In this project, you’ll look at your wardrobe and organize your clothing for storage. You’ll make several storage changes and a closet or drawer organizer. To show your progress, you might want to take before-and-after photos. Or you may choose to make drawings. You can make this strictly a clothing project or combine it with woodworking or other projects.

What does your closet look like?
Is it neat and clean? Can you find everything you’re looking for when you need it? Is everything ready to wear right when you want it?

Almost everyone can find a “dinosaur” that takes up valuable space in a closet or chest of drawers. Sometimes, when space gets cramped, clothes become wrinkled or end up over chairs, on the floor, or even in the laundry though worn only a few hours!
If your clothes could talk, what would they say?

If your clothes are talking about you, this project can help you manage your wardrobe. It takes time to manage a wardrobe and keep it in good condition. So do it in small doses. For this reason, we’ve divided up your project work into sessions: things you can do at home and things you can do at your group meeting.

When you are working in your closet, try NOT to take everything out at once. You’ll soon get tired and end up stuffing it all back in. It’s better to work with only a few garments at a time.

**Session 1: At Home**

Everything in your clothing storage areas should be clean and clearly visible, with like things stored together—sweaters with sweaters, shirts hung together, etc. The clothing you wear most often should be the easiest to reach in your closet.

An organized wardrobe helps you see what you have, what can be worn, and what needs to be repaired or retired. As you organize, evaluate your clothing. Can you give some garments new life by making new combinations? Are other garments outgrown, worn out, and not very trendy?

Take out clothes you haven’t worn in at least a year. Try them on and divide them into five piles. Get a family member to help you make decisions about what to do with the garments.

**Pile 1: Repairs you can make**

Decide which repairs you can make yourself. Many repairs are very easy—a button sewn on or a stitched hem or seam. You also may want to prevent future repairs by double stitching underarm seams and areas that get the most wear.

Be sure to treat stains as soon as possible. Do not dry clothing until stains are removed. Set-in stains can shorten a garment’s wearing life!

Make a separate pile for things that need to be taken to the drycleaner.
Pile 2: Repairs for someone else to make
If your repairs involve changing sizes, altering a design, or recutting an armhole—or if it’s a difficult-to-work-with fabric, leave it to the experts! Price the alterations you’ll need and decide if it’s really wise to keep the garment or to donate or sell it.

Pile 3: Outgrown or out of style
Clothing that is out of style may be recycled if it’s still in good shape. Recycling can take a lot of time and patience, but often clothes can be updated by simply changing the buttons or using button covers, attaching shoulder pads, or raising the hem. Some clothing can be cut for cleaning rags and the buttons saved for other sewing projects. Keep one set of old clothing for jobs such as painting, washing the dog, etc.

Pile 4: Donations
Usable clothing that can’t be recycled should be donated or sold. Consider how many shelters, community organizations, and charities need clothing! Try selling clothing at a rummage sale or swap clothing with your friends. More expensive clothing can be taken to a resale shop. The owners will take the clothing on consignment and send you a check if the items sell. Out-of-style clothing may be donated to a university or textile museum.

Pile 5: Special clothing you want to keep
There may be garments you no longer wear, but that are special to you in some way. These should be stored away from the clothing you use every day. Because these clothes are special, however, keep them out of the attic, basement, and garage. Light, moisture, fumes, and changes in temperature and humidity can ruin clothing.

Clothing and other fabrics, if stored for long periods of time, may need to be refolded periodically to prevent worn spots at the creases. (This is especially true of household linens and quilts.)

If you don’t have extra storage space, consider storing garments in the back of your closet or in another room. You can also buy storage at a dry cleaner.

--- Sew on loose buttons ---

Between Sessions
Between now and the beginning of the next session, make plans to fix, repair, recycle, sell, and donate clothing. Work with a parent or leader to fix worn and torn clothing. You may want to set up a repair production workshop at your club meeting. Have everyone look at the repairs, decide what to do, and work on the problems together.
**Session 2: At Home**

Organize your wardrobe as best you can. Think about your future clothing and storage needs.

Look at the rest of the clothes in your wardrobe. Count them and measure the amount of space they’ll take when stored. You may want to separate clothing by season so you’ll have an idea of what you can put in back of the closet or in other storage areas.

Organize your clothing as you would a recipe file. Hang similar items together—tops in one section, pants or skirts in another, and long garments at one end. Put hooks on closet doors or end walls to hold belts or ties or to keep tote bags handy. Fold and stack your sweaters neatly and measure the height of the pile.

Put your shoes and boots in a row, and measure how long it is or count how many shoes you have for a shoe holder. This will give you an idea how much space you need in your closet and in other storage areas. Be sure to plan for additional items, too. Store the garments you wear most where they are easy to reach.

Sweaters need to be stored folded or flat. Hangers tend to stretch sweaters and make bumps in the shoulder area. How to fold them is shown on this page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Garments</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shirts or blouses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slacks or trousers</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Suits or two-piece outfits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dresses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coats</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweaters</td>
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<td>Shoes</td>
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<td>Boots</td>
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<td>Socks</td>
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<td>Underwear</td>
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<tr>
<td>Night wear</td>
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<td>Sports clothes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ties or scarves</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bags</td>
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Keep sweaters and other clothing clean so moths or other insects don’t harm them. Check the label for care instructions.

Shirts or blouses should be hung or folded like sweaters. Avoid metal hangers, which can stain the garment if they become wet, or pad the hangers. Hangers come in different shapes and sizes. Choose ones that suit the shape and weight of each garment. Some hangers have special features like slits for narrow straps or belt hooks. There are special scarf and tie hangers, too.
Slacks and skirts can be folded on a standard hanger or on special skirt-pants hangers. Some hangers are designed for a single garment and some can hold many garments. Whichever you select, make sure you can easily reach and pull out the garment you want without jarring other clothes.

