

36 Ways to Cull Your Closet



Hi, I'm Jill Chivers and it's my pleasure to be sharing this special report on 36 ways to cull your closet with you. I have been in love with clothes and style for as long as I can remember, and this topic simply fascinates me.

Before we jump into these 36 ways to cull your closet, let me share just a little about what has brought me to this topic.

I was a compulsive shopper for years. And for much of that time, I didn't even realise it.

I thought shopping was a harmless pastime or maybe a contact sport I had become very, very good at. Shopping was my favourite hobby. I had more than enough clothing, but I was continuing to shop and add more to a bursting-at-the-seams walk in wardrobe.

I had racks and racks of stuff I didn't need, or even want. Why was I buying so much when I already *had* so much? I had no idea what the answer to that question was. But I knew I had to find an answer.

The Journey Back to Conscious Clothes Shopping



The path I chose to explore this question was to take *a year without clothes shopping*. I had to stop the constant intake of new items into my closet. I had to put some space and distance between me and all this buying, and buying, and buying.

That year changed my life.

It changed how I think and feel about shopping, and it changed my shopping behaviour. It also led me to work in this intriguing and complex field of compulsive and unconscious shopping.

Since then I have met many women who are struggling with their own over-shopping demons. They shop too much, by their own definition, but it's ceased to bring them satisfaction. They're buying too much and wearing too little. They often feel "*How can I have nothing to wear – I have all these clothes!*" – a very frustrating feeling!

Which is why I created this special report. To provide a practical and inspiring way for you to reconnect you to your wardrobe and choose for yourself what you want to keep, and what you're ready to let go of.

Inspiration for 36 Ways to Cull Your Closet Special Report

The inspiration for this special report came about from two sources. Firstly, I was in touch with someone on our [Facebook page](#) who shared with me: *“I have a quandary... my wardrobe contains the results of years of steady accumulation, and I am at a loss how to fix it – how do I pull my wardrobe back to a more manageable collection? How do I really pare it down?”*

Then I had a Skype conversation with a colleague in Houston and she was telling me that she has also been culling her wardrobe and using “personality” as the main criteria on which to decide what stays and what goes.

My Houston friend reported that the familiar “have you worn it in the last 2 years?” criteria does not work for her – she wears clothing collected from her mother’s and grandmother’s closet that often are unworn for a period of years, but she always comes back to them.

So, what are the ways a wardrobe can be pared down? What criteria exist? What sorting mechanisms are there?

This special report explores at least 36 ways -- *sorting mechanisms* – you can use to cull items in your own closet.

How to Use these 36 Ways to Cull Your Closet

Don't just head into your wardrobe and start sorting. Without a criteria on which you will assess each item, you'll end up confused, fatigued and even more frustrated than you were before you started your 'wardrobe review play shop'.

Number of categories to work with at a time: Read through the categories and choose a few that appeal to you to work with at a time. I would suggest no less than 2 and no more than 6 categories at a time to sort your items. Less than 2 categories and there's not enough rigour to the process, and more than about 6 and it may become too time consuming and overwhelming.

Number of clothing items to work with at a time: It's really up to you whether you want to do a 'whole of wardrobe' approach or take one section at a time. I generally prefer the "whatever will lead to early feelings of success" approach. So if that means you tackle your entire wardrobe in one sitting – go for it.

Or it may mean you take on one section at a time and work with 8 - 10 items in it until you have achieved what feels (and looks like) success for you. It may be your shoes. Or your folded t-shirts. Or your accessories and scarves. Or the oak drawers, or the long hanging closet.

How to Use these 36 Ways to Cull Your Closet

Timeframe to conduct a wardrobe review 'play shop'

within: I'm a big believer in setting you up to succeed. Which is why a "I'm gonna keep at this until my entire wardrobe is finished" approach may not be the most advisable. If it is for you, all hail Caesar and off you go.

