



Organize your exploding wallet so you can find what's inside

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Seinfeld's George Costanza, trying to close his "exploding wallet" - organize yours in a few steps.
Sony Pictures/Television

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In a well-known *Seinfeld* episode, George Costanza complains of back pain, then reaches in his pocket to pull out a [gargantuan over-stuffed wallet](#).

He explains to Jerry and Elaine that he needs everything he keeps in his wallet ("important things go in a case") - including Irish money and packets of sugar substitute.

How much does your wallet remind you of George's "good friend"? If your wallet has become more of an annoyance than a useful tool, it's time to get it organized and keep it that way.

Step-by-step process to slim down your wallet

1. **Make time to do it right.** Set aside some time - 30 minutes should do it - to clean up your messy wallet. The first time around, it just won't happen in increments of "found" time. Give yourself some (uncluttered) space, too: the kitchen table, your desk, or a countertop.
2. **Declutter.** Remove everything from the wallet so you can see what you've stuffed into it over time (you may be surprised what you find!). Sort the contents into piles of "like" items - cash, slips of paper, keys, coins, credit and debit cards, insurance identification cards, etc.
3. **Arrange cash.** To help you find the right amount of cash at the right time, keep like denominations together - ones, fives, tens, and so on. Make it a habit to sort your cash regularly to make it easy to find exactly what you need.
4. **Organize plastic.** It's too easy to lose a credit card when the plastic in your wallet is in a large pile stuffed in one slot (or with your cash). Sort out your credit cards, insurance cards, and other identification, gift, and miscellaneous plastic cards. Keep only the essentials in your wallet (credit, insurance, driver's license, work I.D.). See "[secrets of a super-slim wallet](#)" for ideas.
5. **Offload coins.** Most wallets weren't designed for coins - remove them and keep them in a [coin holder](#) in your pocket or a designated place in your car or at home.
6. **Find your perfect wallet.** If it's difficult to keep your wallet organized, you may want to find a new wallet that will meet your needs better. Once you've sorted out just the essentials to keep in your wallet, you can determine what features your [ideal wallet](#) should have.
7. **Form a habit.** Once a week, take a few minutes to straighten the items in your newly organized wallet so it will never reach the "exploding wallet" stage again.

For inspiration, ink to the "[exploding wallet](#)" segment of *Seinfeld*'s "The Reverse Peephole" episode.

Share your exploding wallet stories here - and how you solved them.