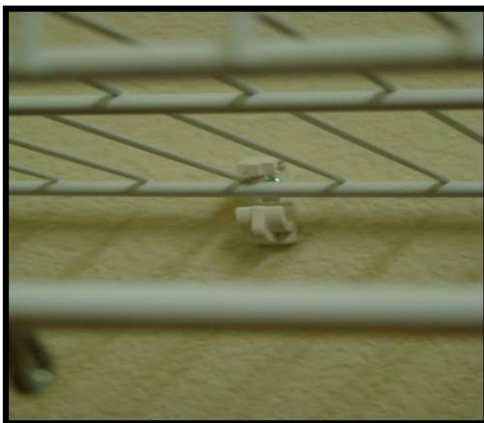
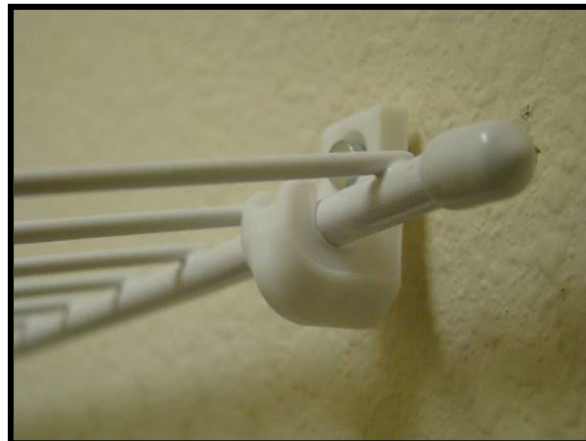


# Closet Organization

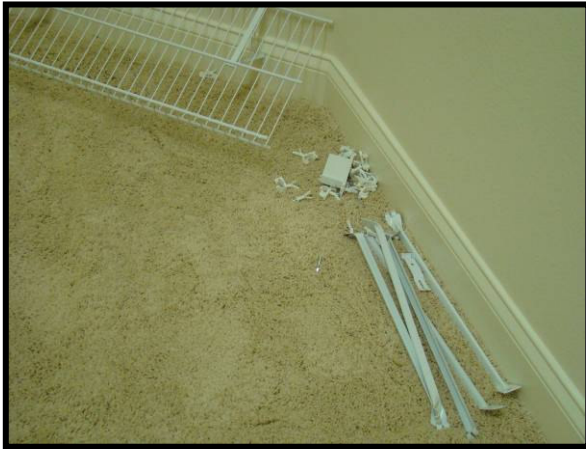


There are closet systems, and then there are *closet systems*. This, I have come to find out through trial and error. Or maybe I should say through, “cheap” and “alright, I’ll pay the bigger bucks”! Not that much bigger mind you, but by stepping up one quality grade, the integrity of my closet jumped up by 100%. I basically went from watching my wire closet shelves sink lower and lower in the front as they pulled away from the walls from the weight of heavy clothes to a closet system I can literally hang on!

I tried to get a close-up shot of the mounting system of my original closet system so you could study it and stay away from it. As you can see, the lower portion of the mounting bracket is pulling away from the wall as my clothes are putting weight on the rod.



Eventually, the clip on the bracket will pop open and allow the shelf to slip out and the whole process of your clothes falling to the floor is underway.



Your next best bet is to bring it all down. And believe me; this doesn't take too much effort. Just unclip the clips that are still intact, lift out the back bar of the shelf, and unhook it from the metal supports that are supposed to give the shelf strength. See them lying on the floor there? Well those, along with the little pile of mounting brackets

are now in a trash heap somewhere and that's exactly where they belong. I did save the shelving though because one saving grace is that the cheaper shelving will work with the stronger mounting system, so at least all is not lost!

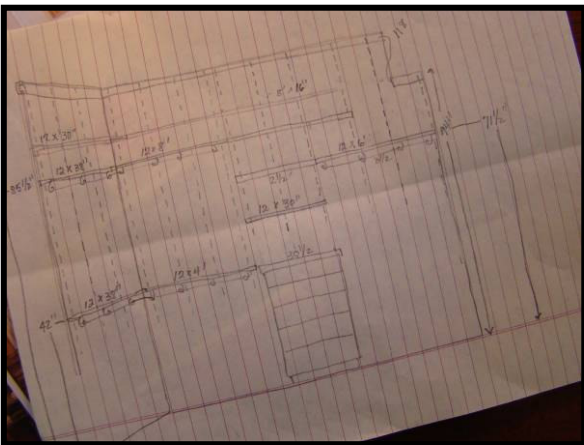
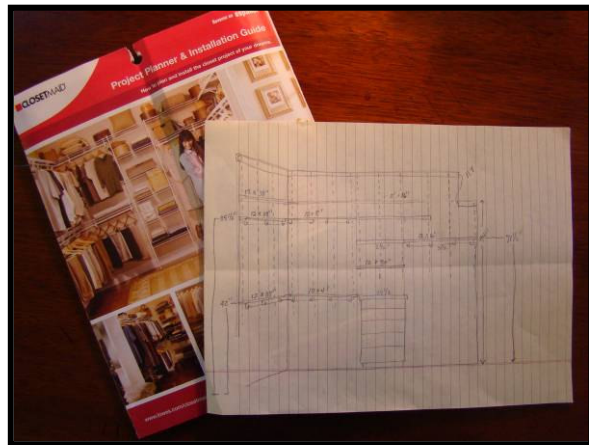
Once the old closet system is removed, you will have some repairs. Fill the holes from the old mounting brackets with spackling compound and scrape it flush to the wall.



