Want to make life easier? Spend less time deciding what to wear! Create a core wardrobe to mix, match, and update your favorites with trendy touches.

A wardrobe is a personal thing. What works for your best friend or for a family member may not work for you. Each of us has different activities, interests, and personalities. What do you enjoy doing? Experiment with color and learn which styles look best on you.

If you haven’t worked with color or proportion before, read over the design project or a book on art before starting. This will help you do the activities in this project. Keep a notebook and camera handy to record your ideas and some of your wardrobe combinations.

One of the best wardrobe expanders is a well-organized closet. Take the time to donate or sell clothes you never wear, and repair clothes that need altering and mending before you start this project.

Are you ready? Let’s go!

In this project, you will:
- Study fashion trends
- Take an activity scan
- Develop a wardrobe inventory
- Plan for additional purchases or sewing of garments
Fashion Trends and Ideas
During your project, scan fashion magazines and clothing catalogs for ideas you can use in your wardrobe. Identify current clothing trends by visiting local stores and becoming aware of what your friends are wearing. Be careful not to spend too much money on fads that are popular for only a short time.

Get to know fashion styles by name. Read the descriptions of garments on the back of pattern envelopes or in pattern magazines. Fashion sections in major newspapers and television shows can help you learn more about apparel trends, too.

Watch how actors and actresses on TV are dressed for their various roles. Do you see certain styles and colors on certain types of characters? What about the performers' coloring and features? Were certain colors selected to enhance their features?

Fabric stores sell wardrobe patterns that can help you learn what styles look good together. You can also find books on wardrobe planning at your library or bookstore. Such books can show you how to put a wardrobe of perhaps 9 items into 40 color-related combinations. They will also give samples of basic wardrobes, show you how to use accessories in trendy ways, and tell you how to decide which style of clothing is most suited to your body type.

Activity Scan
A carefully planned wardrobe means having clothes for activities that are important to you. The types of clothes you have should reflect those activities. So one way to discover your wardrobe needs is to do an activity scan.

Keep track of your activities for a week or more. Try to choose an average week, not the week of a vacation, prom, etc.

How much time do you spend in dressy clothes? Do you spend more time in casual clothes? Are you involved in active sports or are you a spectator? What types of clothes you have and how many depend on your needs.

Don’t forget that your activities may change from time to time. Look ahead to what you will need and to fashion trends.

Mixing and Matching
To expand your wardrobe, discover combinations of garments you can put together with accessories you already have. Try out possibilities by "scarecrowning" an outfit on a bed or table. This will help you see a variety of possibilities before you actually try the clothes on.

When you pick out combinations, look for a design feature that ties the garments together. It may be a similar color, line, or print. Two or more plaids and prints can work together as long as they have a common design element, such as a color, and one of the plaids or prints is smaller in size (scale).

Have a full-length mirror handy, and keep the elements and principles of design in mind when mixing and matching combinations. A parent or close friend can help you make choices and can start a list of combinations that look good.
Choose one of these activities: (1) Select one item from your wardrobe and plan five different outfits from that item; (2) take three to six garments in your wardrobe and mix and match them to make a number of combinations; (3) take pictures from old catalogs and mix and match coordinates.

**Inventory your Wardrobe**

Working on a wardrobe takes time, thought, and effort, but the result is worth it! Begin with the clothing you already have. This is called “shopping in your closet.” An inventory is a list that lets you know what you have so you can make mix-and-match combinations. If time is limited, work with clothing for just one season or for a certain purpose.

Every book on wardrobe planning has its own wardrobe inventory form. Pick the one that works for you. You may want to do an inventory on a computer, if you have one, because it’s easy to keep the inventory up to date and easy to sort clothing by categories such as color and season. You can do an inventory using index cards, too.

**Try on the Clothes**

Be willing to take the time and effort to try various clothing combinations. Start with your favorites and the most expensive items in your wardrobe. Try on just a few items at a time and work with someone else to help you write down your comments about the combinations. (This person can also help hand you accessories and hang garments up when you are finished, making the experience less difficult and time-consuming.)

Be sure to look not only at the front of the garment, but at the back as well. If the combinations work well, write this down on the inventory form or take a photograph of the combination to mount in your closet.

