

A Life in Stiches

A professional guide to Total Wardrobe Care

By Julia Dee



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Introduction

I've run my own tailoring alterations company for over twenty years and during that time people have often asked me the same questions.

How did I become a tailor?

Do I make all my own clothes?

Why bother with alterations?

Which celebrities do I work with?

How did I start?

What are my top tips for making clothes work the best they can?

I recently realised that over these years I have accumulated so much useful knowledge that it was high time I got it all down in writing.

So at last here it is, my very own, guide to Total Wardrobe Care, where all of those questions are answered.



Julia Dee
Author

Small Beginnings

I really mean that. I started at about 2½ years old, when my mum was at her sewing machine and gave me scissors, material, buttons and a threaded needle. I made a little coat for my doll. Not haute couture, it must be said, but the first of many miniature outfits. She ended up being one of the best-dressed dolls on the south coast of England.

School wasn't my thing even though my father was a headmaster but I loved art and sewing. By 14 or 15 I'd become bold: I'd buy any paper pattern I could and I'd tie-dye mum's old sheets in her jam saucepan.

Everything came out pink or yellow (it was the seventies, I made dungarees and everyone asked me where I got them. So I started making them for people and that was it. I knew I was going to make my living from sewing.

In Sixth Form I insisted on doing art and needlework, though you weren't meant to do both, then I went to art college at Southampton and Epsom, doing fashion design. By then I'd started a business at home.

Julia Dee



Go East, Young Woman



Map of Bahrain

When I was 23, I heard about a job in Bahrain, the island off the United Arab Emirates, in the Arabian Gulf. It was to set up a Western-style ladies tailoring business for expatriates. I took it for the adventure, but I think that's where I truly began to learn about the real techniques of tailoring.

The seamstresses were from Thailand and the Philippines and I learnt so much from them. I had to learn how they wanted me to measure. I began to realise the significance of careful fitting and how it can transform a garment.

The waist must come at the waist; not above it or just below it.

A woman who is UK size 12 could be 5'2" or 6'1" and her waist will be in a different place.

This is really difficult with off-the-peg clothes; Unless you're a standardsize (and let's face it, who is?), it's very hard to find the right thing.

That's why you see far more separates than dresses, generally they're easier to make and sell. That's also why the bias cut has been so revolutionary: it clings to your figure whatever your shape.

I learnt about trousers, which are a devil to get right. The cut of the trousers is crucial so women don't get a 'camel hoof' effect at the crotch or creases under the bum and that they hang properly on men. The crotch must never be too tight or too long as it ruins the look of them.

What People Want

This always interests me. It was in Bahrain that I learned that people tend to know what they want – a peplum, puffed sleeves, high skirt – and they can be quite insistent.

There are so many clothing styles and some suit certain body shapes more than others; straight figures v's hour glass, tall v's petite, angular shoulders v's rounded all create different shapes which lend themselves to different cuts and designs.

The right cut will suit a figure and look fabulous whether it is the current trend or not. So I learned to listen to what people want and interpret that for them in the most flattering way.

I remember one client who was hosting a big party and needed a new dress.

We created quite a flamboyant design and she hated it!

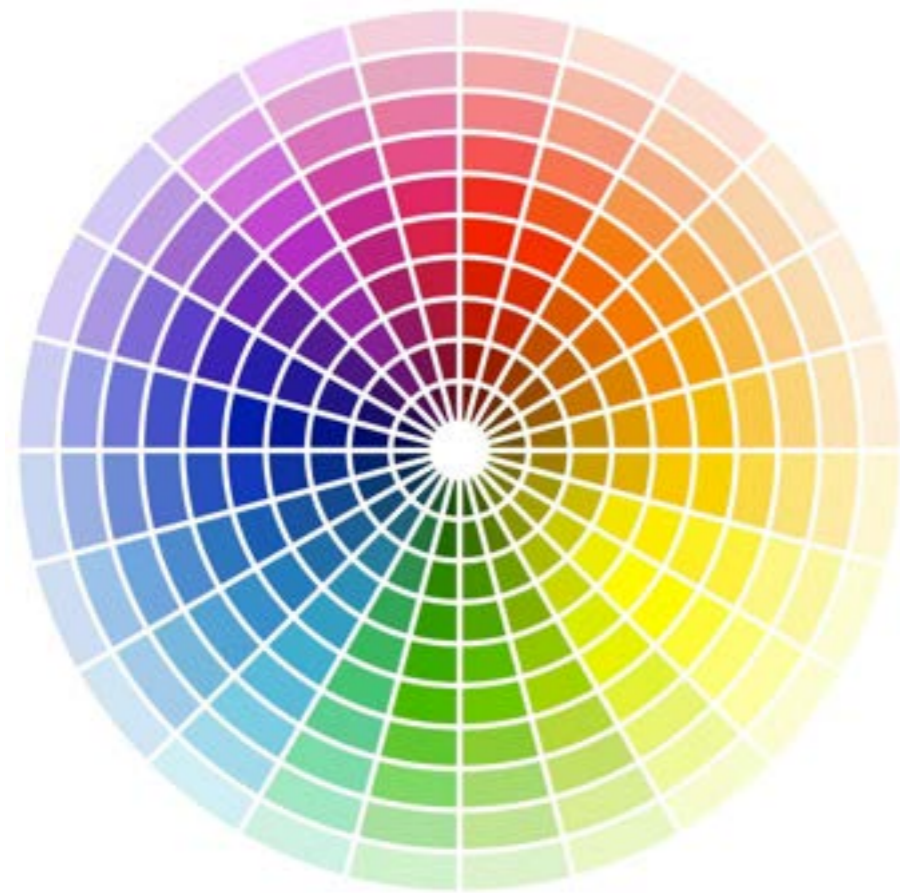
It turned out that that although she was the party host she was uncomfortable being the centre of attention, not everybody wants to walk into a room and 'make an entrance'.

I learnt that day that the key is to listen and ask questions to get to know the personality behind the person.



Julia Dee
Woman and Home Magazine

Why Colour Is Crucial



I once made an outfit for a lady. It was perfect. It fitted perfectly. But she looked in the mirror and it didn't work. I realised after a while that it was the colour. This was 1984 and 'Colour Me Beautiful' and other consultancies were not common place then. I found someone to do something similar – we got in lots of colour swatches – and the business just took off. It made such a difference to people's self-confidence.

Basically, if the colour doesn't suit you, it's never going to work. It's like the missing bit of the jigsaw: fit, style, client choice and colour. If the colour's right, it looks natural, effortless and if the shape fits then the whole thing will work.

Style - Who's Got It, Who Hasn't

Some people are born with it, some have to learn it. Some people can go into Oxfam and come out looking amazing. Some people have terrible taste. That's why all those stars and celebrities have stylists. The point is, you can learn it. The information is out there. Sometimes you can transform things, just by looking a bit harder.





Grooming Is Not Just For Horses

Good grooming is essential to good appearance. So many people walk around with their sleeves too long or their cuffs frayed. It's about how much attention you pay to detail, how much time you're prepared to put in. If it's right, you never have to worry about it. You buy an article of clothing, you spend a few minutes trying it on at home and really looking at it. You make any changes necessary and bang, you don't have to worry about it again. You don't go to get it out of your wardrobe and think 'Oh no, the buttons are loose on that jacket, the hem's coming down on that skirt, that shirt never suited me anyway'.

If you are doing that, your wardrobe is full of dead wood, clothes you will never use. So think about it. Why don't you use them? Can something be done? If not, get rid of it. If it can, it's a relatively small amount of effort to make everything in there serviceable.

Here's a tip: don't buy anything to put in your wardrobe unless it's perfect or you're going to make it perfect.

I know an exceptionally articulate and intelligent woman who said she stood up for a presentation one morning, wearing a suit which made her feel uncomfortable, so she didn't feel good in it and it affected her performance. 'I know I fluffed my presentation not because I didn't know what I was talking about, but because I knew I looked bad,' she explained, 'I just found it incredibly distracting'.

It's not only distracting for the speaker, don't forget, it's distracting for the audience, as well. I went to a lecture recently where the guy looked a bit sloppy. The lecture was okay, but he didn't look sharp and so he didn't come across as impressive. This used to be the case for politicians, particularly in this country. Nowadays it's pretty standard for politicians and celebs to have a stylist but the great news is it's not just for celebrities and politicians. A quick search on Instagram and you'll find that there are loads of great stylist out there that are really accessible to the masses.

The Next Stage

I lost everything in Bahrain because of the first Gulf War. We all had to leave. I came back here and began again.

I went on the dole, but I was still helping people with their clothes. Then I found that because there was a recession, people wanted things altered rather than buying new. Could they put buttons on a jacket, or alter a hem, or add something to the collar? No, they couldn't. But I could.



