

CASH IN YOUR CLOSET

How To Turn Shopping Mistakes Into Money

Do you have hundreds of unclaimed dollars just hanging around in your closets taking up space? Last summer's polka-dot dress and that wool blazer you outgrew. The slacks you bought because they were on sale and the suit that never fit right to begin with. Sound familiar? We all make shopping mistakes, but why live with them the rest of your life? How can you turn past year's bargains into cold hard cash right now? Consignment!

Consignment stores are popping up everywhere because people know that they can find great bargains on quality used clothing for themselves and their families. The flip side of buying consignment is selling on consignment, which is a great way to clear your closet clutter and make some money in the process.

How you can turn some of your shopping mistakes or clothes you no longer love into money? Follow these simple steps.

Pull each item from your closet one at a time, and separate into one of four piles:

- A) You **love it** and wear it faithfully, and you like how it looks on you.
- B) You **hate it** and never wear it, in fact you wonder what you were thinking when you bought it, it doesn't fit, or you bought it because it was "a bargain."
- C) You **like it** and you wear it fairly often, OR it's a key player in a few outfits.
- D) You just **can't decide** which pile it goes into.

Here are five easy steps to complete the job:

Step One: Once the closet is empty, put everything in the Love It pile back into the closet.

Step Two: Put everything in the Fairly Often pile back into the closet. You should be left with two piles of clothing -- the Hate It pile and the Undecided pile. (This is where it gets fun!)

Step Three: Fold everything in the Hate It pile neatly and wish it well, for it will be going on a little journey.

Step Four: Go through the Undecided pile piece by piece, and ask yourself truly what value each piece CURRENTLY gives you.

Warning: Do not get sucked in by the clothing trying to convince you of its value, and reminding you how good you used to look wearing it. Clothing is sly and it will say anything to get you to keep it around. It will remind you of how expensive it was, or that it was a gift from your mother-in-law, but do not fall for these sneaky tricks! You must be strong and objective. Clothes that aren't serving you

need to be culled to make room for those pieces that are valuable. The fact that you are undecided on this pile indicates that you don't love it, which means you should be able to get rid of more than half of it if you're ruthless in the decision-making process. Once you've culled the pile, you should have a whole bunch of clothes that didn't make the cut back into the closet. This is where your secret cash stash is hiding.

Step Five: Call a local consignment store and ask what their guidelines are for consigning clothing. Find out if you must make an appointment to consign or if you can just drop by at your convenience. Ask how the proceeds are split between you (the consignor) and the store, and don't take less than 50%. Ask what happens to your clothes if they don't sell, and do not do business with a store that gives you clothing back if it doesn't sell. Most consignment stores will donate anything that doesn't sell within a certain period of time to a shelter or another non-profit organization.

Step Six: Load up your car and haul the clothes to the consignment store of your choice. When you get back home, relish the new look of your closet!

By following these six easy steps, you'll soon be enjoying more free space in your closet and collecting the cash that was hiding in plain view.

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