
Closet

From the OED:

Closet sb. [a. OF. *closet*, dim. of *clos* :-L. *clausum*]

1. A room for privacy or retirement; a private room; an inner chamber; formerly often = *bower*; in later use always a small room.

1370 A slepe hym toke In hys closet.

1586 We doe call the most secret place in the house appropriate unto our owne private studies . . . a Closet.

1611 Let the bridegroome goe forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.

1750 A sudden intruder into the closet of an author.

b. *esp.* Such a room as the place of private devotion (with allusion to 1611 version of Matt. vi.6). *arch.*

c. As the place of private study or secluded speculation; *esp.* in reference to mere theories as opposed to practical measures.

1746 The knowledge of the world is only to be acquired in the world, and not in the Closet.

2. The private apartment of a monarch or potentate.

3. a. A private repository of valuables or (*esp.* in later use) curiosities; a cabinet. *arch.* or *Obs.*

b. A small side-room or recess for storing utensils, provisions, etc.; a cupboard.

c. *Skeleton in the closet* (or *cupboard*): a private or concealed trouble in one's house or circumstances, ever present, and ever liable to come into view.

4. With special reference to size: Any small room: especially one belonging to or communicating with a larger.

5. *fig.* The den or lair of a wild beast. *Obs.*

6. a. *transf.* That which affords retirement like a private chamber, or which encloses like a cabinet; a hidden or secret place, retreat, recess.

1450-1530 Went the sonne of god oute of the pryuy closet of the maydens wombe.

1594 This skinne . . . is also called the little closet of the heart.

7. Short for 'Closet of ease,' 'water-closet'

1662 A Closet of ease.

9. A sewer. *Sc. Obs.*

[Translating L. *cloaca*: origin doubtful; there is nothing like it in French.]

10. *attrib.*, as, . . . a place . . . of private study and speculation, as *closet-lucubration*, *-philosopher*, *-politician*, *-speculation*, *-student*, *-study*, etc.

1649 Reasons, why he should rather pray by the officiating mouth of a Closet-chaplain.

1649 They knew the King . . . to have sucked from them and their Closetwork all his impotent principles of Tyrannie and Superstition.

1612-5 There are stage-sins and there are closet-sins.