Harvey Nichols

I found a job in sales at Harvey Nichols and I started doing alterations for the concession that I worked for. I started to build quite a big business, because people knew that they could come in, buy something and that it would be absolutely perfect. Don't forget, it was the time of the Lloyds crash so even the well off were pulling in their belts.

I put a small ad in Vogue. It simply said 'If your clothes don't fit, or need repairing, I can help'. Then I learnt a lot about London. I found that people like home visits, they like home deliveries, how important it is the way that clothes are kept, how they travel, how they are hung, how they are pressed, I learnt about structure and quality and that I really had to produce work that was the very best quality, stitch perfect.

After a couple of years I sat back and realised that I had a good, broad business in alterations and repairs, bridal services, remodelling, restyling, made to measure and copying old favourites that people couldn't replace.

Who Cares About Clothes?

Then clients started asking about clothes care. Was it best to hang it on a peg hanger or on an expander? Was it okay to fold wool trousers? What should they do about delicates, vintage garments, or moths? How should they store stuff out of season? In a suitcase? If so, would they get infested by something? What sort of tissue paper should they use?



Julia Dee

Some things I knew, some things I didn't. So I started asking questions myself. One of the first people I went to was a dry cleaner who'd been in business for 30 years.

“ He told me all sorts of things, like the fact that if you spilled toothpaste down the front of your clothes, it would bleach. ”

So I found a chap who could re-dye a bleach spot. And it went on like that, until I knew a lot. What I came to realise was there are experts out there who, if you know how to find them, can sort out just about anything.

The Witch & The Wardrobe

When I was visiting people at home, I was always lecturing them on how to look after their clothes, what coat hangers to use and so on. The next phase of my business developed from there. When I saw how some people kept their clothes, I knew they needed help. They either had to turn everything out, redesign their wardrobes, store out of season elsewhere, or all three. So I started a service doing just that. I could do a limited amount with boxes and baskets, but if the basic space wasn't there, I was going to have to call the builders. So I started on myself.



Julia Dee
In Style Magazine

I used to have a house in south London and I knew that the best thing would be to have a walk-in wardrobe with a door - there's nothing better for clothes - but there simply wasn't the space. Then my designer cousin had an idea. We took some space from the next-door room, just a strip, but wide enough to have a little door from my bedroom and a rail along one wall and shelves.

It's all about money, space and time in the end, isn't it? Although you could argue that if you store your clothes properly, keep them ready to use, know what suits you and can find everything, you save a lot on wasted purchases and impulse buys.

So What About The Celebs, Then?



“Julia Dee and her team offer repairs, alterations and mending as well as an at-home care service. They’ll come to your house, organize your wardrobe, get rid of moths and revamp your clothes and shoes with garment bags, hangers and shoe trees. If that’s not enough, you can also store your pieces with them and access your clothing archive online wherever you are in the world.”

Gwyneth Paltrow, Goop



“Julia at Total Wardrobe Care helped organise my closet. She managed everything, from the right hangers to folding and colour coordinate all my clothes. Finishing off with all her gorgeous smelling products. All my out of season clothes were taken away to storage and are brought back when I need them. They offer a pop in / drop off service, so that if I need something urgently that is stored, it can be accessed straight away. Julia and her team offer a wonderful service.”

Elle Macpherson

I have been very lucky to work with all walks of life and that includes a good number of celebrities and although I would love to name drop that would not be fair. In my line of work particularly, people are really vulnerable as I’ve seen them all naked, or semi-naked. I know the intricate measurements of their body and what they are and aren’t confident about. What I’ve learned is they are human, just like you and me. The big difference is that no celebrity just became a celebrity. They really, really work hard at it. They think about what they’re wearing, do the whole grooming thing, and it works!

What most people have in common is that they want to know what they can do about their bulging wardrobes. How to get rid of the piles of clothes by their beds and those chucked on the floor, the ones that don’t fit anymore and the ones they bought in the sales and have never worn. The good news is that it can all be sorted.

Here’s how:

Cupboard Love - A Manual

Learning to love or lose your clothes.

ASSESSING YOUR WARDROBE

- ❖ First, look at your space. Not for a day or two, but over time. When you move into a new place, buy yourself a couple of wheeled running rails and live with those until you see what works best for you.
- ❖ Even with an existing wardrobe, do the same thing. Take everything out and put it on the rails. Be brave and have a big clear out at the same time.
- ❖ Once you know what you want to put back in, count it. Each garment takes up a certain amount of space and you need to allow for that in your calculations. For instance, 50 pairs of trousers will need approximately 1m of hanging rail. Dresses need less. Jackets need more. Yes it is boring, and that’s why I’m normally asked to do it!



THE GOLDEN RULE:

What comes in must get worn. If you are never going to wear it get rid of it!

ASSESSING & ADAPTING A WARDROBE

- ❖ Empty your existing wardrobe, then cull and count (as before)
- ❖ Ask yourself questions about what you are really going to wear, how often you are going to access something and so on.
- ❖ Look at the physical possibilities: can you raise or lower shelves? Make the most of wasted space with baskets? Use hanging rails, hanging canvas 'chests of drawers', clear plastic storage boxes?
- ❖ Standard wardrobes are 60cm deep and a woman's jumper only takes up 30cm. But men's jumpers need 40cm.

DESIGNING A BESPOKE WARDROBE

- ❖ The perfect, no expense-spared wardrobe is a walk in; with a door; no window, bright lighting, hanging rails, shoe storage and shelves on either side with a ladder so that you can store out-of-season stuff out of the way and swap them around when you need them.
- ❖ If money permits, you should have cedar panels put in. They smell lovely and are naturally repellent to clothing enemies such as moths.
- ❖ Think about length: if you've got no long hanging space and ten long dresses, they'll be crushed up at the bottom. Always measure from the top of the hanger to below the hem, plus 5cm clearance to accommodate them.
- ❖ How tall are you? Are you nearer 5ft or 6ft tall? Is your partner larger and broader shouldered? If male, does he wear jackets of tweed, or other thick material? It makes a difference to the height and depth of the wardrobe. This is something that architects simply don't understand, so you have to do it. Again, remember to add at least a centimetre on either side of the shoulders, for clearance.

- ❖ Get Carpenters/Builders/Designers in to look at the space. Don't just send them a floor plan. Looking at a floor plan is rarely enough and ceiling height, windows etc. are crucial.
- ❖ Remember that shelving can often be made narrower than it is; look at your current shelves - there will often be empty space at the front.
- ❖ Basically there are three elements to designing a bespoke wardrobe: the architect, who will fit it into the overall building design; the interior designer, who will make it look pretty; and - often forgot about - the wardrobe adviser, who does the practical details.
- ❖ If you want to design your own wardrobe, draw your design on graph paper and work out a scale - i.e. one square equals 10 centimetres - and do a schematic diagram. Cut out pieces, representing clothes or storage units, to be fitted in, so that you can move them around.



MAXIMISING YOUR SPACE CHECKLIST

- Could you convert a room?
- Is there an odd space that can be changed?
- Could you raise your bed and build a wardrobe under the steps?
- Could you build a stud wall a metre into the next door room?
- Have you got a dry basement?
- Or a long, dark corridor that could lose 40cm down one side?
- Could you split your clothes into seasons and store half of them?
- Can you replace a shelf and rail with a hanging shelf?
- Can you replace conventional doors with sliding doors?

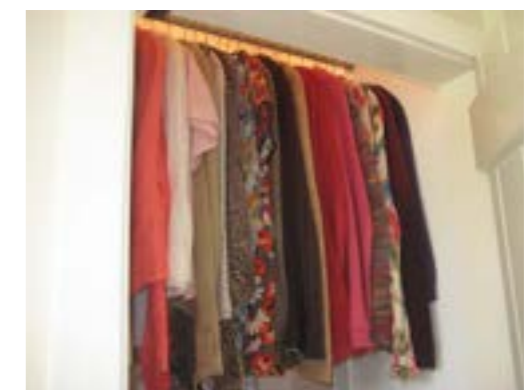
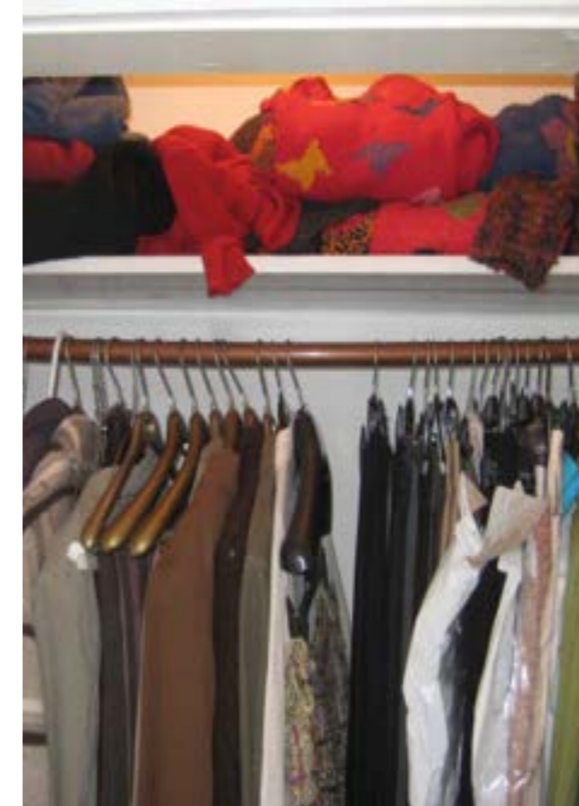
THINGS TO AVOID

- Damp (windows should be double-glazed)
- Direct sunlight (use a good blind)
- Smells (ie near a kitchen or ventilator outlet)
- Inaccessibility - if you can't reach it, you won't use it
- Keeping clothes in lots of different places
- Pointless, bulky clothes: ski gear, winter coats

TIPS

Look at the design of a traditional wardrobe. They had a drawer bottom, shelf on top, hanging space in between, sometimes sliding drawers and a sliding shoe drawer. Or take a clothes press or a linen chest from the 18th or 19th centuries. They knew a lot about how to keep clothes aired - look at the venti-lation they put in. The principles we follow today should be exactly the same.