Otherwise, I generally suggest you put a time limit of about 20 – 30 minutes on your 'play shop'. If you feel inclined to keep going after that, do. If not, stop. Do another play shop another time.

It's a process: Reviewing the items in your closet is a *process*, an ongoing one that never really ends. That's because your closet is living & dynamic, as are you.

This list of 36 ways to cull your closet puts *you in the drivers seat* – you get to determine the basis on which you decide what is working, and what isn't, in your wardrobe.

These categories range from the very practical to the (*cough*) charmingly esoteric, and my intention in pulling them together is to give you a *range of choices*.

These 36 ways are grouped into three sub-categories: the '**Time**' criteria, the '**Garment's Physical Qualities**' criteria, and the '**Heart and Soul**' criteria.

36 Ways to Cull Your Closet: The 'Time' Criteria

1. **Timeline Past:** How long has it been since I've worn it?
2. **Timeline Present:** Am I currently wearing it?
3. **Timeline Future:** Can I imagine wearing this item again in the future (near or unspecified)?

36 Ways to Cull Your Closet: The 'Garment's Physical Qualities' Criteria

4. **Practical:** Do I actually wear it?
5. **Fit:** Does it fit me?
6. **Visual:** How do I look when wearing it?
7. **Touch:** How does it feel on my skin and body?
8. **Condition:** What condition is it in? Does it need repairing, or revamping and up-styling to make it wearable?
9. **Care:** What is it like to care for? Does it require special cleaning?
10. **Versatility:** How many other things can I wear it with? Can I use it to create new and interesting ensembles?
11. **Variety:** Does this piece add variety and interest to my wardrobe? Would my wardrobe seem a little dull without this?
12. **Access:** Is it easy to access – is it in plain sight and easy to reach?
13. **Storage:** Is it easy to store or does it have special storage requirements?

36 Ways to Cull Your Closet: The 'Garment's Physical Qualities' Criteria (cont.)

14. **Proportion:** Does it have the right proportions for my particular body?
15. **Line and shape:** Is the line, shape and construction of this garment right for me?
16. **Colour:** Is the colour right for me, or at least is it in the right 'colour family' for me?
17. **Texture and fabric:** Do I love/enjoy the feel of the texture and fabric of this garment when I wear it?
18. **Pattern:** Do I enjoy wearing this patterned garment, and does it feel like 'me'?
19. **Attractiveness:** Do I feel attractive when I wear this garment?
20. **Uniqueness:** Is this piece unique in some special or meaningful way? And are those reasons enough for me to keep it?
21. **Special Use or Purpose:** Does this item have a special purpose or use, such as for a particular sport or recreation activity, or for wearing to special events that aren't engaged in frequently?
22. **Signature Look:** Is this item something in my 'signature' look (my colour, my print, my motif, etc)? And if so, is that enough of a reason to keep it?

36 Ways to Cull Your Closet: The 'Heart and Soul' Criteria

23. **Memories:** Do I have happy memories of wearing this item (which are either significant in their own right, or mean that I will wear it again in the future)?
24. **Feeling:** How do I feel when I wear this? At least, can I determine if it makes me feel good or bad, fabulous or frumpy, when I wear this?
25. **Personality:** Do I feel like "me" when I wear this? (and how do I know?)
26. **Sentimental:** Does this item have a connection to something significant or meaningful in my past?
27. **Lifestyle:** Does this item suit the lifestyle I currently have (not a previous lifestyle, or a potential future one)?
28. **Emotional 'weight':** Does it feel lighter or heavier to keep this item, or to let it go?
29. **Logic:** Does it make sense to keep this, or let it go?
30. **Obligation:** Was it given to me and I feel obligated to keep it? (and is this a good enough reason?)

