The Finishing Touch
Perfecting the art of accessorizing

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Travelling Light

Your Essential Style Guide

Never Short on Style

With thanks to Sally McGraw of www.alreadypretty.com who allowed me to include her photo in this ebook.

If you want to know where any of the items in the illustrations come from you can do so here www.polyvore.com/ in the Search bar type in Imogen and choose the option Members

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Why Accessorize?

Clothes and jewellery should be startling, individual. When you see a woman in my clothes, you want to know more about them. To me, that is what distinguishes good designers from bad designers.

Alexander McQueen

1. Accessories are my favourite weapon in the art of illusion and distraction
2. Accessories can be used to draw attention toward your face, or away from a body part you’d rather others didn’t notice.
3. Accessories express your unique personality, they are a creative outlet
4. Accessories can dress up or down an outfit
5. Accessories create focal points and interest in your outfit.
6. Accessories can add colour to a neutral outfit, or tie together different elements of an outfit.
7. Accessories are a great way of adding a new trend or updating an outfit without having to spend a fortune.
8. Plus, my favourite reason for loving accessories is, you never feel fat in shoes or jewellery!

Add some personality

If your clothes are your cake, your accessories are the icing. Not too many of us want to eat a big slice of cake without any icing. My kids certainly don’t!

Accessories can take a dull outfit and make it interesting. Through this guide, you’ll find a variety of ways and techniques to choose accessories to suit different outfits, and ways to change the look and feel of an outfit by adding different accessories.

Recently I spent a number of hours with a lovely client who when we were figuring out her personality style, realised that she had been ignoring accessories, thinking that they were less important than the clothes she was choosing, resulting in her not expressing an important aspect of her personality.
She told me that she realised that she was now going to spend more time focusing on the shoes, handbags and jewellery, the items that she'd overlooked, but those items are essential to help her create her unique personal style.

See how easy it is to add a little something to your outfit. Instead of going for those boring shoes, pick a pair with pizazz. Start collecting great brooches and other jewellery at art shows,
markets, galleries, off the net (etsy.com is fabulous). Look for pieces that speak to you, that you love.

Plain becomes *kapow* with just a small piece of edgy. What will you add to your wardrobe to spice it up?
Change Your Accessories, Change Your Look

One of the tips in Brenda Kinsel's book *Fashion Makeover* is creating colour groupings of accessories, to dress up a neutral outfit with a range of accessories so that you appear to be wearing something different each day. Brenda recommends going through your wardrobe and taking photos of groups of similarly coloured accessories that work together and sticking them inside a style folder or inside your wardrobe door so that you can quickly remember which accessories work together. Neutral clothes with different sets of coloured accessories will look like completely different outfits. See how accessories can really stretch your wardrobe?
How to Work that LBD

The Little Black Dress is so widely known and loved and appears in many wardrobes - but how do you get full value from it? Why not dress it up and down to make it work harder for you.

Here I've quickly put together some ideas on what accessories you could put with it to make it more casual, to dressing it up for a cocktail party.
How to Create Focus on Your Assets

Focal points are created by detail on clothing - whether it's colour, shiny fabrics, pockets, distressing on jeans, ruffles, pattern, belts, beading or jewellery. You can use detail to draw attention to your assets and away from areas you'd rather people didn't notice.

![Focus on Your Assets](image)

You can see from this collection how the details draw attention to different areas of the body, depending where the colour, accessories, sheen and pattern sit.

- Face: draw attention with jewellery and detail high up on garments.
• Neck: necklaces and high ruffled collars.
• Shoulders: interesting lapels and shoulder detail.
• Arms: cap sleeves and sleeve detail.
• Wrists/hands: cuff detail, bracelets, watches and rings.
• Bust: ruffles, sheen, graphics and brighter and lighter colours can all draw attention.
• Waist: belts and colour changes at the waist will highlight.
• Hips/thighs: distressing on denim, colour blocking, hems that end at the thighs draw focus.
• Calves: horizontal feature bands at the hem, ruffled skirt and dress hems.
• Feet: Shoes with sparkle and detail, alternate coloured shoes.
Basics

Cheap or Expensive?
- So should you go and buy a designer handbag or not?
- Should all your jewellery be solid gold and real gems?
- Should your shoes be leather (if you’re not a vegan) or will pleather do?
- Should your watch be digital or analogue?

What is the answer to these questions? Well it all depends.

We judge people (like it or not) on their appearance, so if you look like you are wearing high quality clothing (looks expensive, might not be) then we will assume that you are a high quality person. So which accessories should you spend on and which to scrimp?

Fashion Fads
These are the short term trends, they may last 6 to 12 months, but they’re not here to stay. Don’t spend up on these fads, if you want to add something current and fun to your wardrobe from a current trend, then find great looking accessories that are a bargain.

For example, add in a current fashion colour such in a belt, cheaper shoe, bangle or pleather bag.

Necklaces don’t have to be expensive, there is so much great costume jewellery around now to choose from, use it to change up your look and add focal points with ease.
**Fashion Classics**

If you’re looking at a long term trend that you want to last for years and years and to always look great, spend, so an analogue watch that will last a lifetime. A pair of great knee-high boots that are so comfortable you will wear them day after day. A pair of pearl earrings that you will pass down to your daughter. A statement handbag that dresses up an outfit year in year out.

You don’t have to buy designer, there are plenty of high quality pieces that don’t have designer price points. Think about whether or not it can be improved, or won’t be easily damaged:

- Leather can be polished and improved; pleather can’t so choose leather for bags, shoes, boots, and belts.
- Solid silver and gold don’t wear; coated jewellery does wear and can’t be fixed.

If you circulate with people who spend on accessories, always make sure your shoes and watch are great quality, they are noticed!
Big or Small or In-Between?
The scale of your accessories is really important; it’s all about the art of optical illusion.

Which has the bigger centre (orange) circle? The one on the right? No, they have the same size, this is a demonstration of the illusion of scale.

So if I want something to look smaller than it is (say my bust, or my ankles or calves) I’ll put a larger scale accessory next to it.

If I want something to look bigger, then I’ll put a smaller scale accessory.

If I want it to look the size it is, then I’ll put on a medium scale accessory.

This is why you see celebrities with enormous handbags, it makes them look tiny!

So if I have full calves or ankles, I’ll want to choose a shoe with a thicker strap and chunkier heel to balance it.

If I have very slim calves or ankles then I’ll choose a fine strap and slim heel, otherwise I’ll look weighed down by my shoes.
How about jewellery?

Fine wrists and fingers call for finer watches, bracelets and rings.

Small facial features need smaller earrings and necklaces.

Large facial features require larger scale earrings and necklaces.

Large busts need large scale jewellery (if you want to distract from and make your bust look smaller, otherwise, it’s up to you!)

If you want to make a piece appear larger, but without it feeling too dominating, wear a piece that is see through or patterned, rather than one that is solid.

**The Rule of Scale**

If you are a larger scale, either all over, or specific areas of your body, wear larger scale accessories.

If you are petite or smaller scale, wear more delicate and smaller accessories.

Pretty simple eh?
Match the Level of Refinement of Your Accessories

Accessories and clothes all have levels of refinement (it’s kind of like a mood), diamonds and pearls work with evening wear (high level of refinement), chunky beads work with jeans (lower level of refinement). This is why pearls look silly at the gym, and sneakers don’t work with a business suit, they’re different levels of refinement.

As you can see the moods and level of refinement of each of these group differ.

Summer: straw works with cork and coral and cane.

Casual: Fabric works with denim and chunky beads and casual looks

Business: Structured leather is business like and works with other more structured pieces, from
leather to metal.

Evening: Lace works with small detail and sparkle and feather.

You will also match your accessories to the level of refinement of your clothing

How Many Accessories at Once?

Coco Chanel was reported to have said “before you walk out the door, take off the last thing you put on” which if it was me would mean I go out barefoot each day, not practical!

But maybe she saw too many women over-accessorised. I have to admit I tend to see more women under-accessorised these days, so many are too scared to wear any for fear of getting it wrong.

There is no hard and fast rule, though I have heard that you should never wear more than 10 accessories at once (and this includes shoes and handbag). I think it’s very dependent on your personality style and your size, the more petite you are; the less you can carry at once before you look cluttered. Tall women can wear more as they are a bigger canvas.