Often, when rethinking a space that you've lived in for a while, you may be too close to the subject. If possible, get a friend whose design sense you trust to come in and look at it with you. In my case, when I built the wardrobe I mentioned earlier, my Australian cousin, an antiques dealer, was lying in bed in my spare room when he suddenly had the idea to take a strip off the side, stud partition it and make a door into it from my bedroom. Perfect!



BEFORE & AFTER WARDROBE BLITZ!

CLUTTER-BUSTING

Wardrobes are quite emotional spaces, because they're filled with memories. Even if you're wealthy, often the only things that are entirely yours are your clothes (along with your watch and your bed, probably). They are personal to you. They also reflect your changing shape and age and the fashions you grew up with so you need to be feeling quite strong, to make changes.

And yup, it's going to take time. There's no getting away from it. Rather than resenting this and feeling miserable about it - or putting it off for years - set aside a weekend and prepare yourself for a military operation.

Send the kids to your parents or friends. Switch off your mobile phone. Don't organise anything else, not even a movie in the evening. It's TIRING!

- Get in snacks (oat bars, fruit bowl, water, juice for sugar energy)
- Get a roll of black bags and labels
- Get a big felt tip pen and prepare label bin liners with 'Sell', 'Charity Shop', 'Repair', 'Dry Clean', 'Specialist Repair Or Cleaning'
- Get in a clothes rail, as mentioned before, and lots of hangers
- Order in advance proper hangers for jackets, trousers and skirts, shoe trees and other storage (see storage section below and look at our website for our range of wardrobe products and systems)
- Get cleaning stuff: bucket, duster, vacuum cleaner, cloths
- Check out nearby charity, nearly new and second-hand shops before you begin: will they take clothes of any season, or only the appropriate one? Is there anything they won't accept? Do you have to clean donations first? Then you can drop them off

- Check out recycling opportunities at your local tip.
- Check out eBay, Vinted or Vestiaire Collective for re-selling – in this case, you will need a good light back-ground for photographing items.
- Time to phone a friend. You really need someone whose taste you trust so that you can try on clothes and get an honest opinion. They also need to understand that this day - or weekend - is about you.
- Give yourselves a break every three hours.

FIRST, CLEAN YOUR WARDROBE

- ❖ Take all the clothes and shoes out and put them on or under the rail
- ❖ Empty any other cupboards, drawers or boxes that contain clothes
- ❖ Scrub everything so that it smells and looks great
- ❖ Line drawers with drawer paper and put in drawer sachets



AND NOW FOR THE CLOTHES

MAKE THREE PILES

The Good- These go back into the wardrobe on the right hangers in colour families and grouped in trousers, jackets, dresses, blouses etc.

The Bad- Items that need something doing i.e dry cleaned, mended, altered etc.

The Ugly- Items that can be sold (or swapped with friends) or sent to charity.

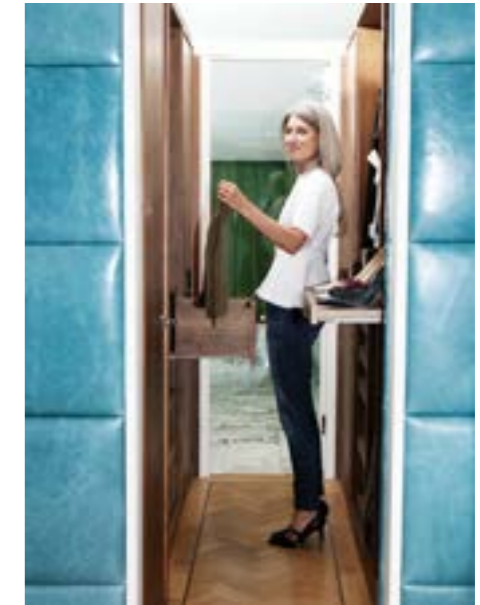
- ❖ Don't give in to unrealistic expectations (i.e hoping that you will once again be slim enough to wear something, or imagining that your bust might magically expand or reduce so that something suits you).
- ❖ As I said, be prepared. Be prepared for the cardigan your husband bought you on your honeymoon, or the dress you wore to get your degree. Even if these things no longer fit, they are important and should not be thrown away. Instead, buy a pretty storage box and plan to keep them where you can get them out occasionally and stroke them.
- ❖ Don't be tempted to attach a story to everything - you know, 'Oh, I wore that to so-and-so's wedding'.
- ❖ Ask yourself 'Have I worn it recently?' If not, why not? Does it fit? Does it suit you? Is the colour right? Have you always had a bad feeling about your upper arms/cleavage/legs when wearing it? Work out why you feel unhappy about some of your clothes and honestly assess whether anything can be done about it.
- ❖ Do things need repairing - buttons, zips, hems - or altering, because the trousers cut you between the crotch, or the skirt rides up when you walk? Does it need re-lining or new shoulder pads?
- ❖ Is it stained? Something worth remembering for the future is that if you put something back in your wardrobe without dealing with a stain it will embed. Stains need sorting, fast, and usually by specialists who know about chemicals. Organic stains will always need washing out.

GETTING SORTED

- ❖ So, you've binned the dead wood. Now it's time to make decisions, which is the really exhausting part.
- ❖ Sort your clothes into categories (trousers/jackets/skirts etc) and colour co-ordinate them. This makes them easier to find.
- ❖ Never store stuff in plastic bags or dry cleaners' plastic covers. Over time it encourages condensation and the clothes can discolour and rot.
- ❖ Hang items on the running rails for a re-count and also to see patterns, it's like looking at your own personal boutique! You'll see great life changes here, such as working girl to motherhood and back.
- ❖ Remember the old 80-20 rule: most of us wear 20% of our clothes 80% of the time. Think about the cost-per-wear ratio; what were your most successful and least successful buys?

TIPS

- ❖ Stop the impulse buying cycle from now on. But don't let guilt about wasted money persuade you to keep the wrong clothes
- ❖ Don't wait for fashion items to come back in - they will always metamorphosize.
- ❖ Don't keep stuff 'for fancy dress parties', or if you do, bung them in a chest in the playroom.
- ❖ Yes, you're allowed one crap outfit, an ugly cardy or cosy tracky bottoms to vegg in.



Sarah Harris in NYT's T magazine

HANGING OR FLOGGING



Wire hangers are great for storing stuff on a clothes rail while you reassess your wardrobe needs. But to keep your clothes in really good nick, they need the right hanging or storage methods. Another reason for counting.

We sell a great range of hangers:

<http://totalwardrobecare.co.uk/clothes-storage/hangers>.

TROUSERS

The best solution is full-length hanging, if you've got the space. You will need peg hangers. Otherwise, they should be folded in half and hung on a hanger with a round, fat bar so that you don't get creases at the knees. The foam-covered ones given away by boutiques are fine. Wooden hangers with grips are excellent, but you do need a lot of room as they're bulky.



JACKETS

- Look at your shoulders in the mirror, or better, look at other people's shoulders as they stand. Are they straight? No, they curve, and that's how jackets are cut. So you need curved, banana-shaped hangers to hold the shape nicely. Plastic ones are fine and wooden too, though again, they're heavy. Expensive designers such as Chanel or Stella McCartney give away velvet flock hangers with their clothes, which are fabulous because clothes don't fall off.

- Look for shaped ends to the shoulders, not sharp ends which will disfigure the garment. Broad-shouldered men can buy hangers with shoulder extensions. Similarly, the narrow-shouldered should get smaller hangers. In this case, one size doesn't fit all.

- Coats follow the same rules as jackets. Ladies hangers should be 38-40cm and mens 40-45cm.

