expand the categories a bit -- for example, "pants" became "work pants," "casual pants," and "jeans," because anything else seemed to extreme and/or resulted in varying degrees of completely-inappropriate-for-the-occasion outfits.

Where I had difficulty picking my favorites, I considered how frequently I wear an item, how worn out it already is, and how many other items in my other favorite piles I could wear it with. It took a few runs through each pile, but eventually I ended up with a good collection of clothes that I love -- almost all of them "go" with each other. (Those that don't are a few favorite specialty items like my orange corduroys that arguably don't go with anything, but I love anyway.)

After paring down, I ended up with just over 40 items in my closet. I love all of them. Putting together a series of outfits also let me identify exactly where the holes are -- for example, despite being a child of the 80s and 90s who is now a semi-functioning adult living in the Pacific Northwest, I didn't have a single plaid button-down shirt (flannel or otherwise; WTF!). So I added that to my shopping list, plus a couple of camisoles to wear with other shirts I'd decided to keep.

Success-wise, it's been great! After the first week or so I barely even thought about it again. I don't have those moments of blankly staring at my closet anymore and my morning routine has become a surprisingly less stressful experience. Yay! I also have not found myself doing laundry any more frequently than before, because even if my "favorite" shirt is dirty, there's still always something left in my closet that I am happy to wear.

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The hardest thing now is recognizing how picky I am going to be about new clothes. (And have I mentioned how much I hate shopping? I hate shopping.) I will wait until things wear out, but I realize I'm apt to go through clothes more quickly since I'll be re-wearing the same items more often. It's already becoming apparent that I'm going to need at least two new pairs of shoes in the next 6 months (sneakers + flats) and finding shoes that meet my needs of durability, versatility, style, giant sasquatch sizability, and frugability will be a fun\* adventure. Wish me luck! I should start now ...

\*not fun