So let’s list the accessories you might wear frequently:

1. Shoes
2. Handbag
3. Necklace
4. Earrings
5. Belt
6. Ring
7. Bracelet
8. Glasses
9. Hat
10. Scarf
11. Hair clips or bands
12. Watch

It’s likely that you’ll be wearing at least 3 of these without thinking, then choose another 3 or 4 to create interest and detail in your outfit and create a focal point.
**Complementing Your Outfit?**

How do you choose the style of jewellery that goes with your clothes?

Here I’ve got 4 different outfits based around jeans, and you can see that the jewellery and shoes chosen are related to the level of refinement of the other garments.

Super casual converse sandshoes and a t-shirt – no jewels, you could wear a pair of stud or simple hoop earrings if you wanted to, nothing sparkly or fancy.
Then we have a pair of suede fringed boots, so some detail, the natural and slightly textured element of the suede works well with some larger beads made from wood or polished stones, again anything sparkly or too delicate would look wrong with this outfit.

Then we have a metallic sheen belt chosen to go with this dressier knit top, which works then with a jewelled heeled sandal and a silver necklace. The elements of sheen all work together.

Lastly, because of the wide leg of the jean you need a shoe that is chunkier, so I’ve chosen a wedge sandal and then because of the cork in the wedge, which is again a natural material and so works well with the large stone or resin beads in the necklace.

If I wanted to put diamonds with my jeans I’d choose a top with some sheen or shine detail and match that with the shoes, such as a patent leather, and a stiletto heel.

The tip to remember is that your accessories need to have the same feel, the level of refinement needs to work together, so a tennis bracelet doesn’t work with a resin bead necklace.

There needs to be similarity of the elements for the whole outfit to look cohesive.
Where to Start – About Face

When dressing the most important place to start is your portrait

Your portrait area is the part of you that people notice the most, the part that people spend the most time looking at, and the part that we focus on as it contains your face, which is your communication centre.

Accessories such as glasses, necklaces, earrings and scarves are great tools to help draw attention up to your face. And as I always tell my clients, “if they’re looking into your eyes, they’re not looking at your thighs”.

Dress your portrait first and then add in the other accessories like shoes and handbags, bracelets and rings. Though, sometimes I like to dress from the shoes up, but don’t forget to dress your portrait.
Matte, Sheen or Shine?
Should your accessories, from bags to belts, shoes to earrings, be made of materials that are matte (non-reflective), sheen (slightly reflective) or shine (highly reflective)?

Have a look at yourself in the mirror, what do you see? Smooth skin that is shiny, has a slight sheen, or is matte? How about your hair? Is it dark and smooth and reflects lots of light, or is it textured and choppy, coarse or curly?

Try and harmonise some of your clothing with your appearance. If you are shiny, wear patent belts or shoes, shiny metals or stones that reflect the light.

Alternatively, if you have matte skin then look for brushed metals and leather that doesn’t
reflect. Think about a polished stone rather than a reflective diamond or cut stone.
If you are more textured in your appearance, whether you have curly or coarse hair, freckling or a few more wrinkles than you’d like: think about wood and rougher textured leathers and materials. Think about adding patterns and textures into your accessories.

**Things to Consider When Choosing a Hairstyle**
The most often question people ask when considering a new hairstyle is “What will suit my face shape?” So often people want to know what their hairstyle options are. - But before that is answered, there are other factors to take into consideration on what will be the best hairstyle for you.

1. The texture of your hair. No matter what your face shape, your hair texture will determine what cuts will work with your hair. Fine hair is often limp and lacks body, whilst coarser hair has more body. Curly hair has its own shape, and I always feel that there is no point in fighting nature every day. Go for a cut that works with your hair, not against it. Mick (my hairdresser from Biba Doncaster, Melbourne) told me that he'd had someone in who had asked for the same haircut as I had in the video, yet they had tight spiral curls - my hair, which is slightly wavy naturally, is also medium fine, and easy to straighten, her hair was not, so my cut was not suitable for her.

2. How much time are you prepared to spend doing it? As you may have seen in my How to Blow Dry a Bob in 3 Minutes video, my hair takes next to no time to do, but it still takes 3 minutes. If you're not prepared to spend any time doing your hair, you expect to wash and wear, then that will also limit the style options open to you. Also, your texture will determine how long it takes to do your hair, plus the volume of hair you have.

3. Prominent features. For example, you have a nose that you don't want to draw attention to - then don't have hair 'pointing' at it, or no hair at all so that it becomes the largest feature of your face. For example, a large nose appears larger when you have very short hair, but much less noticeable when you have voluminous hair.

Only now is the time to start looking at your face shape and taking that into consideration.
How to Figure Out Your Face Shape

So many people want to know what their face shape is. Unfortunately, face shapes are not easy to define as most people's faces don't fit exactly into any specific shape.

The easiest way of figuring out your face shape is to pull all your hair off your face, and sitting in front of a mirror, get someone else to draw an outline of your face with a whiteboard marker. You can then see a fairly good representation of your face shape.

The idea with finding flattering haircuts is to make your face appear Oval - so lengthen a shorter face, broaden or shorten a longer narrow face, balance an unbalanced face. In short, put the volume where you are narrowest. Shorten a longer face with a fringe/bangs. Lengthen a shorter face with height at the crown, length and no or a side swept fringe.

The 'standard' face shapes are:

Oval - length is 1.5 x width, and curves gently at forehead and chin. Think Kate Moss, Charlize Theron

For ideas on hairstyles for Oval faces:
you can carry off lots of different styles, from long to short and in between. A heavy fringe or bangs will shorten your face, but work with the texture of your hair to find the ultimate style for you.

Round - length is less than 1.5 x width (more 1:1) and curves at forehead and chin. Think Kirsten Dunst, Christina Ricci

Ideas for hairstyles for your round face:
As your face is proportionally shorter, look for styles that have either height or length to balance. A soft side swept fringe/bangs can be flattering, but avoid a blunt long heavy one which will make your face look wider.

Square - length is less than 1.5 x width and has a square jaw and hairline. Think Paris Hilton, Sandra Bullock, Demi Moore, Calista Flockhart

Ideas for hairstyles for your square face:
If you think your square jaw is too masculine, look for hair that is long and
layered softly past your jaw to draw attention away from it. Don’t end a bob at your jaw, either above or below is best. Add some height or length to balance, avoid adding volume at the sides if your hair is shorter as this will make your face look wide.

Rectangle - length is more than 1.5 x width, with square jaw and hairline. Think Andie McDowell, Robin Wright Penn, Kate Hudson

Ideas for hairstyles for your rectangle face
A fringe or bangs are ideal for your face shape, you can go heavy if you want, or side swept too. Avoid volume at the crown. If you don’t have a fringe/bangs, and want long hair, try and get some texture and volume into it, rather than just dead straight, which will further elongate your face.

Oblong - length is more than 1.5 x width, curved hairline and chin. Think Sarah Jessica Parker, Chloe Sevigny,

Ideas for hairstyles for your oblong face:
Like the rectangle your face can easily look long and drawn, so ideally either sport a fringe/bangs, or have some volume or curl through it if it’s longer. Really short haircuts don’t work as well on you unless there some hair around the nape of the neck to soften your longer jawline.

Diamond/Hexagon - length is around 1.5 x width, hairline is pointed as is chin (softer version of this is Hexagon). Widest part of the face is cheekbones. Think Salma Blair, Liz Hurley

Ideas for hairstyles for your diamond face:
A fringe/bangs can work really well on you to disguise your hairline at your forehead. Also make sure you have some softness around the chin with wispy hair or longer hair that goes past your chin to balance it.

Triangle/Teardrop - length and width more similar, but widest part of the face is the jawbone with a tapered hairline. Think Jennifer Anniston

Ideas for hairstyles for your Triangle face:
If you have a strong and masculine jaw, try a long shag cut where your hair falls softly past your chin. Avoid bobs that end at or above your chin, your hair is most flattering when it goes past your jawline. You can wear a fringe/bangs if you have a longer or balanced version of this face shape, if you have a short triangle or teardrop face you may find a heavy fringe makes your face look wide.
Heart/Inverted Triangle - broadest part of the face is the forehead with a narrow, pointed chin. Think Scarlett Johansen, Reece Witherspoon, Jessica Love-Hewitt, Kylie Minogue

Ideas for hairstyles for your heart face:

You may find that you fit two categories - square forehead, round chin - then you're a half/half face shape. You may like to wear a fringe/bangs if you feel your forehead is too broad, a side swept one will be really flattering. Alternatively longer hair that ends past your chin also works wonderfully for you.