SKIRTS

For these, depending on the fabric and cut, you need peg or expander hangers to hold the waist taut. Expanders are good with materials such as suede, leather or delicates, which will be marked by the grips on peg hangers. Never hang a skirt by its loops; it makes a v-shape in the middle and creases against other clothes.

DRESSES, BLOUSES AND KNITWEAR

Of all the hangers I've ever tested, I've found the narrow, rubber-covered, slightly curved hangers we stock to be the best for dresses, blouses and tops. They need to hold the garment and stop it slipping off but be light enough not to spoil the shape. Unlike wire hangers, they don't have pointy corners.

TIPS

- Beware the pretty, padded hanger, which can often be too horizontal and take up too much space.
- Never use too wide a hanger, it will disfigure your clothes.
- Look for hanger extensions so that you can store a jacket and skirt together.
- Take hangers when you travel because hotel ones are rarely satisfactory.

WHERE TO STORE

BASKETS

- Natural materials such as wicker, unlike plastic boxes, let clothes breathe but make sure they are lined in calico which can be washed and stops clothes catching on rough bits
- Make sure there is enough clearance to get your hand in.
- Don't overfill them. Better to have two small baskets rather than one big one that you can't find anything in.
- For jumpers, you need room for 30cm x 35cm folded. When storing cashmere, it should be dry cleaned and put in pillowcases or knitwear bags. Knitwear bags can be found at www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk/knitwear-t-shirt-storage-bag.
- Have a basket or drawer for belts which should be coiled (the alternative is a circular hanger but a basket is easier).

PLASTIC BOXES

- Avoid plastic boxes for clothes, the lids are fiddly for everyday use.
- They do not allow air to circulate, and as the temperature fluctuates, condensation will develop and cause mould and shoe leather will dry out and crack
- You can use shallow trays to keep on the shelf of your wardrobe for sunglasses, and costume jewellery etc.
- Breathable storage box. These can be found at www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk/set-of-5-storage-boxes-pink-and-white



DRAWERS

- ❖ Some people like drawer dividers, some don't, but they certainly make it easier to find your rolled-up knickers
- ❖ If you keep your bras in a pile, stack them facing the front of the drawer
Socks – keep them in pairs or use drawer dividers
- ❖ If you've got different types of things, keep them separate: eg light/dark/coloured/sports/sexy/short/long.
- ❖ Keep tights in individual self-seal food bags or drawstring bags to stop them from snagging.



WHAT TO KEEP WHERE

SCARVES

Fold them neatly in a drawer – they're bulky on a hanger – but do keep them in one place. You might prefer a Slack Rack sticking to the wall.

SHOES

- Get a sheet of cedar wood from a timber merchant and put it on the floor of your wardrobe.
- Another great idea is to use the revolving circles that you see in corner cupboards in the kitchen.
- If you can keep them separate from clothing, do so.
- Keep them in their boxes with a photo stuck on the front – or, if you're feeling rich – splash out on see-through breathable shoe boxes with windows.
- Use expandable bars and shoe racks, or convert a bookcase.
- Shoe trees are incredibly important, more important than regular polishing. They come in wood (the best) and sometimes have a flexible spine. Always buy to your size. Put them straight in and let the shoes cool and take the form of the shoe tree. This stops the wrinkles and helps prolong the life of your shoe.
- For slingbacks, you can get spongy shoe trees with handles.
- Try not to wear the same shoes everyday – they need a day of rest every so often, too.
- For boots, you need a proper, shaped riding boot tree.
- When travelling, take your shoes in soft bags.
- If you haven't got any shoe trees, you can find them here:
<https://www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk/shop/shoe-care/>

HATS



- There's no way around it: you have to have a hat box
- Pack them into the box surrounded by tissue
- If there's lots of room, put in more than one, with the most delicate on the top
- Never dump anything on top of your hat box – restoring those bent-out-of-shape hats is time-consuming and very expensive.

PUTTING IT ALL BACK

At last – time to have a bit of fun. This is where you really begin to stand back and say 'My last weekend was worth it – this is GREAT!'

- ❖ Co-ordinate your clothes by type (jackets, skirts etc)
- ❖ Co-ordinate by colour
- ❖ Put suits together



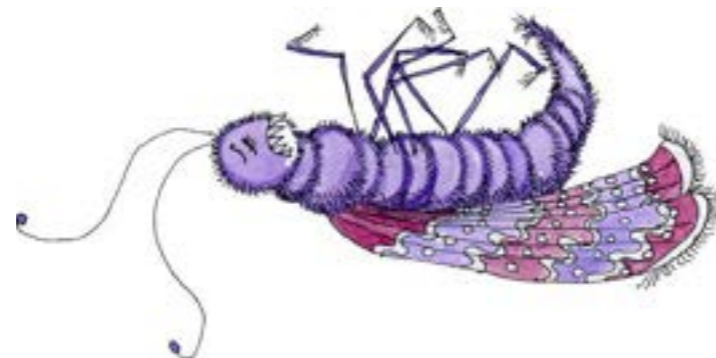
- ❖ Divide everything into day work, day home, evening and dress down – it speeds things up immensely.



The Wardrobe Armoury

THE ENEMY

- Moths (can munch their way through several thousand pounds' worth of cashmere in a summer)
- Woolly bears (wiggly tracks down your woollen coat)
- Silverfish
- Carpet beetle
- Dust
- Sunlight
- Old stains
- Damp
- Plastic
- Wool pills



PREVENTION

5 STEPS TO A MOTH FREE WARDROBE:

Clothes moths can cause havoc in your home and feed on your favourite garments. If you have a moth infestation, or have had one in the past, follow these simple moth prevention tips to keep your wardrobe free from clothes moths.

1. THE CLOTHES MOTH CLEAN OUT:

Clothes moths like to breed in dark, dusty, undisturbed corners. Therefore the first step in eliminating a moth infestation is to remove everything from your wardrobe and drawers. Wash what can be washed and dry clean everything else (including bedding, drapes and curtains). Vacuum your wardrobe, drawers, carpets, floors and all surrounding areas thoroughly. Then wash inside the wardrobe and drawers with soap and water. Treat your wardrobe and room with a natural moth killer such as Total Wardrobe Care's Chrysanthemum moth spray, this will help kill off any larvae that may be present. TIP – steam is very effective in killing moth larvae. If your home has been troubled with multiple or prolonged moth infestations it may be worth investing in a hand held steamer as well.

2. KEEPING IT CLEAN:

Moths love the food proteins in wool and especially love the food, skin and hair particles we leave behind. Do not put dirty or even once worn clothes back in the wardrobe. This is what clothes moths feed on. They don't like the taste of dry cleaning fluid so if you are storing out of season clothes, dry-clean them first.

3. CLOTHING STORAGE:

Put clothes back into the wardrobe clean. Store out of season garments in Total Wardrobe Care breathable cotton garment storage bags. Do not store in plastic, as the fabrics need to be able to breathe. Our cotton storage bags are also washable. For folded items use a Total Wardrobe Care storage box lined in acid free tissue. Don't store your clothes in an overheated or damp attic, cellar or storage unit. Put your storage box in a spare room on top of a cupboard or better still in a clean cupboard with a firmly shut door.

4. MOTH REPELLENT PRODUCTS:

Once you get rid of moths you must ensure that they don't return by using moth prevention products. The key to using anti moth products is to replace them every season. Place moth repellent hanging sachets on the rails of the wardrobe about every 40 -50cms. Put herb potpourri hanging bags or ceramic infusers around the necks of your hangers. Place cone filled herb potpourri bags amongst your folded items or use our anti moth drawer sachets. Line your shelves and draws with drawer liners. Have a large bowl of natural herb potpourri in the room or on the floor of your wardrobe and stir it often. We also have a moth prevention essential oil diffuser to hang or stick inside your wardrobe and it will give off a scent that we love and moths hate.

All anti-moth products can be found at www.total-wardrobecare.co.uk/anti-moth-products.



5. SEASON CHANGE:

Keep a check on your clothes and look out for holes caused by clothes moths. Every season have a mini clean out. Replace your moth repellent products. This will help keep your ward-robe fresh, clean and moth free. Moth traps are an effective way of getting rid of moths, you can also check out our products for moth prevention.



MAINTENANCE

- Twice a year, at the turn of the season, air your wardrobe and spray regularly with our Natural Anti-Moth Linen Spray which is made with essential oils.
- Avoid damp at all costs (which makes clothes smell) by flat drying woollens. Buy a net framework to stretch across the bath or hang them up on hangers if they are not heavy.



Long Term Clothes Storage

When your fashion collection over takes your storage space. It's time to make sense of your wardrobe. Our sister company Total Wardrobe Storage is a luxury storage service for those who need more space, ideal when moving, renting, or travelling abroad. From collection and delivery to your home, alterations, repairs and cleaning to creating an online catalogue of your collection, the expert care of your garments is their top priority.

www.totalwardrobestorage.com

Otherwise...

