



# Ring In THE NEW YEAR with an Updated Closet

The way we look sends an immediate and powerful message to others.

By Elena Brouwer

**EVEN THE SHARPEST OF WARDROBES REQUIRES SOME FINE-TUNING FROM TIME TO TIME**, and this New Year is the time to start. Styles change, things wear out, and to keep you looking your best, a little maintenance is needed. No matter your age, size, lifestyle or budget, dressing well is all about the fit. Visit a few of your favorite retailers and try on a range of different sizes from different departments to see which sizes flatter your figure the best. Dressing well starts in your closet. Keep these tips in mind as you start your New Year's Closet Sweep:

- Ask yourself if you have worn every item in your closet in the last two years.
- Bring a friend whose taste and sense of fashion you trust to go over your clothes and remove anything she/he thinks is unattractive.
- Some classic items are timeless and must be kept as basics in your wardrobe, for instance a well-made set of black pants, white dress blouse and black leather pumps.
- Bring out outfits and accessorize with items you own but never thought of grouping together before, such as a different scarf, belt, vest, earrings or shoes.
- Take out and repair items that need it.
- Shoes have a closet life that ranges from one to three years.
- Donate garments in decent condition to a good cause.

**The Elements of Dressing Well Apply to Both Men and Women**  
Sometimes, the men in our lives need a little wardrobe update.

There are many ways they can undermine their image. Is he wearing ill-fitting clothing? If they are too big because he lost weight, it's time to get a good tailor to fix it. Too tight, it is time to replace it. If he is not dressing appropriately for different occasions, a shopping trip is in order. Alternatively, you could help him coordinate some of the items in his closet to make it easier next time.

**Inappropriate accessories could send a signal of his current position in life. Avoid these fashion pratfalls:**

- Worn or low quality briefcases or wallets
- Outdated eye glasses
- Cheap watches
- Plastic pens
- Shoes in need of repairs
- Skipped haircut appointments

For a man who does not look for fashion trends, he needs a wardrobe stocked with mostly classic looks. Here are a few essential items that every man should have in his closet: medium-weight suits in gray or black; a few silk ties; navy and camel color sport coats; dress shirts; polo shirts; a pair or two of basic blue jeans; and two or more pairs of khakis or casual slacks. Mix and match these basics with the right accessories, and he'll be ready for almost any occasion. **SA**

*May the New Year bring you fashion compliments as you step out together!*