36 Ways to Cull Your Closet: The 'Heart and Soul' Criteria (cont.)

31. **'Enoughness':** Does it feel like *just enough*, *not enough*, or *too much* if I keep this?
32. **Money:** Did it cost a lot of money and therefore I feel I should keep it, or was it so cheap it feels easy to dispose of?
33. **Magic:** I don't know why I keep it, but I'm happy waiting for *something to happen* so I can wear it again.
34. **Energy:** What happens to my energy when I wear this: do I feel energised and 'up', or enervated and 'down'?
35. **Gut Instinct:** What's my gut instinct when pondering this item: let it go, or keep it?
36. **Love:** Do I absolutely, totally, madly love this item?

BONUS: The “Letting Go” and “Keeping” Story Templates

The following two pages allow you to tell a story about a wardrobe item you’ve chosen to let go and one you’ve chosen to keep.

You can print out as many copies of each page as you’d like, and write directly on a separate sheet for each piece of clothing whose story you’d like to tell.

Everything you own has a story behind it, whether it’s a simple and practical story, or a grand sweeping epic, or somewhere in between.

Thinking about these stories can help bring you to a sense of completion about your decision, no matter what you decide to do with each item.

Normally only available to participating and paid up members of the My Year Without Clothes Shopping Program, these are included as a special bonus for you.

Thanks to Michelle Russell, guest faculty for My Year Without Clothes Shopping, for these Story Templates.

I Am Letting Go of _____



I got this when...

It's stayed in my wardrobe until now because

I know it's time to let it go because...

I have appreciated it because

I Am Keeping _____



I got this when...

It's stayed in my wardrobe until now because

I am choosing to keep this (at least for now) because...

I appreciate it because

Culling Your Closet – How did you get on?

This can be a very interesting process, an intriguing experiment: sorting through your closet and assessing each item, and deciding what its fate is going to be.

I hope you've found it a helpful process, and that something is better as a result of your activities.

I'd love to know about your experiences of culling your closet, using whichever criteria from this special report (or other criteria you came up with) was most helpful to you.

Would you drop me a quick line and let me know?

I'm very curious to hear about how you got on doing this.

What was interesting? Surprising? Annoying? Delightful? Helpful?

What is now different as a result of doing this?

How is your wardrobe better? What else has improved? What else are you curious about?

When you get a moment, please drop me a line at contact@shopyourwardrobe.com and let me know! I'd appreciate hearing from you.

About the author

I'm Jill Chivers and I understand what it's like to 'shop til you drop' and yet still feel it's never enough. I know how heavy that feeling is. And I'm here to tell you it is possible to lay that burden down, to stop the constant shopping, and to reclaim your life.

Your life is not to be found in the mall

You won't get to the end of your life (the ultimate scorecard, if ever there was one) and wish you'd spent more time shopping.

Life is about the experiences you have, the people that you love, and the contribution that you make. And none of those things have anything to do with or require shopping.

My goal and intention with everything I do in this space of conscious consumption is to encourage you to think about the shopping you do, and to *choose* it – not find yourself accumulating more and more stuff you don't want, don't even need, and won't fully use.

Through products and resources I've created, I help women who shop too much to stop, or at least cut down.



Continuing the Conscious Clothes Shopping journey

If you enjoyed this experience, you would likely enjoy and gain a lot of value from participating in one of our value-for-money paid programs.

6 Week Conscious Clothes Shopping Mini Course. This is our shorter course, the [6 Week Conscious Shopping Mini Course](#). We provide you with the tools you need to start improving your relationship to shopping in this starter course which contains over 50 pages of thought provoking and action prompting material. It's all delivered online with 14 email lessons over 6 weeks, and all topics are geared around conscious clothes shopping.

If you really want to reshape your relationship to your wardrobe and your wallet, consider our intensive year-long program:

My Year Without Clothes Shopping program. The [My Year Without Clothes Shopping program](#) is our marquee program, the jewel in our crown. My Year Without Clothes Shopping (MYWCS) offers 12 themes over the 12 months, 52 in-depth weekly tutorials, and bonuses and benefits in our member's only area. All in all, there's over 1000 pages of material. This is a premium program where we give you the very best of what we have to offer about the journey back to conscious clothes shopping. We know of no other program like it in the world.