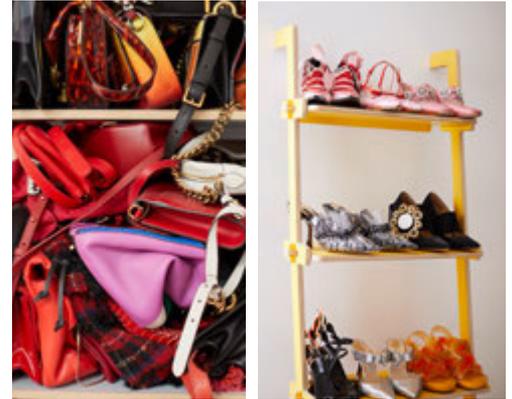




We talk to a host of experts to help curate and cleanse your closet space (yes, that includes those bags under the bed). Whether you're a hoarder or a minimalist, here's your need-to-know...

PHOTOGRAPHS VICTORIA ADAMSON  
WORDS NATALIE HAMMOND

# THE BIG WARDROBE



THE CHIC HOARDER:

SUSIE LAU

WRITER AND INFLUENCER

Susie Lau had to take the door off her third bedroom to make a walk-in wardrobe and the result is a higgledy-piggledy riot of clothes and shoes. 'It's a mess,' admits Susie, 'but it's a mess that I own. Even if I had more space, I'm not sure I'd be able to live in a streamlined way.' She stores coats in vacuum bags under her stairs, keeps her Molly Goddard dresses balled up at the top of her wardrobe ('I take them out, let them pouf up again and they're good to go,' she says), and has a storage unit for pieces that she isn't currently wearing. 'I like keeping things and looking at them,' she says, 'not so much for wearing, but more for tactile enjoyment.' Still, she routinely enlists the help of a folding and organising expert on Task Rabbit, and gives friends clothes she no longer wants, joking that she runs a 'New Year's Eve dress agency'. Her idea of wardrobe nirvana? 'A massive room with lots of rails and racks and shelves wall-to-ceiling,' she says, 'but it would still be stuffed.' ▶

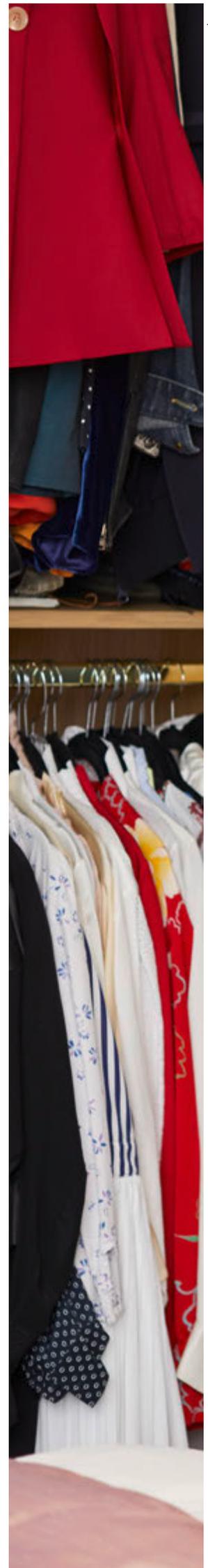
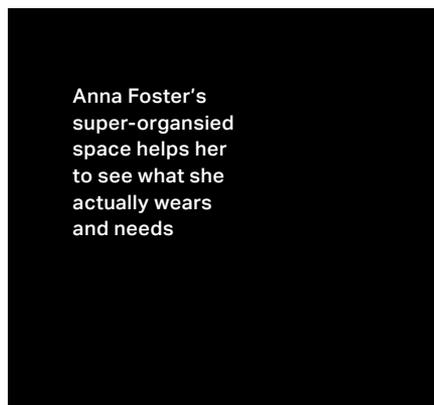
WORKSHOP!