If your face is 1.5x the width or longer you are most likely to be:

- Oval
- Rectangle
- Heart
- Oblong
- Diamond
- Triangle

If your face is less than 1.5x width in length you are most likely to be:

- Round
- Square
- Triangle

Check out these websites for more ideas on hairstyles to flatter your face shape:

- UK Hairdressers
- The Hairstyler
- Visual Makeover
- Squidoo

Upload a photo and try on hairstyles

Virtual Hairstyles

Instyle Virtual Makeover
Facial Feature Placement and its Effect on Face Shape

There is one more point about your face that you need to consider - the placement of your features within your face.

The picture below illustrates a little more about finding your face shape.

OK, there is a proportional measurement I hadn't yet mentioned. Our face is supposed to be around 3 noses long. You can see on the pic of me that in this scarf (which is not sitting on my hairline, that my face is less than three noses long (I do have a very small nose).

What this does is place my features in a smaller area in the centre of my face and make my face look longer.

Yet, by measuring the width x length (1:1.5) my face is actually proportioned when wearing this scarf, the blue oval is the 1:1.15 measurement. But in fact, my face is oblong as my real hairline is where the purple line (oblong) goes which makes my face look much longer and slimmer.
So let's have a look at a different face shape. Meet Sally McGraw who writes a fantastic blog called [Already Pretty (check it out)](https://www.alreadypretty.com/)

Left to right:

- The green lines actually indicate that her face is 1:1.5 in length to width.
- The orange lines show that her features are placed closer together in the centre of her face (the top and bottom horizontals mark a nose length), thus this gives the appearance of having a longer face shape.
- The blue oval shows that her forehead and jaw fall outside of the classic oval face and she has a rectangle face shape.

So her lovely curly hair works well with her face to slightly broaden it and the side part with hair falling across her forehead softens her face. Isn't she gorgeous!
How to Find Your Balance Points

Often, when I'm with a client, they'll tell me that they have some necklaces that they like, but never wear. When they bring them out to show me, we discover that they're just not hanging in the right spot for them - and as soon as we put them on one of their 'balance points' they look fabulous. A small alteration with the length of the chain can make all the difference to the look of a necklace.

What is this 'balance point'? It's a concept devised by the amazing Carla Mathis which she discussed in her book *The Triumph of Individual Style : A Guide to Dressing Your Body, Your Beauty, Your Self* who discovered it when studying portrait art - it's a set of measurements that create a look of 'balance' which we find attractive and appealing.

What is interesting, is that your balance points can help make a short neck look longer, and a long one look shorter.

I've done up a photo to help you understand.

In green is the First Balance Point - to find yours, take a piece of string and visually measure the length of your face - forehead to chin, then take that same measurement from chin down to your chest - this is a great point to end tops, or start seeing skin if wearing a buttoned shirt (so you want the last button done up slightly lower than this point). Necklines look best within 1/2" of this point - it doesn't have to be exact. Or if you're wearing a higher neckline, this is a nice place to have a piece of jewellery sit.

The in blue (with yellow verticals) is the Second Balance Point - to find yours, find the widest part of your face - for many people it's across the width of the cheekbones - but for some it may be the forehead, and others it might be your chin. Draw an imaginary line across your face...
(like the green line that goes across my nose), and measure from this point to the chin, then from the shoulder-line down - this is a great place to end tops or put a necklace.

The First Balance Point will make your neck look longer (if you wear your necklines ending at this point) if it's shorter, or shorter if it's longer.

The Second Balance Point stops you from looking choked by your necklines, and breaks up a long décolleté.

Use this measurement when working out where to button up a shirt to - just because they put buttons all the way up to the neck, doesn't mean you have to use them! Ideally, use the First Balance Point as where you start to see the skin of your décolletage.
Defining Features and Accessory Shape

The Law of Reminiscence or What Goes with What

We have found that if we repeat the shapes in our face and body in our clothes we create a more harmonious and beautiful appearance. When repeating, don’t repeat in a cartoonish exaggerated way, but instead look to mirror in a subtle way your natural features.

Take a mirror and look in it, how would you describe your eyebrows?

A: Flat and straighter (slight curve only)

B: Arched or rounded?

How would you describe your eyes?

A: Almond or straight, not very big

B: Large, round or protruding

How would you describe your cheeks?

A: Smooth and flat or with sharp cheekbones

B: Curved and rounded

How would you describe your mouth

A: Thin and straight

B: Full lips and a wider or more generous mouth

Lastly, how would you describe the shape of your jaw and chin?

A: Sharp, angular, pointed or square?

B: Curved or soft

Now add up all your As and Bs,

Angular: Mostly As:
You have angular features and look great in accessories that have an angular appearance:

Glasses will be straight and rectangular or square with sharper corners.

Earrings will be longer drops or angular shapes, from starts to geometrics
Necklaces: shapes will be more square or rectangular, stars or straight line drops, crosses

Shoes: look for either pointed or square toes on your shoes

**Curved: Mostly Bs:**
You have curved features and look great in accessories that have a curved (not necessarily round) appearance, look for softened straight lines without sharp angles.

Glasses may be oval or softened rectangles, aviator

Earrings may be hoops, ovals, if you have a long face you can wear a round button, but if your face is round avoid them. Drops with balls may work well.

Necklaces: shapes need to have a curved appearance, you may have lots of round or oval beads, or curved shapes joined together.

Shoes: look for rounded toes on your shoes.

**Combination of As and Bs**
You have the best of both worlds and can look for shapes that are either curved or angular or a combination.

Glasses will be softened angular shapes, rectangles or squares

Earrings may be hoops, twists, drops of beads, tear drops

Necklaces: a combination of curved and straight lines, a heart is a great example of this, but you may also find shapes that have some straight or angular shapes mixed with curved shapes.

Shoes: almonds, softened squares or modified points will all look great.
Where to place Your Jewellery depending on your body variations

If you’re petite, keep your brooches higher up your shoulder as it draws the eye upwards.

If you’re tall, unless you have a large bust, wear brooches lower on your lapel.

If you are large busted you also will need to wear brooches higher up on your lapel so as not to draw attention to your bust.

If you have a curved stomach you’d rather people didn’t notice, then avoid long pendant style necklaces that end below the bust as it draws our attention to your stomach.

Those with smaller busts can wear longer necklaces more easily and successfully than your large busted sisters.

For A shaped (pear) women, avoid too many bracelets and bangles as when you are standing with your arms by your side they will have a widening effect.

V Shaped women and those with square shoulders may prefer to keep necklaces and brooches a little lower down their body rather than higher up on their chest or shoulder.
Earrings

How to Choose Earrings to Suit Your Face Shape

Hopefully you've now got more of an idea of your face shape. Remember, these are guidelines only, and very few faces are exactly shaped. In many ways, what is most important to figure out is:

Is your face: longer, shorter or medium in length?
Is your face: narrower or broader in width?
Is your face more angular or curved in appearance?
Is your face balanced (similar width at both forehead and jaw) or unbalanced (either forehead or jaw wider)?

Long and narrow, angular - most likely a rectangle
Long and narrow, curved - most likely an oblong
Medium length, and width, angular – hexagon/diamond
Medium length and width, curved - oval
Medium length and width but more pointed forehead and chin - diamond
Short in length, curved - round
Short in length, angular - square
Medium in length, broad at chin - triangle or if more curved in shape - teardrop
Medium in length, broad at forehead, narrow or pointed chin - heart

This should give you a good idea of your face shape.

Now - which earrings to choose?

Earrings can help to balance your face, especially your chin/jaw and the length of your face. As far as length goes, unless your personality is very dramatic, avoid earrings that fall past the end of your chin.
Look for earrings that relate to the shape of your face to create harmony.

Angular earrings suit angular faces and features, curved earrings suit curved faces and features.
Necklaces
What’s Your Personality Style?