Watch out—don’t put more than one garment on a single skirt or pants hanger. Most hangers break easily!

Skirt and pants hangers also leave hard-to-remove impressions on the waistbands of your corduroy, velvet, and other napped and shiny surface fabrics. To prevent this, simply slip small strips of vinyl, wool, or velvet between the waistband and the clip. Or turn the garment inside out so the impression is made on the inside of the waistband.

Many products are available to help you use your storage space more effectively. These include hooks, shelving, rods, boxes, baskets, tins, and even dish pans. Check around your home for items you can use. Also look through sewing pattern catalogs for instructions on how to make closet and drawer organizers. You might want to visit drug or department stores to see how many hangers and storage organizers are available and what they cost.

**Between Sessions**

Gather ideas that you think might work. What you are able to do depends on the structure of your closet and drawer space, the time you spend, and what you can afford.

Double-decking a closet, with two horizontal rods instead of one, handles shorter garments easily and doubles the hanging space in a closet. To do this, you may need to raise the top shelf of an ordinary closet. You’ll also need to measure the length of garments you plan to tier before you start.

You probably have a drawer that is always messy because you have too many things in it and have to dig around! Existing drawer space can be divided by cardboard boxes to form cubbyholes that keep drawers neater.

Stacked items are difficult to pull out unless they have a divider in between. Overhead storage should have “flip-up” features so you can reach in easily without disturbing other storage.

Think about using some of these items or come up with your own ideas:

- hat and other storage boxes, covered or made from cardboard
- shoe boxes, labeled and stacked
- dish pan storage, placed on shelves
- jewelry pins on a small pillow
- clip-on earrings on a wire grid
- a tackle box or divided tray, or a compartmentalized hanger
- storage for pierced earrings and other jewelry
- covered cardboard tubes for rolling up rectangular scarves in a shallow drawer, or a scarf hanger
- belts hung from a wire ring
- padded hangers
- hanger covers
- garment cover made from a pillowcase
- sachets
- shoe bag
- pajama bag and lingerie bag
- laundry bag
- tie rack
- shoe pads and trees
- grooming cape
- drawer liners
### Session 3: At Home

Put together a plan for your clothing storage. Devise a closet and drawer storage arrangement, and think about special and out-of-season storage. Make sketches of your storage plans. Be as detailed as you can. You probably won’t be able to make all the changes you want right away, but having a plan will help you locate just what you need and, perhaps, help you find good prices!

Begin working on various arrangements and storage ideas. Go slowly, working on one thing at a time. Try to work without too many interruptions.

Get into the habit of hanging and repairing clothing right away. Prevent stains by shielding clothing while you eat and when you apply makeup, perfume or shaving lotions, nail polish and polish remover, creams, deodorant, acne products, and hair sprays.

Keep sewing and stain removal kits in the laundry, out of the reach of young children, together with clothing-care instructions.

A well-organized closet makes dressing simple—but it won’t stay that way without care. Your closet is like a garden: it needs to be weeded and tended. Go through your closet every season and decide what you need to update.

Keep looking at ways to make storage and care easier. You may want to add special items from time to time. For example, a step stool will help you reach high items safely. You may also want to put together a sewing kit and shoe polish kit. A lint brush, static remedy, pill remover, snag repair tool, laundry and/or lingerie bag, shoe trees, and a shoe horn are also good to keep handy.
Organizing Your Closet Storage
Sketch in the arrangement of your closet after it is organized. Show the space you provide for items such as shoes and coats, and for items such as suitcases, that you store in your closet. If you share a closet, show the space allotted to the other person.
What I learned in this project (new skills, new words)


What I shared with others (presentations, helping other members, community service)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC OR SKILL</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>NO. OF PEOPLE WHO WATCHED</th>
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Did I participate in Fashion Revue?

Where? _______ When? _______

Project story
Draw sketches or attach photos of what your clothing storage looked like before you took this project and what it looks like now.

What are your plans to maintain or create new storage areas in the future?
Name __________________________________________

Address _______________________________________

Age as of January 1 __________

Club ____________________________________________

Number of years in this project ________________

Number of years in Textile Science projects __________

Leader’s signature ______________________________

What I made for my project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>FIBER CONTENT</th>
<th>COST</th>
<th>HOURS TO MAKE</th>
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People who helped me and resources I used for this project

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

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How I saved money or time by making improvements

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________
Sharing What You've Learned
Share at least one idea or skill with a group or friend. Here are some possibilities:
- Folding a sweater
- Washing a sweater
- Making double-decker storage in a closet
- Choosing the right hanger for a garment
- Storing jewelry, ties, or scarves
- Making an easy storage aid
- Developing good habits to prevent clothing problems
- Recognizing the hazards of dry cleaning bags
- Organizing a rummage sale
- Making clothing repairs

Want to Know More?
Check the library and bookstore for books and magazines with information on closet storage. Catalogs can give you many ideas, and closet storage patterns are available too.

Exhibits and Fashion Revue
This project was not designed for modeling in a fashion revue. Check a current roundup or a fair premium listing to find out what you can enter as an exhibit. Every piece of your work should have a label printed with your name, age, club name, and county.

Name Kelly Taro
Age 14
4-H club Socks and ties
County Snippet

Taking the Project Again
You may want to take this project more than once to carry out further storage improvements. You may also want to learn about items that can keep your wardrobe in shape (dress shields, shoulder pads, etc.) and what to do about special clothing problems. Why not make organizers or luggage for travel? Perhaps another person in your family or a friend needs special help with their storage.