## HOW TO ORGANISE YOUR WARDROBE

**T**here's always more exercise to do and less dairy to consume, but those truly dedicated to the 'New Year, New Me' mantra will be doing something else this January – clearing out their wardrobes once and for all. For personal stylist Anna Berkeley (below), who runs what she calls 'wardrobe management' sessions with clients, it's a particularly busy time of year. The idea of mindful closet maintenance has taken on a new meaning in this new era in which much of the fashion world is rethinking its attitudes towards consumption and waste. A chest of drawers heaving with disposable clothing you hardly ever pull out no longer feels modern or right. 'People find getting rid of stuff really cathartic,' says Anna. Her step-by-step process to clearing out goes something like this:



- ➔ **Take everything** out of your wardrobe, including what's been squirreled away under your bed or in a chest of drawers.
- ➔ **Examine each piece** and sort it into a pile. The number of piles will vary from person to person, but a rough guide is A) Wear all the time, B) Haven't worn in over two years, C) No longer fits with lifestyle, D) Special occasion.
- ➔ **For the items** in B) and C) piles, split into things to donate, things to give to friends, things to sell.
- ➔ **Put everything back** into your wardrobe in lifestyle sections. These are dependent on preference and how much space you have, but try the following – work, weekend, gym, special occasion, holiday. You could go a step further, sorting by colour, type (eg, work blouses) or even outfits if you find that helpful.





THE ECO-WARRIOR:  
ANNA FOSTER

FOUNDER OF ELV DENIM

As the founder of a zero-waste jeans brand, ELV Denim, Anna Foster takes a similarly mindful approach to her wardrobe. She only buys what she truly loves, and tends to wear it straight away. 'If I don't, it means I don't really love it,' she explains. She has her own system for monitoring how much use everything's getting in her wardrobe. 'I have all my hangers facing one way. When I wear something, I turn its hanger the other way when I put it back. That way I can see what I'm wearing all the time and what I'm not. It sounds a bit 1950s, but it works,' she says. Although she donates to Women For Women's annual car boot and sells things she no longer needs via One Scoop Store (an online shop for second-hand, pre-loved clothing), Anna's a big believer in holding on to classic purchases that will come around again. 'I'm currently wearing the stompy boot of the season, but mine aren't Bottega Veneta, they're Ann Demeulemeester from 1999.' ▶



## STORING THE SMART WAY

There's no point clearing out and categorising if you fall down on whether clothes should be folded or hung. Treat the below, as gospel.

### Jeans

Folded.

### Jumpers

Folded. Never hang a heavy cardigan or knit because it will just grow in the wardrobe and completely lose its shape. Don't put mohair or alpaca knits next to dark clothes to avoid fluff transfer.

### Dresses

Hung. If it's heavy, it needs to be on a structured, padded hanger.

### Coats

Hung full-length if possible on a padded hanger. Button everything up and make sure the lapels are flat. Give it space to breathe by not cramming next to other coats.

### Jersey

Folded or rolled to save space.

### Trousers

Hung, but not folded in half over a hanger. Clip at the waist and then clip at the hem. It's still folded, but isn't rubbing against the hanger.

### Delicate fabrics

Hung on padded hangers. Delicate fabrics mark easily so keep them covered in dust bags, ditto embellished/beaded pieces to avoid catching.



Thin velvet hangers are great space-savers, while padded are best for delicate/heavy items.

Roll your socks and pants, Marie Kondo-style, and place in storage boxes.