When choosing jewellery, you need to think about your personality style, who you are as a person, what your personality traits are, and therefore how you want to express them through your clothing and accessories.
If you look at the picture you will see that each of the groups of jewellery has a different feel. The Feminine jewellery is smaller and more delicate, possibly floral, multiple rows of beads, shiny or sparkly.

The Dramatic jewellery is large and bold, if this is not your style you’ll find it too overwhelming.

The Relaxed jewellery is made of natural materials and is simpler in construction, wood, resin, stone.

The Creative jewellery is more quirky or whimsical, can also be made by an artist or craftsman.

The Classic jewellery is real gems and pearls in traditional settings.

The Rebellious jewellery is tougher and has attitude, skulls and symbols are common.

Which style speaks to you the most? You’ll probably find that you like a couple of styles and can wear different styles with different outfits. Some won’t appeal, best to steer clear of them!
How to Choose Necklace Length to Flatter

Necklaces come in a variety of lengths, from a choker to opera.

Choker: suits long and slender necks. They often look best with short hair too as they fill in some of the space between face and shoulder if there is no hair.

Bib: suits smaller busts and longer necks.

Pendant: suits everyone, usually better with a lower neckline. If you have a wide, short or thick neck look for a pendant that has a very fine chain so that that pendant is the feature rather than what it’s strung on.

A long pendant that goes past your bust line doesn’t suit those with a full bust or rounded stomach as it draws unflattering attention.

Matinee suits everyone, usually better with a higher neckline

Opera: suits small busts, avoid with large bust.
Jewellery for a Short or Thick Neck

Many women with shorter necks feel that they can’t wear necklaces at all. This is not true, when choosing necklaces look for those with either a very light or fine chain, even one made of fishing wire so that there isn’t an obvious line drawn around your neck, but having a larger scale pendant placed on the middle of your décolletage.

Alternatively try long necklaces that sit either at your first balance point or longer.

Of course you can always wear brooches instead, draw attention up to your face with earrings, or create a focus on your hand with bracelets, bangles and rings.
Necklaces for Long Necks

If you have a long neck (you can fit all four of your fingers easily between your chin and collar bone and could also fit another two or three fingers along the length of your neck), then you can easily wear chokers.

The longer your neck, the more space the choker can take up with ease. They look particularly good on you when wearing collared shirts

Look for thicker chains and strings for your pendants to hang on as they draw attention to your lovely long neck.
How to Match Necklaces to Clothing

Look for details that harmonise. Repeat related shapes, lines and details in your garments in your accessories.

When I'm wearing this silver jacket, I'll choose a necklace like the one on the left as the curved lapel detail looks better with a necklace with curved detail.

You can see if I chose a necklace with angles rather than curves (the one on the right), it doesn't work as well -. The shapes are unrelated and don't harmonise with each other. The star is too sharp for the lapels.
Now when I wear this skirt - I choose this large circle shaped necklace (circled in green) - it mimics the small rivet details in the skirt (circled in red), which is modern and fits with the deconstructed feel of the skirt.

In winter, when I may not want to wear a lower neckline (which is more flattering for my bust), for example if I'm wearing this boat neck top - I will wear a longer necklace such as the one shown in the picture below.

I make sure to never let these kind of longer necklaces dangle over the end of my bust peak, as it will emphasise the size. Wearing the longer necklace helps to draw attention away from the
higher neck of the top, to create to almost create another neckline.

You may also notice that these necklaces are not solid, but you can see skin or fabric through them. This takes away from them appearing very dominant and dramatic and feeling too big for me - as I'm overall a medium scale person.

As an aside: I was asked about where the necklace in the top picture came from - it was from an artist who sells necklaces at markets on the Gold Coast of Queensland, Australia! One of the best pieces I've ever bought.
How to Match Jewellery

How do you match jewellery without being matchy-matchy? Unless you're very classic in your personal style, matching sets tend to look old and frumpy.

You can see some of the elements of design I may look for when choosing jewellery that goes together, without it being a matching set.

Top left - a matching set - feels contrived

Top middle - [Wendy Brandes swear rings](#) - they are made as a matching set, but because they
are each different it's not old fashioned.

Top right - the circle element of the earrings works well with the plain simple gold bracelet without extra detail.

Bottom left - the filigree bracelet, the delicate curled pattern works with the feminine nature and detail of the earrings.

Bottom middle - the angles of the star necklace and the sparkle work with a simple plain diamond stud that has an angled finish.

Bottom right - the industrial and modern feel of the earrings needs a strong and large scale cocktail ring, that is also angular in design, it wouldn't work well with a curved ring.

So just remember, look for elements of the designs that work together rather than clash, and you can create a great personal style with your jewellery.
How Much Jewellery at Once?

I see that the larger earrings are paired with ring / bracelet, not a necklace. How do I tell when my earrings are "too much" to be worn with a necklace?

My general advice for this question would be - depends on your personal style and personality - but as a guide, if you want some rules try this.

If your earrings are large or chandelier style you might find that a necklace is overkill and you
look too cluttered. Instead pair with bracelet and/or rings.

If you have a short neck, then I'd avoid both earrings and necklace as it will clutter up the 'portrait' area.

If you have a long neck, then you will be able to wear both earrings and necklace.

If your hair is long and worn down (not tied back), you won't notice earrings in the same was as you will notice them if you have short hair (or long hair tied back).

You can still wear earrings with a necklace, but consider the size of each, big earrings, smaller necklace and vice-versa.

If your personality is dramatic or creative, you can get away with wearing more jewellery at the same time, if you are more classic or relaxed, err on the side of caution.
**How to choose a Necklace to Work with Patterns and Prints**

One of the other elements of choosing a necklace, along with the neckline, is creating harmony with the print or pattern or other design features of the garment it's sitting next to.

From left to right, top to bottom:

- **Snakeskin cardigan with multiple piece coral necklace** - two naturally occurring shapes, made of many small pieces to make a non-symmetrical shapes and patterns.

- **Soft chevron design top with necklace that creates a triangular shape.**

- **Drape cardigan with fine line pattern works with multiple strand fine necklace.**
Floral top with different floral necklace, though colours work in harmony.

A geometric pattern needs a geometric necklace, if you put something fiddly and swirly, next to squares or plaid, it won't harmonise.

Paisley top in soft fabric with delicate cursive letter necklace in a colour that blends. Notice how the curve of the letters works with the curve of the paisley.

Taking a cue from the colours in the multiple pattern tank, and the shape of the dominant pattern in the centre front, works with the turquoise star made from multiple small pieces. Notice how the star pendant is not the same as the centre pattern, matchy matchy can look way too contrived.

Soft geometric inspired top works with the soft asymmetrical pendant with colour and shape harmonising with the pattern.

These are just a few ideas of the way you can choose necklaces to suit the pattern or print in your garment.
How to Choose a Necklace to Work With Your Neckline

- Necklines that have detail - beading, ruffles, cowls etc., don't need any extra embellishment, avoid wearing a necklace with them.
- Lower necklines such as Vs, Scoops, Square, Sweetheart need something to fill in the space, but preferably on the skin rather than hanging over onto the top.
- High necklines like crews and boat necklines look great with longer necklaces.
- Collared necklines work well with narrower and higher necklaces, if you have a longer neck, try a choker, otherwise something that fits in the space and sits just below your collar bones.
- Use the colours of your top as an inspiration for choosing a necklace.
- Look at the styling, if it is modern and minimal, don't wear fussy old fashioned jewellery.
Accessories for Wrists and Hands

How to determine the length of your fingers?

The length of your middle finger should be equal to the length of your palm for a balanced hand. If your middle finger is shorter than your palm, than you have short fingers and wider hands, if it’s longer then you have long fingers.

Rings

Rings need to suit your hands and fingers.

Long fingers can take wider rings and more rings at the same time.

Long fingers can wear a ring on the pinkie.

If your hands are fine and delicate in appearance then go for stacks of fine rings or medium scale rings, avoid anything that is too bulky or heavy.
Short fingers need medium to narrower rings and should avoid wearing rings on the pinkie as it makes the hand look shorter and wider.

If you have short fingers and want to wear very delicate narrow bands, you need to wear two of them otherwise they’ll look lost on your hands.
Bracelets and Bangles

Bracelets are bendable, bangles and cuffs are solid and hard.