GARMENT BAGS

- Perfect for occasional outfits (wedding dresses, fur coats) etc
- They must be breathable and have a wide gusset so you can store several garments in the same bag. Don't use plastic, especially not dry cleaners' bags
- Ideally, use a spare wardrobe. Put everything in there and cover it with garment bags or a duvet cover buttoned up around a number of hangers. Most of us don't have this luxury!
- Hang our hanging sachets, ceramic infuser or essential oil and wooden diffuser cup in your wardrobe. These can be found at: <https://www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk/shop/anti-moth/sachets-drawer-liners/>



UNDER THE BED

- Line plastic bins or drawers with acid free tissue paper as this is absorbant and will absorb any moisture if there is a change of temperature in the atmosphere. Acid free tissue can be found at www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk/clothes-storage/acid-free-tissue-paper
- If you use a lid, don't press it down so that the air can circulate
- Put drawer sachets on top.

OTHER

- Use acid-free tissue or a single, clean cotton sheet to wrap the clothes in if using a suitcase for storage
- You can get acid-free cardboard boxes that can be lined again with tissue. Conventional brown boxes are not ph neutral and the dye can react with chemicals in your clothes.

CASHMERE

- Use knitwear and cashmere bags, these can be found at www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk/cashmere-storage-bag
- Always store them clean. Moths love cashmere but they also love dirt such as skin, particles and microscopic spots of food.
- If a clean jumper rubs against a dirty one, they will both be vulnerable.
- Moths hate dry cleaning fluid so it's a good idea to get your cashmere garments cleaned before storage.



TIPS

- ❖ You need to put things away in perfect condition.
- ❖ Deodorant stains, for example, oxidise with chemicals in the fabric and leave a stain.
- ❖ In time, a stain from deodorant, perfume or hairspray that you thought had gone, can reappear, and a white collar can go yellow.
- ❖ Check hems, button, zips, pockets, trouser turn-ups.



GENERAL CLOTHES MAINTENANCE

- You need a tool kit and a sewing kit for this:
 - Good sharp scissors
 - Black/white/beige threads
 - Plait of coloured threads
 - Invisible mending iron on kit
 - Fabric glue or UHU
 - Sticky velcro circles (for shoulder pads)
 - Needles
 - Pins and pin cushion
 - Tape measure
 - Safety pins
 - Clothes brush
 - Thread puller needle (for pulling loose threads back through)
- Keep extra pieces of fabric, clothing labels, buttons, darning wool in a box. Also size tickets are always useful (eg for bras or re-selling)

The Art Of Cleaning

LAUNDERING

LAUNDRY CARE SYMBOLS

Wash	Dry	Air Dry	Bleach	Ironing
 Normal	 Machine Dry	 Air Dry	 Any Bleach	 Needs iron
 Perm press	 Normal	 Drip Dry	 Non colouring bleach	 High Iron
 Delicate	 Perm Press	 Dry Flat	 No bleach	 Med Iron
 No Wash	 Delicates	 In Shade		 Low Iron
 No Wring	 No Machine Dry			 No Iron
 Hard wash	 No not dry			 No Steam
 Cold	 Low			
 Warm	 Medium			
 Hot	 High			

www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk

- Yes, do read the label, they are surprisingly informative nowadays. The only trouble is, you need a degree in semiotics to understand them, so we've translated them for you below.
- Do what it says! All garments are wear and clean tested before making it up and companies such as Marks & Spencers are very stringent: if their labels say 'wash at 40 degrees', trust them. They don't want things coming back. Total Wardrobe Care has lovely laundry liquid and ironing water for purchase, they can be found at www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk/clothing-care/care-products
- Always hand-wash delicate garments - fine wools, silks and so on using a specialist hand-washing powder or liquid
- Always hand-wash and rinse woollens at the same temperature
- Ecover or vanish stain remover make a big difference
- Try to dry clothes naturally: tumble drying is not only very expensive, it wears out clothes faster. Best of all is in the open air.
- Choose organic and non-biological detergents.
- Don't wash synthetics and cottons together as the former will absorb the dirt. They also prefer different temperatures.
- Use hot water to sterilise hankies and tablecloths.
- Use mesh lingerie bags for bras and tights/stockings. These can be found at www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk/lingerie-wash-bag



DRY CLEANING



- Specialist dry cleaners are incredibly skilled, often with years of experience, and they will tell you if they can't improve something. Anything rather than deal with a furious client.
- Use an independent Dry Cleaner, rather than a chain and take your time to build a rapport with the staff. Look out for the cleaners that are beginning to avoid nasty chemicals.
- **Don't rush**, take your time to explain exactly what the stain is, the more information you give the cleaner about the stain the more likely they are to have a solvent to remove it.
- Never try and do it yourself, it can seal it into the fabric if you rub the stain and use water, white wine, soda or a solvent.
- Cover special buttons and buckles in silver foil or ask for slip-on plastic button covers. If mother of pearl, shell or horn buttons are put into dry cleaning fluid they will crack or break.
- Dry cleaners have had a tough time in recent years: fluoro-carbons were far more efficient cleaning solvents, but legislation stopped them. Eco solutions are often excellent.

IRONING

• Use a pressurised steam iron the steam is easier to control. Pay for a good one, try John Lewis or Morphy Richards online.



Morphy Richards |

- Don't press the steam button too much if you have a traditional iron as you may end up getting a jet of water on the clothes which can stain.
- Always iron clothes slightly damp. You can use our lovely floral ironing water which leaves a delicate fragrance of orange blossom and lemon grass. <https://www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk/product/floral-ironing-water/>
- Make sure the board is the right height for you.
- Get a decent ironing board and pad it properly. Use thick upholstery felt or an old, good condition, doubled up blanket, cut to the shape of the board. Then fold an old cotton sheet in four lengthways, cut it to six inches around the board, turn the board over and sew it using strong buttonhole thread and ladder stitch.

The Forgotten Art Of Mending

If everyone mended and altered we wouldn't be here - most people don't have the time or the resources. Here are a few tips:

- Loose shoulder pads - buy little sticky circles of Velcro which adhere to the fabric for a short-term solution. But in the end, you have to stitch them in
- Buttons - don't use more than a double thread and don't sew them too close to the shank
- Backstitch across holes in pockets until you can get to a tailor (tailors have to do jacket pockets particularly, because of the lining)
- Remember that lining is designed to wear out - it's never going to be as tough as the fabric it's designed to protect. So do re-line occasionally to stop the outer material from wearing as well.
- Hems and sleeves can be temporarily repaired with double-sided sticky tape. Long term, they must be stitched or ironed together with Bondweb (though beware, it can leave a line)
- A trouser hem will hold for a day with a little safety pin on either side seam.
- You can easily darn if you have the right wool and a darning mushroom, but don't try with delicates such as cashmere and angora. Leave it to the experts who will pick up the stitches.
- Similarly, don't be a have-a-go-hero with beads or missing embroidery or unravelling lace.
- If there's a stain in a visible place, the only solution may be a patch, motif, embroidery or beadwork.
- For underarm stains, buy a piece of matching material, or take some from the dress hem or seam allowance, and put gussets under the arms. Deodorant rots fabric badly.



Cashmere - Care Tips

WHAT IS CASHMERE?

Cashmere is also known as Pashmina in Nepal. It is a diamond fibre, collected from the soft undercoat of the cashmere mountain goat, *Capra Hircus*.

This goat is a native of the Himalayan belt 10,000 feet above sea level. Existence of this nature's wonder species is very harsh with extremely cold climate and scarce vegetation. It's blessed with very thin, short wool, the softest wool found in the nature. It has an exotically silky texture, weightless lightness but super warmth which, when wearing it next to the skin, provides a uniquely titillating experience which has been described as 'Sensual Sublimity' by our ancestors.

Pashmina, the finest cashmere wool has been popular for centuries among royalty and other elites as it is the finest, most luxurious wool in the world. For a thousand years or more, this glorious wool has been prized for its warmth, lightness and durability. For lightness and warmth, Pashmina wool is unmatched. Delicate and soft to touch, it caresses the skin. It is not surprising that Pashmina has been successful in establishing its uniqueness among fashion wear throughout the world.

HOW TO STORE YOUR CASHMERE SWEATERS:

Before storing your precious cashmere garments in basements or attics, check carefully for leaks, dampness and sunlight. Fold clothes or pack them neatly in tissue paper or cotton knitwear bags and store them in a closet away from light, dust and dampness.

Cleaning before storage is recommended, as fresh stains that may not yet be visible will oxidize and become fixed during storage. They may also be the food for moths. Moths have a discerning palate, they feast only on natural fabrics. Traditional natural repellents are the best.

Mothballs which are made with the chemical naphthalene have been banned in the UK. But they were effective as they gave off a toxic gas to moths. We recommend a natural repellent made from herbs used over centuries.