## THE RECOMMENDED KIT



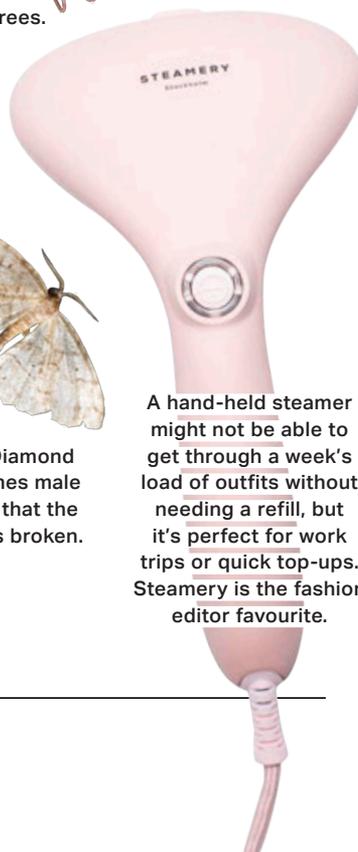
If you have the luxury of space, a standalone shoe wardrobe is ideal. If not, store at the bottom of your wardrobe, but always use shoe trees.



A Demi-Diamond Trap catches male moths so that the lifecycle is broken.



The Philips fabricShaver is as therapeutic as it is effective. £30



A hand-held steamer might not be able to get through a week's load of outfits without needing a refill, but it's perfect for work trips or quick top-ups. Steamery is the fashion editor favourite.

## WASHING YOUR CLOTHES

You might not give this much thought, simply following the instructions on the label, but it's quite the topic of conversation in fashion circles. And for good reason. Not only is washing something on the wrong setting the fastest way to ruin it, but washing has an environmental impact. Laundry detergents can leach toxic chemicals into water systems, while microfibres from synthetic clothes are piling plastics into our oceans.

A starting point to a more sustainable solution is The Laundress, available at Net-A-Porter and Selfridges.



Its plant-derived detergents and conditioners are kind on clothes and the environment. Check out [thelaundress.com](http://thelaundress.com), with posts like 'Which Dry-Clean-Only Items Actually Need To Be Dry-Cleaned?'

Meanwhile, Anna Berkeley takes you through three of the most hotly-debated garments when it comes to washing...

### JEANS

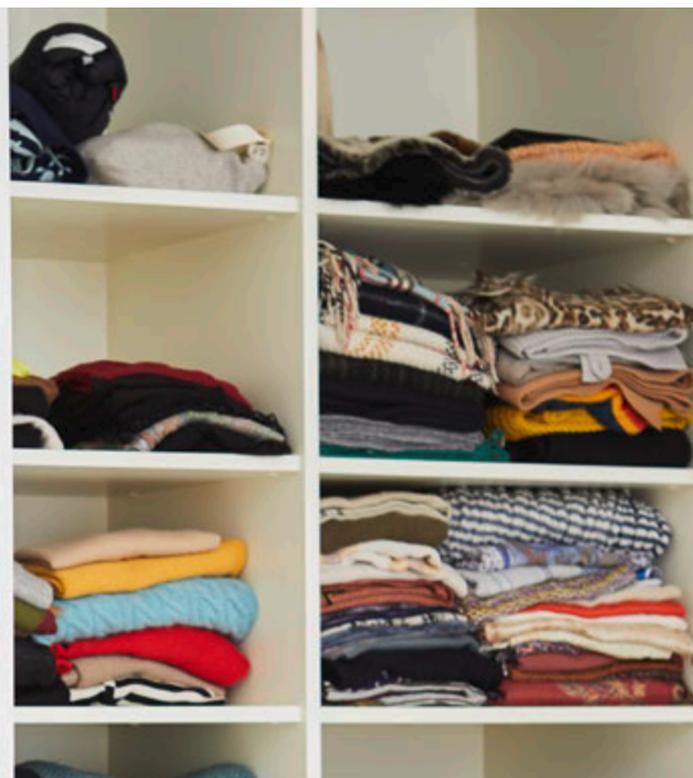
I very rarely wash jeans. Denim is a tough fabric. Spot clean it instead of machine-washing.

### WOOL

This shouldn't be washed a lot. Hang jumpers up to get air into them – an outdoor line is great as long as it doesn't rain – then spot clean using a Vanish soap bar, washing the soap off.