Cuffs can be worn at both the wrist and the upper arm (if you have shapely toned arms to show them off). If you have a large wrist bone you’ll probably find cuffs uncomfortable and will avoid them and instead opt for bracelets which don’t poke or press onto the bone.

If you are an A shape (pear) and prefer not to draw attention to your bottom and thighs, wear your bracelets on the same wrist as your watch (if you wear one) so that you don’t draw an obvious horizontal line across your body at your widest point. Alternatively if you want to wear it on the other wrist from your watch, make sure that it’s a different colour to your watch so we don’t visually group the colours together and create that horizontal.

Think about staking different sorts of bracelets and bangles together, particularly if you have medium to larger scale wrists and your jewellery is finer in nature, you will find a few pieces together will create a larger scale appearance which works with your body scale.
When stacking bracelets, they don’t have to be the same type together, you can try mixing metals, try a 25/75% ratio of silver and gold (either way) rather than 50/50%.

If you have long arms, a wide cuff or multiple pieces can make them look shorter, but be warned, if your arms are short, they will look even shorter with a big cuff unless the colour blends well with your skin.
How to Choose a Watch

Basically, I think that watches are an accessory but like a shoe, a more basic, every day essential accessory (yes I know that your mobile phone has a clock on it, but a watch is so much more convenient and stylish, and the batteries don't run out so often).

I love watches, in fact it has always been my 'treat' to myself to buy a watch as a celebration when I get a new job, with my first pay. Each watch then tells me about a stage in my life, and reminds me of a job I've had.
There are some basic rules to follow:

1. Balance the size of your hand and wrist with the watch, thicker wrists suit chunkier watches, finer wrists suit more delicate watches.
2. More sporty watches, they're made for athletic pursuits and very casual clothes
3. Bright colours spell fun, keep them outside of work time.
4. Classic shapes and styles work with a professional wardrobe - if you wear a suit to work, look for a classic, high quality watch to match your image
5. A plain analogue face with a metallic band can be worn almost anywhere (except when dressed up to the 9s)
6. Diamond encrusted watches are made for night time glamour
7. Watches that have the appearance of bracelets and bangles are a great way to add some personality to your outfit, whilst still being a practical piece
8. If your personality is rebellious or unconventional, throw all the rules out and wear whatever style you like, as long as it's an expression of who you are on the inside!
Jewellery Care and Maintenance

Where to Buy?

Jewellery can be found at many places, from the obvious eponymously named jewellery store to clothing stores and boutiques. Don’t forget there are many other places to buy, from markets to ebay, from art galleries and museums to internet stores, it comes at all price points and styles.

Creating a jewellery wardrobe with pieces in a variety of styles and colours will help you put the icing on your cake.

How Long Should You Keep it For?
So when do you know that your jewellery needs retiring?

Fine jewellery made from solid gold, silver and platinum will last forever, just remember to give it a clean every now and again, but if you’re bored with the styles and it’s not a fantastic period piece or heirloom, think about having it remodelled and can take the materials from the piece and turn them into something new and modern.

Costume jewellery, if it’s great quality it can last for years, but if it’s something that is scratched, chipped or tarnished, or has lost its coating, it’s time to let it go as it looks shabby and will make you look tired and shabby. Costume jewellery needs to look real, so when the coating comes off the metal, or if the pearl finish scratches off the ‘pearls’ it becomes obvious that it’s not real and needs to be replaced quick smart!

If you just no longer are excited about the piece or feel it’s dated, as jewellery is small and easy to store, think about putting it away for a few years (particularly if it’s a piece you’ve loved, but you’re just over it right now), as often a few years pass and then you really want to get that piece out and wear it again as it has become fresh to you once more.

Is it making you look old? Often as we age our classic pieces that worked so well when we were younger now make us look old and dated. Adding a new, funky statement piece to your simple clothes can take years off your age and remind people that you’re not old and ‘passed-it’, that you’re still alive and kicking!
Image Master Carla Mathis who is in her 70s said to me “I’m becoming invisible and I need some funky jewellery to help focus attention on me”.

**How to Store Your Jewellery**

I like to have all my jewellery on display, particularly my necklaces, so I have them hanging off large push pins off a cork board next to my mirror.

**Jewellery Trees** are great for necklaces and can look really decorative on a dressing table.

You can now get really fun little **ring holders**, like these elephants.

Try a wardrobe **hanging jewellery organiser** with pockets for earrings and rings or one made for **bracelets and necklaces**.

Alternatively you can also get an **Over the Door Jewellery storage system**.
Scarves

There are so many ways to wear scarves, from elegant and dressy to casual and comfortable. No matter what your personal style, there is a scarf option for you.

What the scarf is made of will change the formality of the scarf and also the seasonality.

So an organza scarf is more suitable for evening and summer, whilst a cashmere scarf is suitable for evening and winter.

A chunky woollen scarf is suitable for casual and winter. A cotton scarf is suitable for casual and summer.
Scarf Shapes and Sizes

Different sized and shaped scarves lend themselves to different ways of tying.

Small square scarves are best knotted around the neck.

Long slim scarves can be wrapped around the neck, and tied and looped easily.

Knots which are too bulky on thicker scarves such as the Hacking Knot work well on slimmer or summer-weight scarves.

When tying a large or wide scarf use the extra fabric for drape or to create interesting effects by tucking or knotting.

Don’t forget you can use brooches and pins to secure scarves and to add decorative detail too.
Larger square scarves can be folded and rolled as well as draped and knotted.

Just remember, there is no one right way or wrong way, it’s about adding a dash of your personal style.
16 Ways to Wear a Pashmina or Long Rectangular Scarf

Twisted and looped twice ends tucked
Looped twice ends loose
Looped twice ends tucked
Looped end pulled through
Loose twist
Hacking Knot
Double Hacking Knot
Plait Knot
Looped ends at back
Faux infinity
Loose knot
Looped twice knot
Draped Shawl
Slip Knot asymmetric
Knotted ends
How to tie a Head Scarf

Watch some video demonstrations to see some scarf tying tricks in action.

How to tie a Head Wrap

How to Tie a Headscarf

How to Tie a Scarf with a Rosette Finish

If you don’t have hair and want to wear a scarf, try one in a colour similar to your hair for a more natural look.

How to Tie a Pashmina

Here is a video I’ve made with more than 13 ways to tie a pashmina or long rectangular scarf.

13 Ways to Tie a Pashmina
How to Store Scarves

You will want to find a solution where your scarves don’t fall off all the time.

1. A hanger that has a non-slip surface is ideal.
2. A hanger with holes to thread your scarves through is another option.
3. If you have a large collection and the space to display them you could even try something like this spiral tree scarf rack.
4. Of course there are always draws and storage boxes if you don’t want to hang them.
Handbags

How to Choose a Handbag

I was in the supermarket the other day and noticed that many women carry the same handbag everywhere, to work, to the gym, to the supermarket, out for an evening, never stopping to consider that this one-size-fits-all solution may be doing them an injustice.

So is it time you thought about your handbag, and whether or not you may need more than one to create that overall stylish look you are trying to create?
Relate the colour - it doesn't have to match exactly, but it needs to relate to your outfit. A little floral sundress does not suit a large black bag. A pair of jeans does not work with a briefcase style bag. A suit does not meld with a sparkly clutch, nor a graphic bag suited to a pair of jeans. An evening dress needs a smaller, more refined bag than you everyday variety.

So in brief:

1. Match the formality, satin works for formal, but not casual.
2. Relate the colours, or choose colours that don't clash to provide an accent colour.
3. Relate the size for the purpose, day bags are larger and more roomy than evening bags.

And unless your personality is very conservative, don't match your bag to your shoes, unless they are both black or brown.
Handbag Style, You and Your Body Shape

Before you buy a bag, try it on for size, is it comfortable to wear? Does it sit nicely on your shoulder or under your arm or slide off?

When it’s full, does it still fit nicely under your arm? Often more boxy styles become uncomfortable if they are designed to sit under your arm, particularly if they are made in a structured design.
Does the bag suit your body? Wherever the bag ends, will draw attention to that body part, so for example, if you are an A (pear) shape, a bag that sit at your side on a long strap and ends at your hips will make them look wider.

A bag with short straps will need to be carried either in the crook of your elbow or in your hand, if this would annoy you then don’t choose this style, instead go for one with longer straps that you can either wear on your shoulder or across your body.

