

the pared-down purse

Copyright 2009 Store & Style, All Rights Reserved

by Christine Vick

If you pull hair ribbons and hosiery out of your handbag before locating your wallet, it needs an overhaul. Instead of committing to vague organizing goals in 2010, decide instead to keep your favorite tote tidy all year. You'll feel more put together (and eliminate embarrassing moments at the checkout stand).



Here's how:

- **Dump It:**
Clear off your dining room table, and empty the contents of your satchel, including every pocket and pouch. Wipe off crumbs or dust.
- **Sort:**
Remove items that belong elsewhere (toys, stray jewelry) and put them in their appropriate places. Throw away lint-covered gum and any other item that's lived there too long.
- **Errand List:**
Don't keep to-do items in your purse; returns, letters to mail and overdue library DVDs will likely get lost in its depths. Instead create a [launching pad](#) for your car, and add the errands to your planner

or to do list.

- **Give Essentials a Home:**

Designate a specific pocket for your wallet, cell phone, shopping list, and emergency chocolate stash, so when you're loaded down with groceries you won't be rooting around desperately for keys.

- **Corral Smaller Items:**

We love [No Big Dill's](#) January 9th organized purse post. She designed and created mini drawstring bags for purse essentials, first aid supplies, a sewing kit, and personal items. If you're not a seamstress, a few small make up bags or oilcloth pouches can serve the same purpose.

- **Contain Coupons:**

For these money-saving scraps of paper to be useful, they must be at your fingertips. Choose either a mini accordion file or zippered pencil pouch for storage. I use a pencil pouch, and attach coupons from the same store together with paper clips. Sort coupons monthly to discarded expired clippings.

Best Bags and Gadgets:

- [The Butler Bag](#) is our favorite for storage (it even keeps a Diet Coke can upright!), and the newly-reduced prices for the short and tall totes (\$65 adn \$85) make it a bargain.
- We also love [Jane Marvel's](#) oilcloth totes in every size and variation. If you need a a backpack or messenger bag that both savvy and sturdy, she has one to love.
- [The Purseket](#) is a purse within a purse--a removable lining with storage slots for essentials such as lipgloss and your Blackberry. When it's time to shed your daytime carryall for an evening clutch, simply remove the purseket, slip it into the clutch, and your supplies come along as well.

Christine Vick - *Christine Vick is the co-founder of Store and Style.*