Paint over the spackle in about an hour so you can completely erase the nightmare of the first closet system. (I'm going too crazy with this? I just know that the old system had me living in fear of getting crushed one day by my own clothing and no one finding me for hours!)

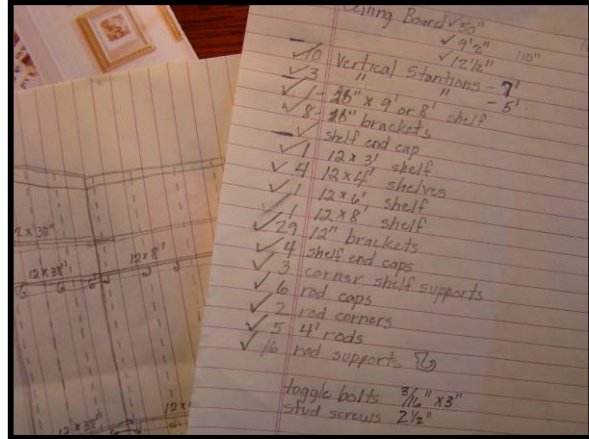
The new closet system used shelves very similar to the old ones, but they actually had a separate closet rod that you attach yourself that is about an 1 1/2" in diameter like a normal closet rod. However, it is the mounting system, of course, that makes all the difference in the world. The system is made up of standards that attach to the wall with toggle bolts or directly into the wall studs. Then, heavy metal brackets are used to hold up the shelves. It's a system that can't be beat!

However, there is work to be done before hand. You do need to grab the literature from the home center store, measure up your closet, and start figuring out what you do and don't need. This includes your clothing! I went through everything I had in the closet and sent quite a bit to Goodwill and some to a guest room closet. Now the real figuring begins!



Draw up your closet showing all of the ceiling brackets, wall standards, shelf brackets, shelves, and clothing rods you will need. My closet had a small set of drawers already in it so I placed them in a new location to get more hanging space. I took measurements, considered the sizes of the closet materials, and finally came up with a finished plan.

Once I knew what I wanted, I created a list of everything so the trip to the home center store wouldn't be daunting. At the store I grabbed one of those huge lumber carts and simply worked my way through my list. I was actually very easy and rewarding! Until I hit the register. My closet is large, a walk-in, about 5' x 11', but that doesn't stop the sticker shock at the check out. Just so you have a ballpark figure when you go to do your closet, the pieces parts I needed totaled about \$500. (My husband's closet will have to wait for a couple months!)



To install the closet system, of course you follow the manufacturer's directions to a tee and you'll be fine. The basics are, find the studs in the wall using a stud finder. And yes, Matt's heard all the jokes!

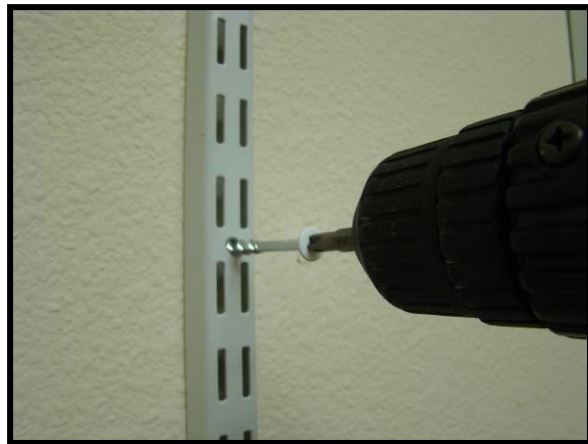
Install the top track flush with the ceiling and screw it into the wooden header for maximum strength. I ran into issues here and had to use some toggle bolts because I guess my ceiling is higher on the other side of my closet so the wooden header wasn't there.....weird.)





The vertical standards hook into the top track so the slits in them that hold the brackets are lined up across the wall. Space a maximum of 24" apart, but I tried to go 16" to find all the studs I could.

Some of the standards hit on studs and I used a screw called a "wall dog" to attach them.



With others I wasn't so lucky and had to use the toggle bolts. I was a little afraid of them at first, but by the time I was done, I was an old pro at drilling the hole, inserting the toggle and holding the screw out tight with a hand held screwdriver while tightening with my cordless screwdriver.





During this whole process, the level was right by my side. I checked everything I attached to the walls to make sure it was level.

The next step was the brackets and the shelves. The brackets went in like a charm and so did the shelves that were the correct size right from the store. Some of the shelves had to be cut to fit, especially around the corner. For this I used a hack saw.....and my husband!



The closet rods had to be shortened as well and again the hacksaw and husband were used!



Well, finally complete, about 8 hours later, I was able to load it back up. I now have room at the tippy top for my quilts and extra pillows, my winter sweaters and sweatshirts are up high on shelves to pack for those visits to Matt, and yes, I have more purses than I need, but I want you to stop thinking like my husband!

I must admit that I am saddened that my after photo doesn't look as beautiful as the brochure. I checked back at the "beauty shot" on the front page and noticed that it helps if all your clothing is in neutrals and you space everything in your closet, including the hangers by exactly 3 inches.



Whoever owns this closet.....you are my hero!

Shari

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mattandshari

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