CARE FOR CASHMERE SWEATERS:

To keep your cashmere garments always clean and beautiful, here are some basic rules to follow:

Do not wear the same garment too frequently. Allow the garment two or three days' rest after a day's wearing. A silk or Pashmina scarf goes well with cashmere tops and cardigans. Used between your cashmere top/cardigan and your neck, a scarf will also prevent powder or other cosmetics stains.

Do not wear a cashmere garment next to rough clothing, metal necklaces, bracelets, belts and rough leather items such as crocodile leather bags. Dress up your cashmere with a silk scarf and pearl accessories instead of accessories with a rough surface.

Pilling is caused by abrasion during regular use. It often develops around elbows, on the seat of skirts, and in areas rubbed by a bag or briefcase, even a seat belt. Soft, fuzzy surfaces are more susceptible than others. So for cashmere products, some pilling is normal after repeated usage.

To avoid pilling, it is important not to allow the cashmere garment to rub against rough clothing, metal accessories, bags and belts.

To remove pills, just manually pick them off or use our cashmere comb www.totalwardrobe-care.co.uk/knitwear-comb. Do not use an electric de bobbler as this can get carried away and make a hole in your knitwear.

WASHING WOOL AND CASHMERE:

Hand wash in lukewarm water using our laundry liquid. Our laundry liquid can be found at www.totalwardrobe-care.co.uk/laundry-liquid. Be sure to dissolve the liquid thoroughly then put the sweater into water. Wash colored garments separately.

Do not bleach. Squeeze gently, do not twist or wring. Twisting the wet sweater would distort the shape. Dry flat after removing excess water, away from direct heat and sunlight. Press with damp cloth, using a cool iron, iron from the inside of the garment.



PRE-TREAT

- De-pill first if the item has heavy pilling.
-
- Examine for stains: pre-treat with a stain solution. Always treat stains first and pre-soak for most effective removal.
- Only wash with similar colours.

HAND WASHING

Regular hand washing is the best way to clean cashmere. Just follow these simple steps:

- Soak in sudsy, lukewarm water for five minutes, and then gently 'squish' to let the suds soak through the fibres.
- We recommend our own laundry liquid with 8 essential oils. A generous capful should be sufficient for several garments.
- Rinse in lukewarm water using the same 'squishing' action. Never wring cashmere until the water is clear.
- Please avoid fabric softener as it causes the fibres to stiffen.
- Roll the garment in a towel and press to remove excess moisture and speed drying. Lay it flat to dry, out of sunlight.
- Re-shape whilst damp, taking special care, as wet cashmere fibres can stretch out of shape.
- Turn item inside out to wash the fabric where stains and odors buildup on the inside closest to your body and under arms.
- Prepare a "bath" –basin of cool/tepid water with 2 capfuls of Total Wardrobe Care's laundry liquid.
- Submerge item(s) in bath using your hands to agitate the water and detergent.

*DO NOT PANIC if you see colour in the water. This is normal and it is simply the yarn dye releasing colour. You will not notice any loss of colour at the end.



MACHINE WASHING

- Whilst we cannot 'recommend' machine washing, as machines vary between manufacturers, Pure cashmere does wash well in most front loading, modern machines that have delicate cycles. The temperature should be set no higher than 30 degrees celcius.

If you decide to machine wash we can offer the following advice:

- Turn your garment inside-out in a laundry bag or pillow case with the end tied off - this helps to keep its shape.
- Make sure you select the most delicate setting with the temperature set no higher than 30oC. Our laundry liquid also works effectively in washing machines.
- If you decide to spin dry your cashmere, we suggest you opt for the shortest and most delicate spin.
- Re-shape the garment whilst damp and dry flat, out of direct sunlight.
- Tumble drying on a cold setting for a couple of minutes will help to fluff up the cashmere.

DRY/FINISH

- To finish drying - lay item flat in its natural shape on a drying rack or towel. Hang, if item will not stretch or deform.
- When dry - finish removing any extra pills as noted.

Dry cleaning is the best way to deal with stains that hand washing cannot remove. It is also recommended if the cashmere is woven, for example a pashmina, or has details such as leather buttons, which could be damaged by water. Some designs with loose knit structures are safer dry cleaned as hand washing can disturb the knit pattern.

PREVENTING & DEALING WITH PILLING

The friction of wear causes tiny balls of fluff to form on new cashmere garments; this pilling is quite normal and does not necessarily indicate poor quality.

Regular washing will help to prevent pilling on quality cashmere garments.

We recommend de-pilling a sweater before washing using our knitwear comb. This can be found at <https://www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk/product/knitwear-comb/> Hold the garment taught and comb firmly over the affected area to remove the pill balls. Once they are all removed, wash it as instructed and after a few washes you should find they disappear if you continue to carefully wash your cashmere regularly.

Telegraph

Why you don't need to wash your clothes as often as you think

With energy prices increasing, here's how to keep your clothes pristine and save £3,969 while you're at it

By Frankie Graddon
2 November 2022 • 10:00am

Related Topics
Clothes, Energy crisis, Cost of living crisis



Useful Charts And Guides

To find your correct size, use a tape measure and take these measurements. Stand with your back straight in front of a mirror, to make sure that you measure correctly and that the tape measure is kept level.

Bust

Measure under your armpits, around your shoulder blades, and over the fullest part of your bust. Don't pull the tape measure too hard. For fitting a bra, you also need the measurement just under your bust.

Waist

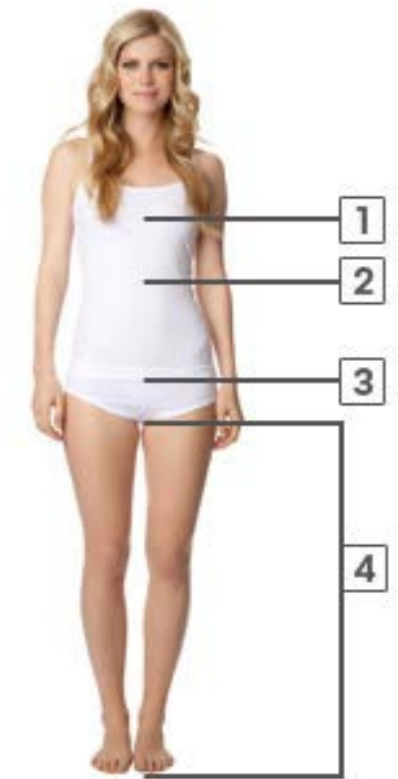
Measure around your natural waistline. This is the narrow part of your waist, about an inch above your navel. Relax and breath out before you measure.

Hip

The hip should be measured around its fullest part (about 8 inch. below your waist).

Inseam

This is the measurement from your ankle to your groin, when you stand with your legs straight. If possible, ask a friend to help you. This can also be measured on a pair of trousers with the proper length.



TAKE YOUR MEASUREMENTS - MEN

Neck size

Use the tape to measure around the base of your neck, where it meets your shoulders. Put a finger between your neck and the tape measure for a more loose fit collar.

Sleeve

Bend your elbow and put your hand on your hip. Ask your friend to measure from middle of back of your neck, around shoulder and elbow to wrist bone.

Chest width

This measurement should be taken beneath your armpits, around the widest part of your chest and shoulder blades. Make sure to keep the tape measure horizontal, and don't pull too tight or hold your breath while measuring.

Waist

Put the tape around your natural waistline, which should be close to your bellybutton. Put one finger between the tape and your body before you measure.

Inseam

This is measured between your groin and your lower ankle. You might find that it is most easily measured on a pair of trousers that already suit you.



International size conversion chart: dresses, jackets, coats and blouses.

S-M-L	USA	UK / AU / NZ	Italy	France	Germany	Japan	Russia
S	2	6	38	34	32	7	40
S	4	8	40	36	34	9	42
M	6	10	42	38	36	11	44
M	8	12	44	40	38	13	46
L	10	14	46	42	40	15	48
L	12	16	48	44	42	17	50
XL / 1X	14	18	50	46	44	19	52
1X / 2X	16	20	52	48	46	21	54
2X	18	22	54	50	48	23	56
3X	20	24	56	52	50	25	24
3X	22	26	58	54	52	27	26
4X	24	28	60	56	54	29	28

Bra size guides and converter:

USA	UK	EUROPE	FRANCE/SPAIN	JAPAN	AUSTRALIA
AA	A	A	A	A	AA
A	B	B	B	B	A
B	C	C	C	C	B
C	D	D	D	D	C
D	DD	E	E	E	D
DD	E	F	F	F	DD
DDD/E	F	G	G	G	E
F	G	H	H	H	F
G	H	I	I	I	G
H	I	J	J	J	H
I	J	K	K	K	I

Size conversion for women's shoes.

