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KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE AND NEED
For more convenient and wiser Shopping

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Before you go to shop for anything, take inventory of what you already have.

Procedure:

1. Buy a small notebook--(small enough to fit in your purse, but large enough for the entire family). This notebook will be used to keep the vital clothing statistics for the entire family. (If you like, you might have one notebook for each family member).
2. On the first page of the notebook include the following information:
 - A. Name
 - B. Measurements
 - C. Sizes--clothes, underwear, shoes, etc.
 - D. Height
 - E. Weight
3. Arrange your wardrobe in the following categories:

For Females

1. Dresses
 - A. Street
 - B. Formal
2. Skirts
3. Pants and Pant Suits
4. Blouses and tops
5. Sweaters
6. Special sportswear
 - A. Swim suits
 - B. Sun dresses
 - C. Sweatshirts
 - D. T-Shirts
 - E. Shorts
 - F. Scooter skirts
 - G. Sport tops
 - H. Etc.
7. Coats and jackets
8. Pajamas & other nightwear
 - A. Shorty PJ's
 - B. Gowns
 - C. Robes
 - D. PJ's
 - E. Slippers

For Males

1. Suits
2. Sports jackets
3. Slacks
4. Shirts
 - A. Dress
 - B. Casual
5. Sweaters
6. Special sportswear
 - A. Swim trunks
 - B. Shorts
 - C. Sweatshirts
 - D. Etc.
7. Coats and Jackets
(not included in No. 1 & 2)
8. Pajamas and Robes
9. Underwear
 - A. T-shirts
 - B. Shorts
 - C. Socks
 - D. Etc.

For Females

9. Underwear
 - A. Bras
 - B. Panties
 - C. Girdles
 - D. Hose
 - E. Slips
 1. Full
 2. Half
10. Shoes & boots
11. Accessories
 - A. Gloves
 - B. Belts
 - C. Scarves
 - D. Hats
 - E. Handbags
 - F. Jewelry
 1. Necklaces
 2. Bracelets
 3. Earrings
 4. Rings
 5. Pins
 6. Cufflinks

For Males

10. Shoes & boots
11. Accessories
 - A. Belts
 - B. Ties
 1. Bow
 2. Regular
 - C. Gloves
 - D. Hats
 - E. Scarves
 - F. Jewelry
 1. Rings
 2. Cufflinks
 3. Etc.

4. Briefly list each person's present wardrobe according to categories.
5. Include swatches (cut from seam allowances), when possible, of items you want to color match. Rubber cement does a good job of attaching the swatches to the notebook pages.
6. You might want to write in the cost of the item and where you bought it, if you remember. This will help you estimate the value of your wardrobe in case of fire, flood, theft, etc.
7. Eliminate from your list those items you would not be caught in outside of the house (except for PJ's, etc.) and things you never wear.
8. Leave space at the end of each category for future purchases.
9. Look at what you have and decide on what must be replaced. Put these items on a priority list--warm coats, children's shoes, underwear--they are essentials.
10. Make another list of items each person wants.
11. Take the notebook with you when you shop . . . but complete your priority list first!

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This wardrobe inventory will help you avoid the two most common shopping pitfalls: The duplication of an item, and buying on impulse. It will also help you (1) clean and organize your wardrobe, (2) realize how many or how few clothes you have, and (3) realize more clearly your family's clothing needs.

SHOPPING TIPS

1. As you examine the clothes of each family member, be flexible. Certain items might be passed from one member to another, or shared. Clothes like jeans and sweaters are adaptable to multi-usage because they can be worn by either sex. Family members who wear the same size may be able to trade or share clothes. Mothers and daughters (or sisters) might invest in a good shirt or pantsuit and take turns wearing it.
2. Look for quality when you buy. Read labels and hangtags carefully. Check the construction of the garment. Are the hems and seam allowances suitable or will they need to be altered? Are the darts pointing to your bust point? Is the stitching even? Does the garment look skimpy? Is the fabric shopworn? (If so, inquire what it will look like after a week of casual wear.) If you're unfamiliar with the brand name, check the store. It might be their own special brand. Such merchandise is usually slightly lower in price than comparable nationally advertised merchandise.
3. Shop in army/navy surplus stores, sporting goods, and men's work-clothes stores for jeans, utility clothes, overalls, socks, shoes, thermal underwear, work shirts, etc. These clothes are usually so ruggedly made that they are almost indestructible.
4. Is your best bet sales merchandise? Yes, if the item is on your want list. Yes, if you are positive the markdown is legitimate. Yes, if you're sure the item represents good quality and value. No, if you cannot try it on and doubt its fit. No, if you're just psychologically hooked by a tremendous "saving" on an item you do not really need.

Today, stores have marked-down merchandise in most departments almost every day of the year. Look for bargains here first before you turn to the regular-priced merchandise. Watch for advertised sales, too, especially on regularly replaced standard clothing items such as family underwear, hose, etc. Take advantage of a good sale to buy more than one; buy half a dozen of something you know you will be using like sneakers, jeans, socks, T-shirts--over a two-year period savings can add up to \$100 or more.

REFERENCE: *Woman's Day* magazine, September, 1974. "How Your Family Can Dress for Less this Fall and Still Look Great."

