

creating a functional

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CAPSULE WARDROBE

for the life-seasoned woman

What's a Capsule Wardrobe?

Have you heard of the term capsule wardrobe? The idea has been tossed around since the '70s, coined by the owner of a London boutique and later embraced by fashion designer Donna Karan, and it is making a comeback amongst those passionate about minimalistic living. While I am not a minimalist, I definitely appreciate the focused attention on making your environment and possessions work for you in the simplest way possible. That's why I'm a fan of the eliminate and concentrate approach to life. Even though I have a hard time parting with my "things" and appreciate some measure of cozy-but-not-clutter filling up my spaces, in the end I'd opt for purposeful and simplified over filled-up and disorganized especially when it comes to my wardrobe.

A traditional capsule wardrobe is simply this:

1. a collection of a few essential items of clothing that will not go out of fashion, such as skirts, trousers, and coats
2. these basic pieces that can be livened up by seasonal pieces
3. the pieces should be inter-changeable, working together in multiple ways

The idea of a capsule wardrobe is enticing because it offers structure and focus in coordinating and simplifying the clothing you already have in your closet, while it also gives guidance and purpose when it comes to shopping and sticking to a budget.

Like everything in life, however, I hardly ever feel compelled to follow a pre-fabricated system exactly. Trust me. I tried to make the resources for capsule wardrobe planning work for me, but the reality is I'm not a suit-wearing professional nor a 20-something freelancer — 37 pieces won't cut it for me with all the variety of attire I'm supposed to put on over a given week. I'm a work at home woman, who starts the day in yoga pants but transitions to dressy casual attire by noon, so I need to have gear for both in my closet. There are times I need business attire and nearly a dozen occasions a year that require something formal. Of course, there's also the jean dilemma, common for almost every woman over 30, with a stack of wide leg, boot cut, skinnies, plus dressy and distressed, comfortable faves and a little too tight but "when I lose the weight" hopefuls.

Let's not devalue the fact that as we age, our bodies change shape while our hearts still long for that favorite outfit that fit ten pounds ago. It's hard to let go of something, especially when it's a classic piece,

simply because it doesn't fit. And it's equally difficult to ditch a fav even when the trend says it's long over.

So, my friends, if you're in need of wardrobe simplification and a fashion update, but you don't have a budget to go buy a whole new closet nor the figure to fit into a 20-something Pinterest wardrobe capsule, let me meet you right where you are.

A Life-Seasoned Capsule Wardrobe is For You

I've come up with a capsule wardrobe formula that is tailored to my life, but can be exactly what you're looking for to help you establish a wardrobe that fits your personality and life-season. It's a life-seasoned capsule because is designed for the woman whose figure is ever-flexing and whose attire is ever-changing to match the role she's filling.

A Life-Seasoned Capsule Wardrobe looks like this:

1. provides a goal to set up a wardrobe that only contains clothing for a two to three month season, with the non-season clothing packed by capsule and stored in bags or containers elsewhere in the house (attic, basement, another closet)
2. a clear understanding of what type of attire is needed and how many pieces are necessary in the follow categories: workout, casual, dressy casual, business professional, formal, shoes, coats, and accessories
3. a solid selection of traditional pieces that are interchangeable
4. the freedom to add a few new seasonal or trendy pieces into each capsule
5. a two-week period of prepping and purging for the next-season's capsule
6. an understanding of preferred styles, colors, and brands
7. a specific shopping list based on what is needed as well as what you like and don't like, so you make wise purchases

Invest Time = Reap Blessings

I'm certain that if you put to use this download and create for yourself a capsule wardrobe, you'll walk away with a whole smattering of blessings, like the ones I've experienced:

- relief to have a cleaned out closet (and drawers)
- feeling good about donating clothes in good condition, which were taking up space in your closet
- clarity about your style and what works, and what doesn't
- no more guilt over not being able to get dressed without leaving a trail of tried-on, discarded clothes behind
- a reality check helping you to know what to buy, when to buy, where to buy, and when to just say no
- easy-peasy packing for each seasons, since everything fits and most of the capsule should work together

You might think you'll never be able to pair down your wardrobe nor have the budget to find only the exact pieces to fit your lifestyle, but trust me: You can do this! Set aside small chunks of time or dedicate a Saturday to the overhaul process. Be committed to spending only what your budget allows. In the long run, you'll save yourself time and money, while living in clothes that fit you right and feel good.

Here's the real motivating question:

Wouldn't you like to spend more time focusing on responding to the opportunities God puts before you each day rather than on wondering what to wear or distracted by being uncomfortable in what you have on?

Matthew 6:25-26 NIV

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?"