US	UK	EUROPE	AUSTRALIA	CHINA	JAPAN
5	2.5	35	3.5	35.5	21
6	3.5	36	4.5	37	22
6.5	4	37	5	38	22.5
7.5	5	38	6	39	23.5
8.5	6	39	7	40	24.5
9	6 1/2	40	7.5	41	25
9.5	7	41	8	42	25.5
10	7 1/2	42	8.5	43	26
10.5	8	43	9	44	27

Size conversion for men's shoes.

US	UK	EUROPE	AUSTRALIA	CHINA	JAPAN
6	5	38	5	39	23,5
7	6	39	6	41	24,5
7 1/2	6 1/2	40	6 1/2	-	25
8	7	41	7	42	25.5
8 1/2	7 1/2	42	7 1/2	43	26
9	8	43	8	43.5	27
10 1/2	9 1/2	44	9 1/2	44.5	28
11 1/2	10 1/2	45	10 1/2	46	29
12	11	46	11	47	30
13	12	47	12	48	31
14	13	48	13	49	32

International size guide charts found at www.sizeguide.net

Men Have Wardrobes Too

Guys, like it or not, you also have clothes to maintain and a wardrobe space to utilise, and you too can streamline your life if all your clothes and accessories are clean, mended, easy to access and are ready to use.

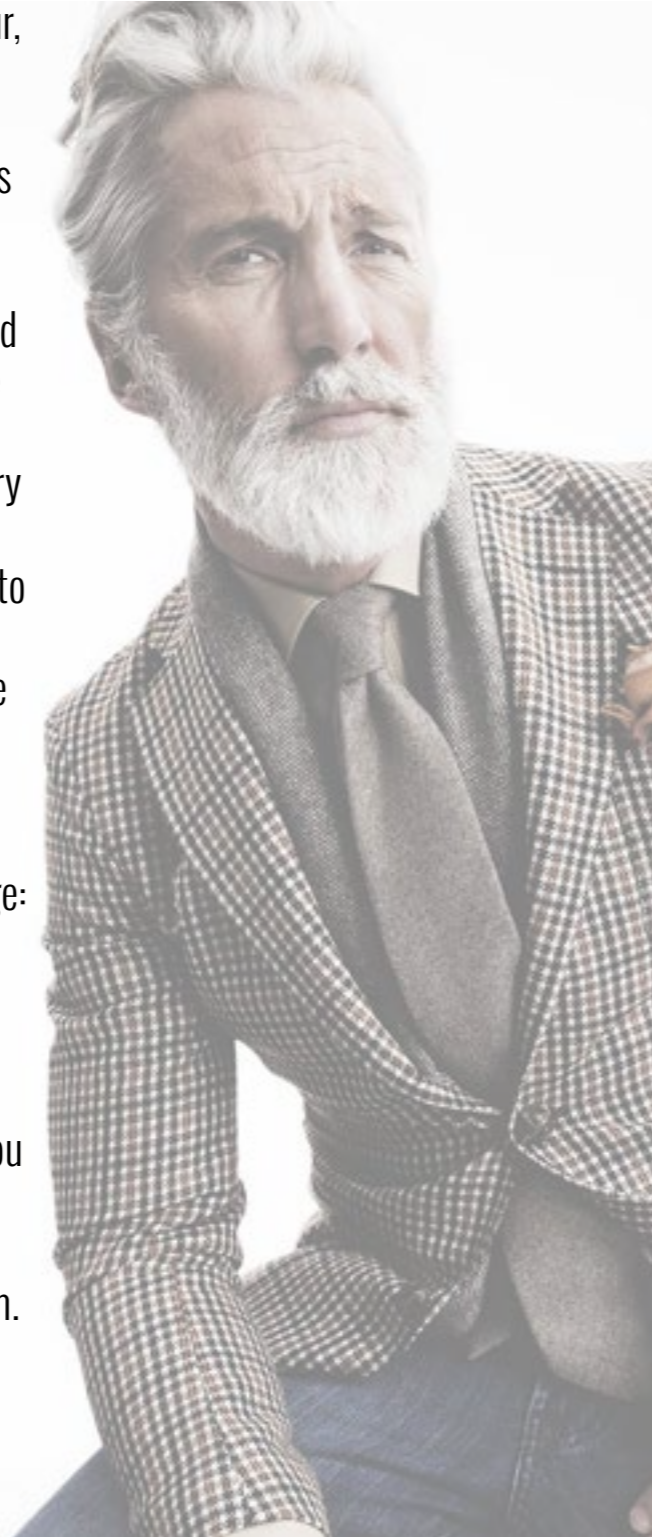
BASIC MEN'S WARDROBE KIT

- 2 x expensive shoe trees and some cheaper plastic ones.
- Cedarwood & Vetivert Sachets; Hanging Sachets & Drawer Sachets available from <https://www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk/anti-moth-products/sachets>
- Tie racks that fit on the back of doors - a towel rail will do.
- Some proper jacket and coat hangers, the right size for your shoulders.
- Hanger space for hung and ironed shirts or drawer space for laundered and folded shirts.



WARDROBE TIPS FOR MEN

- Sort and store your clothes by colour, weight, formal or casual wear.
- Keep packets of spot cleaner for ties in your briefcase.
- Always dry clean vintage or inherited clothing before you get it altered. We quite often get what we call 'organic stains' coming in - simply because dry cleaning chemicals will not remove bodily stains and the only solution is to take a kitchen sponge with the green raspy bit, wet it with soap and sponge to remove the stains.
- Food spills on lapels can often be removed with the same sort of sponge: use it dry and brush them off.
- If you sweat a lot, use t-shirts as vests - you can get them from M&S. To save the armpits in your jackets you could attach armhole sheilds which can be bought in the haberdashery department in John Lewis and sewn in.
- Before you store a suit dry clean it and go over it with a lint roller and clothes brush to deter moths.



CLOTHES STORAGE

- Clothes to be stored need to be kept well aired, dust free, covered and away from sunlight.
- Clothes not in use should be covered with an old sheet, duvet cover or garment bags. Hang away clean as moths are attracted to dirt as this is their food source. Add anti-moth products, hanging sachets and drawer sachets to the wardrobe and drawers. Make sure they are re-placed every sixth months.
- Jumper tops and t-shirts can be folded and put into knitwear storage bags with a drawer sachet.
- Try not to use pastic bags for storage but if you have to, don't leave them in plastic for more than 3 months because the change in temperature causes condensation in the bags, which dries on the garments and can cause mildew or yellowing on light colours.
- Nothing should be left in direct sunlight as sunlight rots fabrics.
- Evening and wedding suits can be kept in a large garment bag. Alternatively they could be boxed with acid free tissue, which protects fabrics against condensation and insects.
- Shoes should be repaired, re-soled and re-heeled. Rubber heels and toe tips protect the leather, keep water out and prevent damage.



Our Natural Anti-Moth Ingredients



Total Wardrobe Care uses all-natural essential oils in all of its products. Inspired by the New Forest and with help from a professional perfumer, I have developed a range of anti-moth products which use a blend of eight essential oils. These have created the refreshing and fragrant moth deterrent product range that is available today. Using May Chang, Lavender, Virginian Cedar wood, Patchouli, Thyme, Laurel, Rosemary and Clove Bud. I have developed this special, all-natural recipe that is pivotal in deterring moths from wardrobes while keeping clothes fresh and fragrant.

The 8 essential oils we use in our products are:

May Chang has fragrant lemon-grass scented leaves and flowers and is a wonderful aroma that uplifts, cleanses and tones.



Lavender promotes well being in the home with gentle, healing and comforting properties.



Virginian cedar wood is a century old fragrance that cleanses and purifies both the spirit and the home. It calms tension and anxiety and is used as an antiseptic and fungicide. It is one of the most powerful natural ingredients for deterring moths and other insects.



Patchouli was used by silk traders in the 18th and 19th century to prevent moths from laying their eggs on their merchandise.



Thyme is a powerful immune booster and has always been used to relieve colds, coughs, tonsillitis, for relieving muscle aches and pains and to repel moths from clothes and wardrobes.



Laurel is a herb of protection. It is a natural fungicide that helps to freshen and cleanse the air, particularly in musty or damp places.



Rosemary is a medicinal herb used for centuries to ward off infectious diseases. It is also a great insect repellent.



Clove Bud is a spice that has medicinal properties and is a well known insect repellent; it is anti fungal, analgesic and antiseptic, great also for certain digestive problems and for colds and the flu.



Moth Information

THE LIFE OF A CLOTHES MOTH AND ITS IMPACT ON YOU

Within the dark corners of your wardrobe, tucked between drawers and hiding in-between cashmeres, all is not what it seems...



The female clothes moth commonly known as the webbing clothes moth and the case making clothes moth, with the binomial names, *Tineola bisselliella* and *Tinea pellionella* are winged insects that lay larvae that feed on fabric before pupating and metamorphosing. The moths are weak fliers and not attracted to light, therefore dwell in undisturbed dark heated spaces with a relative humidity of 75%.