### CASHMERE

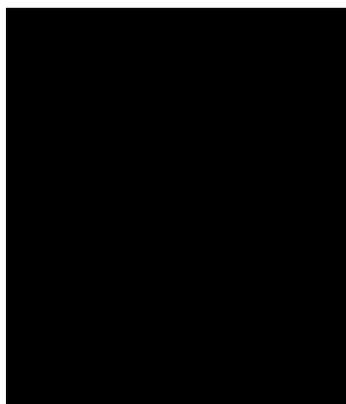
Wear a jersey top under knitwear in winter so you're not sweating directly on to it. When you buy new cashmere, wear it once and then wash it. You do that the first four times. It helps the fibres to calm down and then you can merrily wear and depill it.



THE PRO :  
CANDICE FRAGIS

FASHION DIRECTOR  
AT DREST

Candice Fragis has organisation in the blood. Not only did she grow up with a 'total perfectionist' for a mother, but she worked on the shop floor at Browns, folding and hanging, when she first started out as a buyer. Both these life experiences translate to a near perfectly categorised wardrobe. Her three tips for keeping things organised are simple: 1) Make sure you can see everything. 'The more I can see, the more I wear and the less I buy,' explains Candice. 2) Categorise. 3) The minute you take something off, put it straight back where it should go. She also finds decluttering a cathartic and, dare we say it, fun process, especially when she moved house last year. 'I found all the pieces from Maharishi, Roland Mouret and Alexander McQueen that I stood in line for at sample sales,' she says, adding, 'If it's something with sentimental value or a high-fashion piece I want to collect, it stays. If I don't love it and it doesn't fit, it goes.' ▶



## THE BEST RESALE SITES AND APPS



**Depop**  
The Millennial favourite, Depop, has an impressive 13 million users in 147 countries. It looks a lot like Instagram, display-wise, and is particularly good for selling one-of-a-kind and vintage pieces.



**eBay**  
Founded in 1995 during the age of dial-up internet, it's second only to Amazon on the App Store's top shopping apps. The site is experiencing a big comeback in popularity among fashion editors as resale and circularity become popular topics in the industry.



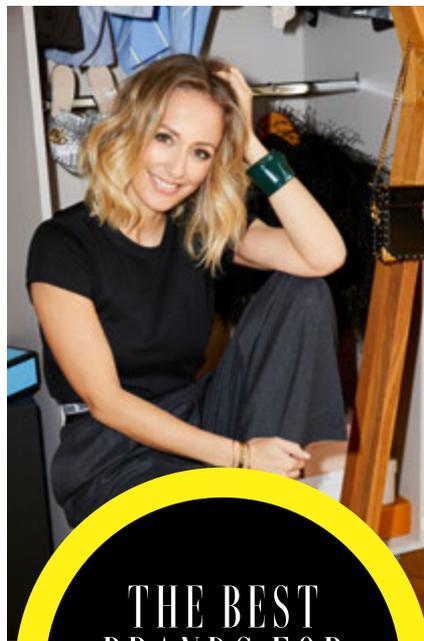
**Vinted**  
This fashion and accessories resale app, from Lithuanian founder Milda Mitkute, is free to use and has a following of 25 million 'Vinties'. Its design means it's super easy to communicate with buyers and check out fellow sellers' ratings.



**Vestiaire Collective**  
Most fashion editors have a wishlist as long as their arm on Vestiaire Collective, which offers a concierge service so that you can outsource the selling to the in-house team. It's the ultimate resale site for designer pre-owned products that are verified for authenticity in-house.



**Rebelle**  
Founded in 2013 by Cécile Wickmann, Rebelle, like Vestiaire, specialises in second-hand luxury fashion and offers a concierge option for users. It also hosts shopping events in boutiques all over Europe where customers can buy IRL, as opposed to virtually.



## THE BEST BRANDS FOR RESELLING NOW

BY VESTIAIRE COLLECTIVE'S CO-FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT FANNY MOIZANT:

'We've seen newer brands making waves, such as Rejina Pyo, Bottega Veneta, Loewe and Ganni. Interestingly, following the recent acquisition of Tiffany & Co by LVMH, we saw a +21% increase in searches for the brand. It's definitely one to watch.'



