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Magazine Writing Article

How To Have The Very BEST Closet at Age 20 By Use Traveling To your Advantage

Okay, it takes quite a lot to acquire enough clothes to really build a steady closet. Years and years of collecting and searching will eventually lead you to have a pretty decent selection. My strongest tip is to buy everything... and I'm not kidding when I say that. I'll give some insight on how my closet came to be.

The summer going into junior year of high school was revolutionary because this is when I really started traveling and being able to go off in different countries and do things by myself, most importantly – shop.

Traveling is your best weapon because there is so much out there that you would never find in the United States. A great example is Europe. European countries have a lot of the same stores as the US. Places like Urban Outfitters or H&M are not to be looked passed when you're abroad because you'll find a ton of items that aren't sold in the US stores.

American and European styles are polar opposites so designers deliberately sell different items in each of the stores in order to tailor to those different audiences. Colorado State University senior, Elena Dodd, recently arrived back from studying abroad in London so I asked her about this concept.

"When I studied abroad, the clothes in those exact stores were so much more hip and edgy than the clothes in the same stores here in the US." said Elena. She also spoke a lot on how the Europeans would dress in a 'cute and casual' style. "I noticed that almost every girl walking down the street was wearing edgy, sporty, and chic outfits that looked super cute and casual."

I tend to support the Europeans style choice on the simple fact that it's absolutely amazing and because they walk – literally everywhere. They need to be dressed to the nines but also comfortable enough to hop on the train and walk a few blocks.

Back to my wardrobe story, I had an eye for cool items that I knew would add a little something to my closet. When I was out in cities like my hometown of London or in Rome, I made sure I did a thorough sweep through some of my favorite stores to snatch up all of those one off items.

You have to have the right mindset when browsing through clothes. You might think “okay where will I wear this? Maybe an enchanted garden party?” That actually happened to me and now I own a great dress that I could whip out on the rare occasion that I was ever invited to an enchanted garden party.

When you’re looking at clothes, never say such a thing like “ohh I already have something just like this” because guess what? It’s not the same thing and if it is go ahead and buy it in multiple colors because you’ll want to wear the right color at the appropriate time.

Buying absurd amounts of clothes obviously isn’t cheap so make sure you’re smart about it. Another key tip: do not buy ‘vintage’ clothes from places like Urban Outfitters or Free People. They will rip you off and it’s not like the clothing is authentic. So, drive yourself downtown and browse the thrift stores because that’s the real gold.

I spoke with CSU fashion major, Anna Shifter about her thoughts on thrift shops and whether or not she believes this thrifting is a good way to add to your closet. “I buy most of my clothes from thrift stores in Denver because I get a lot of ‘one-off’ finds that no one else would have” said Anna.

Anna also began talking about when she went to a few thrift stores while she was abroad. “When I was In Paris a few years ago of course I went to Galeris Lafayette but I also stopped by this little thrift shop. It was much different than the thrift shops in the US, it was pretty small and the clothes we very different” said Anna.

I’ve been going to this great thrift store in downtown Houston called Retropolis since I first got my license at age 16. The place is a two story warehouse sort of thing with an insane amount of clothes. It’s organized really well and actually has quality items such as hilarious graphic Tees and a great selection of one-off jean shorts that were probably jeans three decades ago.

Years ago, I made a vow to myself to never buy shorts from places like Urban Outfitters. Nothing against the company, I pretty much sold my soul to them back in 2012. I just know you can find more authentic and cool shorts for a lot cheaper at places like thrift

stores. I've found some of my favorite jean shorts from Retropolis and guess what? They were Vintage Ralph Lauren and Tommy Hilfiger.

There's definitely a point in time when you know you've made it. You start to notice that all of these stores you've been shopping at are recycling old looks, styles, or patterns from several years ago that you already own. Fashion forward Reilly Bailey had a lot to talk about regarding this recycled mess.

"I remember when I started shopping at some of my favorite stores such as Topshop and Urban Outfitters. I was really into the clothes and couldn't help but buy everything I saw that I genuinely liked. A few years later, I began to notice that some of the old shirts that I had were being sold again either in the same exact style or different colors." said Reilly.

I asked her a bit more about that subject and wanted to get some specific examples. Reilly mentioned that "...For some reason Urban Outfitters thinks it's totally normal to keep selling their 'project social' t-shirt in different colors every other season for six years straight." I laughed at her statement because I had purchased the 'project social T' in 2013, when they only sold it in black or white.

It's years down the line, you're 20 years old, and you look in your closet. While everyone else is whining about not having clothes to wear, you stand in your closet – not willing to share because no, you shouldn't share prized possessions – staring at your amazing collection and say to yourself "well I have enough", but there's still room for more.

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