

Dressing Better Series

CLOSET CONSCIOUSNESS

Proper storage is paramount to a garment's longevity. A large dressing room fitted with gentleman's hanging fixtures, closets, and mirrors is the Utopian solution; yet the luxury of personal space, particularly in urban environments, is becoming a rarity. A few basic rules for wardrobe conservation can be applied, even when space is compromised.

4 First, allow enough "breathing" space. Seasonal and infrequently worn items should be edited several times a year and stored in a secondary closet or given away.

Second, use the appropriate hangers for each garment. Suits require a wooden hanger with formed shoulders. Trousers can be hung by the cuff on wooden pinchers or on a metal pant hanger with a rubber grip to keep them from slipping. Classic wooden hangers are preferable, however, certain high quality plastic hangers are an excellent alternative and often take less space. All other articles, such as sweaters, shirts, ties, shoes, and accessories should be categorically arranged in well-designed fixtures and cabinetry. Storing garments in plastic may seem to keep a garment clean and protected, but over time a synthetic environment restricts the breathability of the natural fiber. The ultimate choice would be a garment bag made of unbleached cotton muslin or linen.

Third, keeping a closet fresh maximizes the wearing enjoyment of a garment. For instance, never hang a suit in a closet after it has been worn in a smoke filled room. The odor will seep into the other clothes and one is left with a foul smelling wardrobe. Hang the garment in fresh air for a period of time until the odor is gone, then return it to the closet. Aromatic closet sachets can be placed in drawers or hung on hangers to enhance the freshness of the wardrobe.

Fourth, defense against moths, the scourge of any natural fiber garment, is a battle that must be fought mercilessly. Moths inflict irreparable damage on fine garments. Camphor and cedar wood are the best organic weapons. A closet lined with these fragrant materials is ideal, although it is equally effective to place a sufficient quantity of small wooden blocks that are soaked in the essence in strategic spots. Old-fashioned mothballs have a pungent smell that is intolerable to many, nevertheless, the moths hate them. In order not to undermine one's effort in moth warfare, it is important not to store food and beverage stained garments. With this simple action, one unwittingly feeds the enemy.

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M A N ' S C L O T H I N G