£445, Remain Birger Christensen at selfridges.com

## HOW TO BUY BETTER

The best way to keep your cupboard organised? Don't fill it with things you don't need in the first place. We ask the experts their tips for buying with longevity in mind.

**Heather Gramston**, buying manager at Browns Fashion: 'I like to compile a wishlist ahead of time so I can be quite strategic about new purchases. When I find something I love, I want to be able to enjoy it in the long-term. I think about when I'll wear it, what it works with in my existing wardrobe and, if I am making an investment purchase, I rationalise it by working out cost-per-wear.'

**Poppy Lomax**, buying manager at Selfridges: 'I like to invest in pieces that work within my existing capsule wardrobe so that I can maximise on wear. I take sustainability and environmental impact into account when shopping. Maggie Marilyn is a current favourite as she responsibly produces timeless pieces.'

# FINDING YOUR FOREVER STYLE



The best way to avoid ‘a wardrobe full of clothes, but nothing to wear’ syndrome and the cycle of buying disposable fashion that never gets worn is to find your forever style. It’s an idea that Rêve En Vert’s Cora Hilts (above) says is key to her business. ‘We believe in a wardrobe that will stand the test of time, that is not comprised of fast fashion, and that is filled with items you truly love,’ she says. Founder of Eco-Age, and champion of sustainable fashion, Livia Firth almost never has need to sort hers. ‘My wardrobe is full of old clothes, ones I’ve bought over the years and ones inherited from my mum or aunts,’ she says. ‘I upcycle a lot. I have a dress, for example, which I made using the top of an old dress and the skirt of another one.’

If you do shop, Cora suggests seeking out well-made pieces. ‘By investing in higher-quality items that aren’t trended, people will end up being happier with their wardrobes and, incidentally, more sustainable. It’s a win-win.’

Higher quality obviously means a higher cost. ‘Sustainable fashion is admittedly more expensive than fast fashion,’ she says, but remember that a garment made with innovative materials that’s ethically produced and responsibly shipped is always going to have a larger price tag. It will also last for years as opposed to months. ‘If you buy one or two sweaters that you genuinely adore and wear for five years, it will end up costing you much less in the long run than purchasing 10 you wear a few times and throw out,’ says Cora.

£205, Remain Birger Christensen at selfridges.com



£295, Envelope 1976 at reve-en-vert.com



£265, Envelope 1976 at reve-en-vert.com



£55, Woron at reve-en-vert.com

£290, Elv Denim at reve-en-vert.com



£180, Kow Tow at reve-en-vert.com



## HOW TO MEND CLOTHES, SHOES AND HANDBAGS

HANDS UP IF you have a teetering stack of clothes in desperate need of repair? 2020 is the year to tackle it. You can find a good seamstress by asking for recommendations in your local area. If it’s more of a simple mend than an alteration, you might be able to go the DIY route using sewing tutorials on [loveyourclothes.org.uk](http://loveyourclothes.org.uk).

There has also been a new hive of restoration services for shoes and handbags, items that are often the worst for showing signs of wear. **THE RESTORY**, which operates nationwide and has concierges at Harvey Nichols and Selfridges, offers services like leather restoration, re-stitching and re-edging (from £105) as well as more straightforward repairs like resoling and replacing zips (from £20). You book a collection online, get a quote for the restoration and wait for your new-look shoes/handbag to arrive back in beautifully spiffy packaging.

**THE HANDBAG CLINIC** has its flagship store on King’s Road and caters to the booming resale market. It values and repairs handbags, with full restoration services starting at £195, so that they can fetch the best price possible. Co-founder Charlotte Staerck remembers the handiwork that went into salvaging a Prada tote. ‘It had been stolen and found in a wood. The client was astounded by the results.’

