

IN THIS ISSUE, WE WILL DISCUSS:

EIGHT RULES TO KEEP YOUR SHOPPING UNDER CONTROL

NEW TIPS FOR EFFORTLESS TRAVEL

PACKING UP MOM'S HOUSE



ORGANIZE YOUR LIFE!

8 Rules

TO KEEP YOUR SHOPPING UNDER CONTROL

1 Take a friend with you.

Make sure your friend knows that you tend to overspend. Ask him or her to reel you in if the shopping cart starts to overflow.

2 Avoid shopping on the Internet and television.

It is too easy to purchase items impulsively from television shows and online, and then forget what you ordered, especially when you pay by credit card. Put a blocker on your television for shopping channels, and have a friend set up the password. The Internet is trickier because there are no blockers, but you can still block yourself, if you really set your mind to it.

3 Try clothing on before you buy it.

Trying items on at the store slows down your purchases and minimizes your returns. I guarantee that you won't like 50 percent of what you try on.



8 RULES TO KEEP YOUR SHOPPING UNDER CONTROL

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4 Don't bring a credit card with a high limit.

In fact, if you have a hard time with credit cards, cut them up or leave them at home. Credit cards should really only be used for emergencies. When you do use one, consider it a loan, not free money. It's easy to fall into the trap of spending copious amounts that you don't actually have if you use a credit card. With cash, if you don't have enough, you won't overspend.

5 Avoid the sales rack.

I have a friend who loves to find deals. She used to purchase a ton of clothes for a great price. The catch? The clothes didn't fit well or flatter her. Now she buys sale clothes that look nice, too. She no longer buys them just because they are cheap.

6 Don't shop as a method of therapy.

We all have really bad days where we just want to get out of the house. Some people use "retail therapy" as a solution. Once you start, this can be a very hard habit to break. Many shopaholics started out the same way.

7 Write a shopping list and stick to it.

If you have a list, it will keep you on task instead of letting your impulsiveness drag you all over the store. Think of the list as a map that will help you reach your quest for socks. Stay focused: Don't let other items, such as hats, perfume or new jackets, lure you into overspending.

8 Think before you impulse buy.

Instead of buying something right away, think about it overnight. This gives you time to look at your budget to see if you actually have the money. You can also check your closet to see if you really do need another pair of shoes. Once you know you need the item and can afford it—and you still want it—you can purchase to your heart's (and wallet's) content.



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NEW TIPS FOR EFFORTLESS TRAVEL

Recently, I traveled to Israel. Below are some new tips and tricks that saved me time and sanity while navigating security and much more!

What to wear to the airport:

- Slip-on shoes (If you love to wear nice clothes, you'll pay for it in the security line. Your best bet is to wear shoes that come off easily—you could also take your shoes off ahead of time, place them in your carry-on and replace them with slippers.)
- Earrings with posts (I don't recommend packing much jewelry, especially when traveling overseas)
- A scarf, which can double as a neck pillow or an extra blanket

What not to wear at the airport:

- Belts (I stash mine in my carry-on luggage)
- Watches (I usually keep it in my purse for safekeeping until I am through airport security. Men, you could button yours into a coat pocket.)
- Clothes with rivets or metal parts



How to pack efficiently and effectively:

- Be sure to plan your outfits before you pack. If you don't, and you care what you look like, you'll regret it!
- Pack light! Try to limit yourself to two pairs of shoes—just make sure they match the outfits you pack. They should also be comfortable for walking in any weather (especially rain or sand—depending on where you are headed).
- Make sure you can lift your bag over your head. I once gave myself a fat lip trying to lift my bag into an overhead compartment because it was so heavy!
- Try not to check bags, if possible, on the way there.
- Bring paperback books, which are much lighter and smaller than hardbacks. You can also purchase books at used bookstores and leave them at your destination when you are done. This frees up room in your bags for purchases you make along the way. The more room and less weight you have, the less likely you'll be charged to bring new belongings back with you!
- Save yourself time fumbling for all of your IDs at security by packing them in a special wallet. One version with excellent access to your passport, plane ticket and driver's license is Levenger's document manager travel wallet (<http://www.levenger.com>, item number AL6015). While a bit pricey, it gives you an idea—my mom found one for half that price at a luggage store.

PACKING UP MOM'S HOUSE

My mom recently sold our family home. As a gift to her, I went home for a weekend and packed up her entire house. Being an organizer, I wanted to get as much accomplished as possible in a short time. So before we started packing her belongings, I had to know the following:

- what she was going to take with her to her new home
- what she was going to give to her kids and grandkids now versus later
- what she wanted to donate

We started by walking through the house and choosing what she would donate. I made sure we focused on one room at a time so she wouldn't feel overwhelmed or get confused by the process. Instead of marking boxes for donation and leaving them for later, we moved all the donations to one room. With the giveaways in a separate, designated area, mom was

able to easily evaluate the leftovers. (She was also able to point out just how much all of us kids had left at her house! I would like to note that I missed only one box of belongings when I officially moved to Washington.) After seeing how much was left, my mom was willing to get rid of more.

We set aside a large space for items she wanted the family to have, even though she wasn't sure who would want what. So that evening, we invited my two sisters and brother, plus three nephews, two nieces and a sister-in-law to come and sort through the items over take-out. With so much to divvy up among so many people, I set a time limit. If my siblings didn't take their stuff home by the end of my stay, our mom would donate or sell the remainder to an antique shop. Without this deadline, I fear my mother would have had to drag the items to her new home.

Finally, when we had separated the family belongings and the donations from everything else, we packed up all of mom's possessions with ease.