The life cycle of a moth revolves around the laying of eggs- survival of the fittest. Once mating has occurred, the females lay 40 to 50 minute eggs between a course of 4 to 21 days which are poised ready to hatch into destructive invaders and commence the downward slope of wardrobe disintegration. These live for an unusually long period of 50 days before they pupate by wrapping themselves in a silken case sealed with excrement and fibre. Whilst pupating they drag their bodies along in their silk turban, eating as they go. Holes appear as the larvae annoyingly choose to eat clean-cut holes rather than spin a web of silk over the food material. Once metamorphosed, the life cycle repeats and the adult moths soon die. The life cycle lasts for about 65 to 90 days, with the female adult moths living for about 30 days and potentially laying up to 300 eggs in their lifetime. A lot of hungry larvae! Unwashed damp clothes don't have a chance.



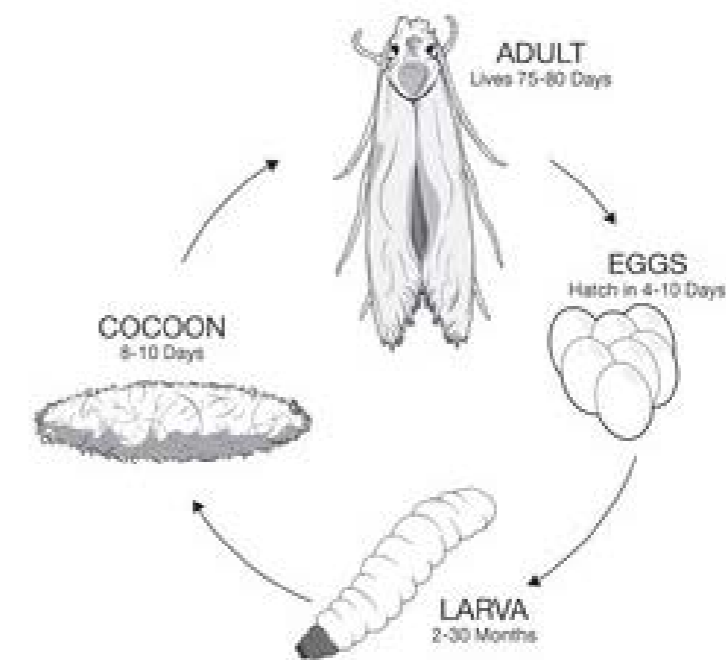
The Moth Box

The larvae that hatch from the eggs are the ones to target, as the adult moths pose no threat to your cashmeres. It is the larvae that are notorious for feeding on wool, hair, leather, cotton, linens, silk and occasionally synthetic fibres. Practically anything they can get their mouths onto. They do not drink water, so depend on their meal of jumper sleeve for moisture. The dirtier the better. Clothing moths adore fabric containing human sweat or food splats as it will provide a perfect feeding site for their hungry hatchlings. The larvae also convert the protein, keratin, that is present in hair and wool into useful nutrients. Not only do they munch away holes but also leave their silken cases, silken threads and faecal pellets all over the surface or your garment.

Pupation lasts from 8 to 10 days in summer, 3 to 4 weeks in winter. Heated buildings enable clothes moths to continue development during winter months. Generally, developmental time for the clothes moth from egg to egg is between 4 to 6 months, and there are usually two generations a year between May to October although this is increasing with longer warmer weather.

If you do find an unexpected hole in your jumper, chances are that the larvae are at work. To identify them look for moths with white heads and wings about 1 cm long with a black and cream front and pale grey on the hind. These lady moths rarely fly. In fact it is only the males that flutter around locating females who prefer to hop around trying to find food and hideouts. The Larvae are distinguished as cream caterpillars with black heads and can be seen with the naked eye.

Persistent total wardrobe care is imperative to keep the moths away. However, if you do have an infestation, it is only by destroying the eggs, removing the food source and disrupting the life cycle that the problem can be solved long term.



The life cycle of the clothes moth

Quick Guides

5 STEPS TO A NATURAL MOTH-FREE WARDROBE

1. **The Big Turnout!** Moths want to eat, mate and lay eggs! They like dark dusty undisturbed corners. Remove everything from your wardrobe and drawers. Wash what can be washed and dry clean everything else (including bed drapes and curtains). Vacuum your wardrobe, drawers, carpets, floors and all surrounding areas thoroughly. Then wash the inside of the wardrobe and drawers with soap and water. If your carpets are infested (you can see the eggs) get them professionally cleaned.

2. **Cleanliness!** Moths love the food proteins in wool and especially love food, skin and hair particles we leave behind. Do not put dirty or even-once worn clothes back in the wardrobe. This is what moths feed on. They don't like the taste of dry cleaning fluid so if you are storing out of season clothes, dry-clean them first. This is particularly important for perfume and deodorant stains as these may oxidise and get worse over time.

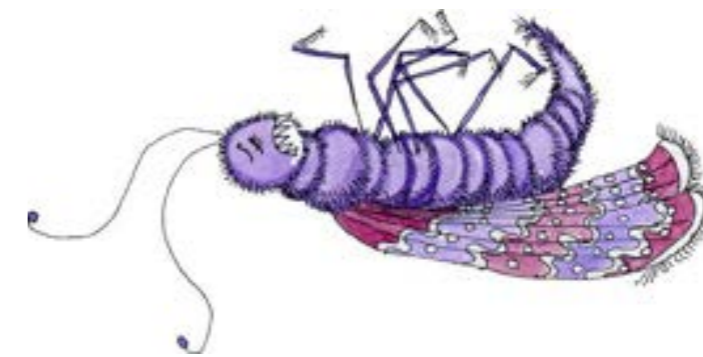
3 **Storage!** Put clothes back into the wardrobe clean. Store out-of-season garments in Total Wardrobe Care, cotton breathable garment bags. Never store in plastic, for the following reasons: Over a period of time, the static in cheap plastic garment bags (especially the ones used by dry cleaners), attracts dust. The bags become very dirty soiling other garments in your wardrobe. The change in temperature in your home may cause condensation on the inside of the plastic garment bag. This may lead to mildew forming on your garments. This moisture can react with the dyes in the fabrics and may cause discoloration. Have you ever noticed anything white go slightly yellow after being stored in plastic?

Finally, garments exposed to sunlight, may fade over time and rot. For folded items use our Total Wardrobe Care storage box lined in acid free tissue. Don't store your clothes in an overheated or damp attic, cellar or storage unit. Better to put your storage box in a spare room on top of a cupboard or better still in a clean cupboard with a firmly closed door.

4. **Anti Moth Products.** The key to using anti-moth products is to replace them every season. Place the Total Wardrobe Care Hanging Sachets on the rails of the wardrobe, one every 40 -50 cm. Put the Hanging Ovals or Ceramic Infuser around the necks of your hangers. Place the Potpourri Cone amongst your folded items. Line your shelves and drawers with the Drawer Liners. Place the Moth Decoy out. Burn the anti-moth candle regularly in the moth season. Use the essential oil diffuser, hang or fix it inside your wardrobe and it will give off a scent that we love and moths hate.

5. **Season Change.** Keep a check on your clothes. Every season have a mini turnout. Refresh your anti moth products. This will keep your wardrobe fresh clean and moth free.

All anti-moth products can be found, here:
www.totalwardrobecare.co.uk/anti-moth-products.



10 TOP TIPS FOR STORING CLOTHES

1. The big turn out: Use the end of the season to have a cull. Go through your winter woollies, suits, coats and dresses, are you sure you want to see them all next October!
Cleanliness: Wash or dry-clean. Any garment to be stored away for the season must be clean. Stains oxidise and moths love hair skin and food particles. Do not feed them! House keeping. Any storage area, cupboard, under bed, top of wardrobe needs to be vacuumed, dusted, wiped down, kept clean and damp free.
2. Anti moth products: Replace/refresh hanging sachets, lavender bags, potpourri, diffusers every season as they lose their strength. This will keep your wardrobe fresh, clean and moth free.
3. Storage: Don't use standard cardboard boxes. The acids and alkalis in cardboard react with chemicals in fabric and can cause discolouration. Brown cardboard boxes are very alkaline! Our tissue paper and storage boxes are PH neutral.
4. Wrap delicates and cashmeres in acid free tissue which preserves the original colour and protects against damp and dust. Try not to use plastic bags for storage but if you have to, don't leave them in plastic for more than 3 months because the change in temperature causes condensation in the bags, which dries on the garments and can cause mildew or yellowing on light colours.
5. Line cupboards and drawers with anti-moth drawer liners.
6. Clothes to be stored need to be kept well-aired, dust free and covered, away from sunlight.
7. Nothing should be left in direct sunlight as sunlight rots fabrics.



USEFUL WEBSITES AND CONTACTS



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USEFUL WEBSITES AND CONTACTS



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