Consider your lifestyle, what do you do? If you have young children and need to pick them up or hold hands, a bag that can be worn hands free, so either across your body or backpack style may be more practical than one that sits over your shoulder.

I find that when I’m out doing a shopping trip with a client I always like to wear a cross-body style bag that is very light in its materials because I’m going to be picking up lots of clothes and their wooden hangers which get heavy very quickly. Not having a shoulder bag allows me to bend and move more easily so that I don’t have to worry about my bag slipping off my shoulder.
**Handbag Wardrobe**

Can one handbag do for all occasions? No, you may find that you need a couple, particularly a daytime bag and a night time clutch as a minimum.

If you only want to have one main handbag that takes you to both work and out casually, it will need to be a style that isn’t either too formal or casual in its construction.
You may find that 3 bags are the ideal, a work handbag, a weekend casual style and an evening clutch.

Note how the bags for business are more structured which works with the more structured garments and clothing styles we tend to wear to work (unless we work in a casual environment). The casual bags are more slouchy which teams well with denim and knits and our less structured casual garments.

Evening bags are smaller, often shinier, and made to harmonise with more refined fabrics and accessories.
How to Store Your Handbags
Many expensive bags come with a protective cover, unless your wardrobe is very dusty or you rarely wear them, don’t bother to use these all the time as you’ll not see them and therefore not wear them.

1. Have your handbags on shelves where you can see them easily as this will allow you to best decide which you want to use that day. If you stand them up side by side you can easily see them all. If they tend to fall over why not try some book ends in between? You’ll find if you stuff them with some paper they’ll keep their shape better and stand up more easily.
2. There are now some Door hanging devices that can work well if you don’t have shelf space.
3. You could if the bags are small such as a selection of evening bags, store them in a basket or box on a shelf, label so you know what’s inside.
4. Try a hanging cubby system if you don’t have shelving.
5. Coat racks are another option if you have one.
6. Hooks on the back of a door can also work well if your bags have longer straps.
Belts

Contrasting or Blending Your Belt?

Is it better to wear a belt in a contrast colour or colour blend it to your clothing?

If you have a short waist, colour blend it, particularly if it’s wide, if it’s a narrow belt then you can get away with a slight contrast.

If you have a long waist you can contrast with either narrow or wide belt
Tucking and Belting

If you have a long waist you have more options as far as belting goes.

Short waists don’t look so good with their clothes tucked in as it further shortens the torso. But if you do, look for a belt that is colour blended or a shade darker than what you’re wearing so that it doesn’t further shorten your body with an extra horizontal line.

If you don’t love the width of your waist, but want to create a feature, why not think about an interesting belt buckle, whilst still either colour blending your belt or with a belt a shade darker.

If you want to create more of a waist feature (and if you’re super long waisted this is important to do) add a belt in a contrast colour and you can have it with or without an extra buckle feature.
Unlocking the Secrets to the Mysterious Art of Belting

Who looks good in belts and who doesn’t? What kinds of belts work best on each body shape?

Those with very defined waists look great with belts, both wider and thinner belts. Depending on proportions, you may want a belt that contrasts with your clothing, or a belt that blends with your clothing.

The longer your waist, the better you’ll look in a belt. A wider belt is often better for a really long and defined waist.

A short, but defined waist is more likely to suit a thinner belt, in a lower contrast.
A belt that sits higher on the waist and drops lower down at the front is more flattering for a shorter waist.
Do I Have to Match My Shoes to My Belt (and Handbag)?

My answer to this is a definite no, unless your personality style is traditional and classic, otherwise this rule is not one you need to follow.

You may want to wear a black shoe with blue denim jeans, a blue suede belt and a red handbag. As long as the colours work as a whole with your outfit there is no need to match everything together.

Here I’ve teamed a red handbag with black shoes, black skirt and camel jacket. And blue denim with a blue boot with grey jacket and belt with a tan and blue bag. As long as the elements and colours work together in harmony, there is no need to match.
How to Wear a Belt on a Straight Body Shape

I'm an H shape, not waist to speak of, and sometimes I wish I could wear a belt, but they just show off my lack of waist.

So what are my options?

Option 1 is to wear it low down on my hips rather than at my waist. Preferably with a curved belt that sits higher at the waist and drops down lower at the front. It's best if the belt isn't a high contrast to the clothes you are wearing it over, so it doesn't make too dominant a horizontal line.
Option 2 is to create an optical illusion, with a belt underneath a jacket (but be warned, you can’t take off the jacket without losing that lovely bit of magic. It can be a high contrast to your clothing colours. The effect of the open jacket is that it creates a very short, and thus slimming horizontal line.
How to Store Belts

There are all sorts of belt storage options, from hanging them on a ring (good if you only have a few belts) to options with multiple hooks if you have a larger collection.

Of course if you don’t want to hang them you can roll them up and store them in boxes or drawers.

You can even install a sliding belt rack into the wall of your wardrobe.
Shoes

*I did not have three thousand pairs of shoes, I had one thousand and sixty.* Imelda Marcos

Imelda may have gone a overboard, we don’t need a thousand shoes, but a good shoe wardrobe will really make a difference to your appearance, you need to have

Here is an example of a shoe wardrobe that would fill most needs.

- There is a combination of both flat shoes for every day, running around, plus some heels for going out and more dressy occasions.
- Shoes for pants, and shoes for skirts and dresses.
- Shoes for winter and shoes for summer.
- Shoes for casual and shoes for smart occasions.
**General Shoe Guidelines**

**Materials**

Unless you are vegan I’d suggest that the majority of your shoes should be made of leather or if a fabric shoe, have a leather lining. It lasts much longer, lets your feet breathe and can be improved (once scuffed it can be polished). Shoes made out of pleather (vinyl or faux leather) once they scuff can’t be improved and will need to be thrown out, which is neither environmentally or monetarily sound. Only buy a non-leather shoe if it’s to be worn only occasionally, such as a special occasion shoe that doesn’t get much wear and tear.

**Comfort**

Always buy shoes that are comfortable in the store, if they rub anywhere on your foot (such as over bunions), squish your toes uncomfortably, or dig into your Achilles tendon, don’t buy them, you’ll find that you don’t want to wear them for more than a few minutes and so they are a waste of money.

Sure you might get the shoes home and after a few hours they are less than comfortable and may need to be worn in a little, but if they feel uncomfortable in the shop this is a sure sign of a bad shoe buy.

Buy your shoes in the late morning after you’ve been walking around for a few hours or in the afternoon as your feet naturally swell during the day.

Don’t just walk on the carpet in the shoe store, also try the shoe out on a hard surface to get the real feel of the shoes.

Price doesn’t necessarily equate to comfort or quality, but often, particularly with leather, paying more will get you a softer more comfortable leather.

**Fit**

The ball of your foot should fit across the widest part of the shoe.

Your toes should fit comfortably in the toe box without been squeezed or it rubbing in any way.
Your heel should fit into the quarter (back of the shoe) without it digging into you or being too low so that the shoe slides off your foot. If you have a narrow heel you may need to add suede heel grips to the back of shoes, they really work well.

The size of your feet may change over your lifetime. Pregnancy can make a woman’s foot grow ½ a size with the hormones and extra weight.

Like clothing, shoes are not completely standard, so you may find that you need to try on a couple of sizes for the best fit. The width will also vary and you may find that some shoe brands fit your foot better than others.

Repair

Have you heard the term “down at heel”? It refers to the heel of the shoes being worn down (and the wearer being poor). Don’t forget to get your shoes resoled and heeled when necessary.

Leather soled shoes if planning to be worn regularly can benefit from having a rubber sole added to them. Leather soles can be quite slippery on smooth surfaces and the rubber both adds grip and will wear better and make the shoes last longer.

Polish shoes when they are warm, just off your feet, the polish will be better absorbed by the leather and will help them last longer.

If you want your shoes to last, don’t wear the same pair every day. Your feet sweat and your shoes need to dry out between wears, so at least alternate 2-3 pairs of shoes and you’ll find that they last much longer, don’t stretch out of shape and your feet will also thank you, as each shoe rubs a little (even when comfortable) and you will be less likely to develop corns and bunions (and other painful foot problems).
What’s the Occasion? Judging the formality of your shoes

**The Heel**

The thinner the heel the more formal the shoes, the wider or thicker the heel the more casual it becomes.