Yes, in God's eyes, clothing is nothing we should fret about, and yet we can find ourselves all-consumed by it. So let's put the clothing-distraction in it's place, by setting up seasonal capsules, giving it a set period of time to focus on, and a limited budget to spend, and then get on with living the life God has called us to each day.

Step 1: Brainstorm

Are you ready to get planning out your approach to a capsule wardrobe? Take time to answer these questions to help you decide your personal capsule formula.

1. Based on where you live and the seasonal temperatures, what would be a good breakdown of your seasonal capsules?

Capsule #1 _____ to _____

Capsule #2 _____ to _____

Capsule #3 _____ to _____

Capsule #4 _____ to _____

Capsule #5 _____ to _____

Capsule #6 _____ to _____

2. What is your lifestyle? List the various types of attire you need during a given week or month and indicate in the space how many outfits you think you need:

workout: _____ per week / _____ per month

casual: _____ per week / _____ per month

dressy casual: _____ per week / _____ per month

dressy: _____ per week / _____ per month

formal: _____ per week / _____ per month

business: _____ per week / _____ per month

other: _____ per week / _____ per month

3. As you consider the types of attire you need, check off items of clothing that you feel are necessary and how many items you think are reasonable to have:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> jeans - casual _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> scarves _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> jeans - dressy _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> flats - neutral _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> jeans - skinny _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> flats - colorful _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> jeans - boot _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> heels -neutral _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> long sleeve tops _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> heels - neutral _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> button down _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> boots - brown _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> short sleeve tops _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> boots - black _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sweaters _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> sneakers _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sweatshirts _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> sandals _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yoga pants _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> flip-flops _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sweatpants _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> purses _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dress pants _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> clutch _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> casual pants _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> leggings _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dresses _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> formal dresses _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> skirts _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> blazers _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> winter coats _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> spring coats _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> necklaces _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> earrings _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bracelets _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> rings _____ | |

Use this space below
to complete your list:

4. How would you define your style? Check off all that apply?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trendy | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural | <input type="checkbox"/> Polished |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classic | <input type="checkbox"/> Earthy | <input type="checkbox"/> Sporty |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Earthy | <input type="checkbox"/> Boho | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chic | <input type="checkbox"/> Easy | <input type="checkbox"/> Beachy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athletic | <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable | <input type="checkbox"/> Preppy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colorful | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional | <input type="checkbox"/> Runway |

5. How would you describe your color palette? Check off all that you like to wear?



6. What brands do you prefer? List the stores and styles.

7. What type of clothing items should you NEVER have in your wardrobe again? Think in terms of fabric, fit, style.

8. What's your ideal outfit? Describe it or link to pictures online. You might even decide to create your own Pinterest board to collect images of your fashion favs.

Step 2: Prep and Purge

Now that you've taken the time to brainstorm what your capsules should look like, it's time to get down to business. The prompts below will help you get organized and breeze through the process.

1. Pick a day to do your purge, which will require taking all your clothes out of your closet, potentially trying them on to see what fits and what you like, and then putting them away.
2. On the day of your purge, how will you organize your capsules? Will you put the out-of-season ones in garbage bags or containers? How will you label them? Where will you store them?
3. What will you do with what you purge? Will you take it to a donation center or call a collection place to pick it up? Make that plan before you start!
4. Do you feel like you need to record what is in each capsule stored away? If so, decide if you're going to write it out, take pictures, or type it up as you go along.

5. As you overhaul your wardrobe, ask yourself these questions to help make your decisions:
- Does this fit properly? If no, should I put it in storage or donate it?
 - Do I like how this looks? If no, donate.
 - Do I like how this feels? If no, donate.
 - Do I have something to wear this with? If no, donate or put in a pile to decide if the budget can stand to purchase something to go with it.
6. As you put your clothes back in your closet, take time to consider how you'll organize your clothes:
- by item type and color
 - by outfits
 - with hangers all facing in reverse and when the item is worn it goes back in the proper way, and then anything left unturned at the season's end gets donated

Step 3: Budget and Shop

The final step in your capsule wardrobe process is to set up a budget and shopping plan — or a no shopping plan for some! These questions will help you think practically about your situation.

1. How much of my overall budget is devoted to my clothing purchases?
2. How can I divide that budget over each capsule?
3. What am I willing to spend that budget on, such as staples, seasonal additions, or trendy pieces?
4. When will I allow myself to shop for those pieces?
5. Where will I shop for those pieces?

Congratulations!

You're on your way to putting together a wardrobe that works for you without it dominating your life. If you'd like help working through this capsule project, I'd be happy to help you through life coaching. Feel free to contact me to set up a free consultation and be sure to mention the Capsule Wardrobe coaching package, which includes two forty-five minutes sessions for only \$125!