Keep records of when you purchased an item, what it cost (attach receipts), care instructions, and drycleaning dates. If you loan garments, write down the date and name of the person who borrowed it. Other garments and accessories that work well can be noted, too.

Keep a notebook of ideas that can help extend your wardrobe or update some of the basics you have. Also keep a list, in your wallet or purse, of clothing items you need. If you sew or have fabric swatches from garments that have been altered or hemmed, keep them in a plastic wallet folder or in a small photo album for easy reference while shopping.

**Purchase or Sew Items for Your Wardrobe**

Now that you have a plan, visit department stores, thrift shops, or consignment shops to see what you can purchase or make to complete your wardrobe. Check recent clothing and pattern catalogs, too.

Before you buy, set limits on what you can spend for each item. Decide what you need first, second, and so on. Remember, building a wardrobe is an ongoing process.

Consider garment care. Choose garments with similar laundry instructions. Wearing a sweater that you send to the drycleaner with slacks that you wash at home will mean the garments will look different over time.

Drycleaning takes dollars from your budget and hand washing takes time and space. Manufacturers are only required to put one care option on their garment labels. But follow the directions or you may have an unwearable garment.

Check the end of a bolt of fabric for care instructions or the handtag on a purchased garment. You may decide to purchase or make all your needed garments, or you may decide to buy some and make others. Don’t forget, accessories can extend combinations. Clothing and fabric stores often group similar fabrics and accessories together to help you do this.

Consider where and how long you’ll wear each garment you buy. Quality clothing will usually perform better and last longer. Quality means a well-made fabric, a good design, and good clothing construction.

Cost per wearing is important, too. An inexpensive shirt may seem like a bargain, but if you wear it only five times, the cost per wearing may be considerably more than an expensive shirt worn once a week. The true cost per wearing is the total cost divided by the number of times worn. Look at these examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Times Worn</th>
<th>Cost per wearing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winter coat</td>
<td>$150.00</td>
<td>150 times</td>
<td>$0.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>$80.00</td>
<td>Two times</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
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You might also figure the cost of separates, shoes, or personal grooming products!

Good wardrobe planning requires care, repair, and skill in selecting and sewing garments. It involves creative thinking and experimenting. It is much like gardening, because you continuously weed out and add new items.
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
Use this space to write about your project. What did you do? What did you enjoy doing most? Least? Tell where you wore or will wear your outfit.
Tell about the type of pattern you chose and the fiber content of your fabric(s). Attach sample swatches. Talk about the sewing resources you used, the resource people who helped you, and your group activities.
Include a photo or sketch of your final outfit, complete with accessories.
Wardrobe Planning Project Record

Name

Address

Age as of January 1

Club

Number of years in this project

Number of years in Textile Science projects

Leader’s signature

Include here a drawing or photo of five possible combinations using three garments and three accessories:

Tell what you did and learned in this project. (Talk about new combinations you found doing your wardrobe inventory and how others helped you.)

What garments did you make or buy as a part of this project? Attach a list if needed.

What did you share with someone else? How did you do this?

Do a cost-per-wearing analysis of three items in your wardrobe. Write the results here:

1.
2.
3.
Sharing What You've Learned
Share one idea or skill with one person or a group of people. Here are some ideas, but you may think of others:
- How to do an activity scan
- How to “scarecrow” clothing to come up with different combinations
- New trends in fashion
- How to do a wardrobe inventory on a computer
- How to figure cost per wearing
- How to figure cost of dry cleaning over 5 years!

Want to Know More?
Continue to read books and magazines on wardrobe planning. Study how “experts” put together combinations using very few items. Notice how they layer basics and use accessories to express fashion trends.

Exhibits and Fashion Revue
Check current fair or roundup listings for exhibit ideas. Be sure to label each exhibit with name, age, group, and county. Check fashion revue rules if you want to model a garment.

Taking the Project Again
You may take this project more than one year! You could develop a special wardrobe for college or a new job; a layette for a baby; or, perhaps, a wardrobe for someone who has a disability. You may also choose to make a wardrobe from a wardrobe pattern and experiment with fabrics and fibers that go together. Or experiment with units or elements (basic tubes of knit fabric that can be mixed and matched).

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

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