

CAPSULE WARDROBE

A TEMPLATE

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Buy less. Choose well. Make it last.

— *Vivienne Westwood*

THE TEMPLATE

This template helps you build a coherent capsule wardrobe. It consists of a 4x4 outfit grid and one row of additional items. The main strength is the visualization of the color palette and the automatic outfit ideas it generates. Let's get started!

THE 4X4 OUTFIT GRID

In the grid, each box represents one item of clothing, the only exception are tops. Here, the boxes are split to fit two items, because tops tend to be changed or washed more frequently than bottoms, accessories and layering pieces. I like to pick one short-armed and one long-armed top each.

To fill it, start by adding season-appropriate items you love and are looking forward to wear into the boxes. Note: The items in each corner should be your most versatile pieces, as these are included in the most outfit ideas.

To help you pick clothes, take a moment to think about how long you want to use this capsule for, what the weather is likely go-

ing to be like in this time period, and take note of the main activities you'll be doing during this time.

Next, check your color palette by looking at the overall grid and adjust the items to match accordingly. Are you missing a pop of color? Is there too much contrast? Not enough consistency?

Lastly, create multiple outfits to look at how compatible your clothes are. In each row, each column and each diagonal, you now have an outfit idea including bottom, top, layering piece and accessory. Does everything make an outfit you would wear? Otherwise, move items around on the grid or switch them out for something else that matches better. Overall your capsule now makes at least twenty outfits.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Recently I came across a discussion about what makes an outfit. The main point in question - does changing the shoes make for a new outfit? Since I would argue it does not, shoes are not in the 4x4 grid, but are more of an additional item for me. The same goes for outerwear and bags in my opinion. Here, having these items match each other is just as important as matching them to your outfits. When you are inside, you will not use your outerwear, shoes or bag much, but when you are outdoors, you will wear most of them together (depending on the weather) and your outerwear may even cover up most of your other clothes. For your additional items, first make sure these items match each other, then check if they would go with the color palette and the outfits in the rest of your outfit grid.

And lastly, dresses. These should match with the other additional items, but need to be less aligned with the outfit grid. With each dress, think about how you want to wear it to consider what they should match with. Do you want to layer your dress over a blouse or under a cardigan? Do you wear it with some skinny jeans? Do you prefer to wear it just with an accessory or two?

NOT INCLUDED

There are a number of items I do not include in this capsule template, because they are part of the never changing basics. These are things like socks and underwear, your wedding band or any other piece of jewelry you wear constantly for sentimental reasons. Your school or work uniform, sleepwear or athletic wear should not go here (unless you wear it as athleisure), the same is true for any scarfs, gloves and hats you need to stay warm in winter. No one should be freezing for the sake of sticking to their capsule.

THE CATEGORIES

Tops includes any shirts, t-shirts, blouse, polo-shirts or other tops.

Layers are anything you would mostly wear over your tops, like pullovers, cardigans, sweaters, vests and others.

Bottoms are anything you wear to cover exactly those. This can be jeans, pants, shorts, skirts or anything in between.

Accessories is probably the widest category. Anything you like to wear in addition to your clothes - belts, rings scarves, bracelets, necklaces, hairbands, watches, hats, earrings, ... the list goes on.

Dresses also extends to other full-body clothes like jumpsuits.

Shoes is probably quite self-explanatory as a category. Flats, boots, heels, sandals, ... the only thing I would leave out are indoor slippers.

Outerwear are any jackets or coats, basically anything you might put on to go outside, but not wear indoors regularly.

Bag can be any go to bag, basket, tote, backpack or other carrying item you love.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Here are some prompts to help you fill out the template.

Weather - What does the weather service and / or climate diagram say about the weather you'll have to dress for?

Favorite Pieces - What are your favorite pieces? Do you have clothes you feel especially confident or comfortable in and why?




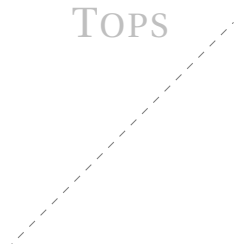
Last Capsule - If you've had a capsule before, what are items you wore a lot and what are items you wanted to add last time, but didn't?

Calendar - Is there something special scheduled for the future, that you want to dress up for?

Regular Routine - How do you spend your week? Do you have to dress for recurring activities? Are you going to spend a lot of time indoors or outdoors?

Comfort Zone - How many of your clothes do you feel comfortable wearing? Do you have any aspirational items, something you would like to be comfortable wearing, but aren't yet?

CAPSULE FOR

ACCESSORIES	BOTTOM	LAYER	TOPS 
BOTTOM	LAYER	TOPS 	ACCESSORIES
LAYER	TOPS 	ACCESSORIES	BOTTOM
TOPS 	ACCESSORIES	BOTTOM	LAYER

Dress	Bag	Shoes	Outerwear
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FINAL THOUGHTS

A capsule wardrobe should be fun and enriching. Feel free to add, change, or leave out anything in this template that does not serve you. There is no exact number of items you should have in your capsule. If you hate dresses, leave them out. If you love accessories, double the number! If you want three bags, make it so. A capsule is meant to make your life easier, so do not waste your time on something that makes it harder. When in doubt, go with your gut, follow your heart or listen to any other body part you like and just have fun with it!

M. Lighthouse