What is the heel made of? A leather covered heel is more formal than a wooden heel, which is more formal than cork or straw. Rubber is the least formal.

Heels of 2+ inches are more formal whilst flat shoes are less formal.

**The Upper Material**

Patent leather is the most formal, suede, is less formal fabric is casual unless it’s satin and has sheen and is formal.

**The Sheen**

The shiner the shoe, the more formal it is, patent leather is very formal as is satin, smooth matte leather is formal, suede or nubuck are less formal as is pebble grain or crocodile whilst fabrics such as denim or cotton are the most casual.
**The Vamp**

The more of the foot that is on show makes the shoe dressier (unless shoes the toes, when it becomes less formal) a shoe that covers most of the foot is less formal than one that shoes the top of the foot.

**Toes**

Showing your toes is always less formal (though sometimes can be dressy). So in work situations where men are required to wear suits, it’s best to keep your toes covered. Toes are considered by some to be exciting and erotic, which is why they are best kept out of sight in the workplace.
Shoes to Commute

If you want to ruin your appearance wear a sneaker (particularly a white one) with your more formal work clothes (suit or suit type separates).

Need a comfortable shoes to commute in? It doesn’t need to be clunky, chunky or ugly, find a dark neutral shoes that is comfortable for you, but one that gives you the ability to walk some distance.

Depending on how far you have to travel, if it’s a few blocks and a train ride why not try a ballet flat with skirts or a loafer with trousers. **Cole Haan has a ballet flat with Nike Air** technology that would make an excellent commuting shoe.

If you walk quite some distance to work, find a dark neutral shoe that is made for walking, but doesn’t look as informal as a sneaker. It will have some inbuilt padding and more likely a rubber sole for comfort, make sure that sole is black not white so as not to draw attention to your feet.
How to Choose the Shoe Vamp

The vamp of the shoe is where it ends on your foot. A high vamp has straps or ends higher up on the foot. A low vamp finishes just above the toes leaving the foot free of any straps or detail.

High vamps work best on those with long legs, or with trousers or short skirts.

Low vamps work best on those with shorter legs, with most skirts and dresses (though you can wear them with trousers too!)

FYI: knee-high boots are classed as LOW vamp shoes!
One easy rule to follow is that you can always wear a shoe that matches your hair colour, no matter what your outfit colour, as you’re always wearing your hair, so it creates visual grouping, we get down to your feet and are drawn back up to your face. So if you’re not sure what colour shoes to wear, why not try one that matches your hair? This is particularly useful in summer with skirt and dresses.

**The essential shoe**

One other essential pair of shoes I’d suggest is the nude shoe – a shoe that blends with the colour of your skin, it’s great at making your legs look longer and you leaner and can be worn with everything!
What do Your Shoes Say About You?

Put on a pair of jeans, now, which shoes to choose? If you imagine each of these shoes with those jeans you’ll completely change the look and feel of what you’re wearing. See the power a shoe has in making you look more dressed up or down? More formal or casual, more creative or dramatic, more relaxed or casual?

Shoes have attitudes, what do you want yours to say about you today?

Don’t just reach for the same old pair, make a statement with your shoes.
How to Choose Boots

Boots are a fabulous winter option for most women, they come in all shapes and sizes (and if you have trouble finding a boot to fit around your calf, why not try Duo Boots who make to measure, then deliver).

Boots are a high vamp shoe, so they make your legs look longer. So which ones are most flattering for you?

A highly detailed boot, so one with lots of buckles or straps, is best for a longer, slimmer leg.

A shorter boot is also bets for a longer slimmer leg.
How to Choose a Shoe to Flatter Your Figure

When choosing shoes to flatter you, think about balancing and scale (which we covered earlier in this book).

Long Legs

Long legs can wear all sorts of shoes, and unlike your short legged sisters, you can easily pull off high vamp shoes and ankle straps.
Short Legs

Look for low vamp shoes and sandals. Peep toes are great as the peep of toe helps to elongate the leg. Also look for nude shoes, they are your best friend to make your legs appear longer as if they start at your toes rather than your ankles.

Long Feet

If you have proportionally long feet for your height, think about breaking the foot up with horizontal straps and details to shorten. Avoid pointed toes and long toe boxes on shoes, look for square or round toe boxes.

Short Feet

If your feet are proportionally short for your height, look for low vamps to elongate, long toe boxes such as pointed and almond shaped toes on shoes which make your feet look a little longer. Avoid straps that cut across your feet, though you can get away with a T-bar which draws a vertical line. Nude shoes are your friend too as they elongate the foot and leg line, blending them together.

Thick Ankles and/or Calves

If you have thick ankles or calves you need to use the rules of scale to balance them with your shoes. So look for a wider or stacked heel or wedge rather than a stiletto. A wider toe box rather than a long narrow pointed one, thicker rather than fine straps, and low vamps to elongate. A thicker sole or platform shoe works well for you to balance your legs. Sling backs with a low vamp can work really well for your feet and legs.

Very Slim Ankles and Calves

Your need fine straps and heels and soles, otherwise you shoes will look like they’re weighing you down. If you like wedges make sure they are the one that are fine and slim from the back. Avoid chunky looking shoes.
Hats

I enjoy hats. And when one has filthy hair that is a good accessory – Julia Roberts

Choosing a hat

If you want to look taller, choose a taller crown.

If you want to look shorter, choose a flatter crown or one that fits snugly onto your head.

If you want to look smaller, choose a broad brim.

If the brim goes past your shoulders, the hat will look too large on you.

Downturned brims will make you look shorter
Upturned brims will make you look taller

Always consider the level of refinement (as discussed earlier) so fabric and straw hats are more casual than felt hats.

How you wear your hair will affect the way a hat looks on you. Often hair looks better tied back with a hat if it’s long, rather than left out, particularly if it’s curly.

Oh, and on a point of millinery terminology, a fascinator has a veil, whilst a confection doesn’t.

**Are You a Hat Wearer?**

I’ve noticed different countries and cultures wear hats differently.

In very cold climates you’ll see lots of winter hats such as berets, cloches and other felted creations, but fewer summer hats.

In very hot climates sun hats are common, but you won’t see hats worn during the cooler months.
Hair Accessories

Do you either have long hair and tie it back or up? Or shorter hair and use clips or other accessories to keep it off your face?

Hair accessories can be really fun and glamorous when done well. Unfortunately, there are some accessories that should be avoided at all costs either because they look cheap and/or dated or way too young.

Sophisticated clips made from quality materials are great for tying back your hair if it’s long or just want to add some interest.

An old rubber or elastic band isn’t so flattering, it brings down the tone of your outfit. Avoid accessories made from cheap plastics too.
And then there are the accessories that are best left to children, and those that are now past their used by date, such as scrunchies and banana clips.

If you’re tying up your hair for sport or exercise, just look for something plain and simple. But when going to work look for a hair accessory that has a finished appearance and is of high quality.
Special occasions such as weddings, the races and formal events may require a more elaborate hair piece. Feathers, flowers and bling are all great options.

For every day you might want a little embellishment, so maybe a smaller floral adornment, smaller bow or limited bling on a hair tie or clip will work.

If you are wearing an embellished hair accessory, make sure that your earrings don’t clash and that there is a similarity of style to both items.
Glasses

From eyeglasses to sunglasses these are an accessory that sit front and centre on your face, so they're a really important accessory.

Even if your glasses are rimless, we still see them and notice them and glasses have personalities and styles, and according to studies, glasses make you more memorable and can help you get that job, so why not use them to your advantage!

But before you even start trying on frames, the No. 1 factor that will affect your choice, and what you need to tell a staff member is what is your prescription.

Why is this so important? Depending on your prescription, this may limit your frame options. Multifocal/progressive lenses need to be deeper than single focus. A prescription which requires a thicker lens edge (I think the technical term is Sil), will limit frame choices as the frame will need to be flatter in construction, or a rimless style may not work. So before you try on every frame in the shop, talk to the staff there and check that your prescription doesn't preclude you from any frames.

You don't want to find 'the perfect frame' to find out that it's not a suitable match for your prescription.

Glasses and Jewellery

If you wear eye glasses, particularly if the frame is heavy or detailed, you are probably better to stay away from large earrings, instead a small hoop or stud style will work better.

Rather than earrings, try necklaces with your glasses, bracelets and rings. The further away from your face, the more of a feature they can be.
Tips for Choosing Eye Glasses

Short face (square or round) look for a narrow frame

Long face (rectangle, oblong) look for a deep frame

Broad or strong jawline – look for a heavy top bar or half rimless (rim at the top)

Broad or large forehead – look for more detail on the bottom of the glasses frame and a lighter top bar.

Curved features such as large round eyes, curved nose, round cheeks and full lips – look for a frame that has a curved design.

Angular features such as a sharp or pointed nose, narrower lips, almond shaped eyes look for a frame that is angular.

Close-set eyes look best with a light bridge and a wider set bridge
Wide set eyes look best with a heavy bridge and closer set bridge.

Long nose looks best with a low bridge.

Remember scale, small or delicate features need a light frame, large or heavier features need a more robust frame.

**Frame Fitting Tips**
Wear your hair how you would normally wear it, so if you wear it in a ponytail, then wear it like this to try on frames.

If you’re about to get a new hairstyle, do this before you try on glasses frames as you hairstyle can alter what is most flattering.

Wear contact lenses when you’re trying on so that you can see clearly. You may ask the optometrist to fit some disposable ones so you can do this.

**What Colour Frame?**
If you’ve had a [personal colour analysis](http://www.insideoutstyleblog.com/2009/10/discover-your-colours-warm-or-cool.html) done, take your colour swatch shopping (needs to be a recent colour analysis, your colouring changes over your lifetime so if it was more than 5-10 years ago, time for an update). Your swatch can be used to choose flattering colours.

Take the frames and lay them over the top of your colours watch, if they blend with the frame then it will be a great colour, if the frame stands off the swatch then don’t try them on.

If you haven’t had a colour analysis done, you want to figure out if you’re warm or cool, so get two frames, one warm and one cool (say a warm green and cool green) see which frame is more obvious on your face – if you see the colour first, then the colour doesn’t suit you, you want a colour that complements you rather than taking focus.

See these colours examples, the left ones are warm, the right ones are cool. After trying on green, go for a warm and cool red, gold and silver, pink and coral, you should find that more of either the warm or cool options are more flattering, then start looking at the style.

Here is some more information on how to figure out whether you’re warm or cool.
Try glasses on your photo

Here are some websites that allow you to upload a photo of yourself and try on different frames virtually. It can help you figure out what sort of frames you should look for when you’re in store.

http://www.glasses4eyes.co.uk/virtual_mirror.php
http://www.specsavers.co.uk/try/
http://www.firmoo.com/tryon/

Looking after your Frames

When cleaning, hold by the bridge, not by the temple (arm) of the frame so that you don’t weaken the hinge or bend the frame.

Each time you clean your lenses (whether with a specific fluid supplied by an optometrist or mild soap and water), check the screws are tight.

Don’t use Windex or other cleaning products on your glasses, they are too harsh and can wreck the coatings on eye glasses.

Use a microfiber cloth to dry your glasses, paper-towel is made of wood and will scratch the lenses.

If your frames have become bent or out of shape, go back to your optician who will be able to reshape them for you (within reason!) and fit them to your face correctly.
Choosing Sunglasses
Do you find it hard to find a pair of sunglasses that suit you? Here are a few tips to help you choose a flattering frame.

One other tip - make sure your eyebrows don't stick out of the top of the frame at an odd angle so you look like you're permanently surprised.
Frames and Personality
Not only should you consider the shape of your frames, but also adding your personality.

Classic
If you’re very traditional and conservative in your personality then you’ll want to choose glasses that don’t make too much of a statement, such as rimless and half rimless styles. Metals such as matt gold and silver or pewter. There won’t be lots of design detail on your frames, no bling or multiple colours, you really don’t want your glasses to stand out and make a statement.

Don’t forget to update your frames every 2-5 years, as even though classic frames don’t the date quickly, the classic of 1990 is not the classic of 2000 nor the classic of 2010.
Casual

If you are relaxed, casual and easy-going, you probably are quite practical in your nature and want a frame that is more robust. You may find that you like frames made from acetate which are sturdier. You may choose a neutral colour with grooves in another colour, though not too “out there”.

Alternatively you may like a frame that is spring loaded or ultra-light in construction as being comfortable is very important to you. Just remember with your frame colour choice to choose one that is flattering to your skin tone and can be worn with all your clothes, a neutral may work better for you than an obvious colour.

Dramatic

You want to make a statement, you love bold details and colours and are likely to have a whole wardrobe of frames for different occasions, moods and outfits. You see glasses as jewellery for your face and change it up like you do with your other jewellery. Bold colours, big frames, and angular details are all staples to you. You’ll break all sorts of rules because your glasses are an expression of your personality, and it’ll work for you.

Creative

Do you love vintage pieces or retro designs? Do you like unusual construction or quirky detail? Is your clothing an expression of your creativity and you enjoy the process of pulling together different looks for different moods? Do classic styles bore you to tears and feel too straight for you? If you have a funky modern hairstyle you can sport the retro ‘nerd’ glasses (they look cool and ironic rather than dated and old-fashioned on you). Your glasses may make a statement about your personality, but in a quieter way than your dramatic sister’s.

Feminine

Do you love the look of 1950s fashions? It that curvy feminine shape that you want, and your frame design reflects this too. Rather than sharp or angular frames you’ll want frames with some curves, the temple may look like lacework, or it may be ‘blinged’ up with crystals. Frames won’t be heavy in construction, rather more light and delicate.
**Elegant**

You love silk and cashmere, high end design, quality is your signature. You won’t leave the house without being well put together and have a refined and classy nature. You’re well educated and cultured but don’t like frills and fuss. Simple and streamlined with a feminine feel, always modern you update your frames yearly and may have a few pairs for different occasions.
Go and Ice Your Cake

It’s time to have fun and experiment with accessories, try out something that you’ve never done before. What’s the worst thing that could happen if you’re badly accessorised? Well as long as you’re not Isadora Duncan riding a motorbike, then nothing. Go for it and enjoy icing your cake!

Let me know how you go as you get creative and express yourself through your clothing and accessories.

Imogen Lamport, AICI CIP
About the author
Imogen Lamport, BA Comm., AICI CIP

Imogen Lamport created Bespoke Image with a clear mission – to help people look amazing every day without stress and confusion.

As a former publicist for Penguin Books Australia, Imogen worked with many successful people. She became fascinated by the issue of image. Was there a connection between image and confidence? How important was image to success? Could she help someone improve their image to gain greater success?

She decided to leave PR to pursue her true passion as an image consultant. She studied clothing, and learned what looked good on different body types. She studied comprehensive colour analysis, and realized how to help people shine with the right shades. She was able to combine her natural talents with extensive training and a scientific approach to figure out what worked and why. She started helping people to look and feel amazing.

In 2004, Imogen started her own business, Bespoke Image. In 2006, her dedication led her to become President of the AICI (Association of Image Consultants International) Australian chapter. She worked tirelessly to raise the industry’s standards of training and professionalism, bringing the AICI’s First Level Certification exam to Australia. In 2007, Imogen was honoured as Chapter Member of the Year, and later, as VP of Communications, she created the chapter’s first website and helped the organization grow substantially.

In 2009, Imogen was awarded the Certified Image Professional certificate from the AICI, an achievement that acknowledges a highly competent level of training and experience. She is proud to be one of only nine in Australia to have reached this level.

Imogen currently trains image consultants through the Absolute Image Training Institute in Melbourne, which she runs with her New Zealand business partner, Jan Fisher. She also conducts workshops for retail optometrists, and works with cancer patients through the wonderful Look Good Feel Better organization. Her successful blog, Inside Out Style, offers valuable information and tips, and attracts readers from around the world.

Not only has she written books on packing and petite style, she has also written a number of lessons on colour, style and packing for the My Year Without Clothes Shopping program which helps women who are addicted to shopping make better choices.
But it is her work with her clients that gives Imogen the most pleasure. Through workshops, corporate events, media appearances, colour consultations, and personal shopping services, she shares her considerable knowledge with everyone from stay-at-home moms to corporate executives. Imogen wants to help you get dressed, get out the door, and get on with life.

Imogen would love to have your feedback on this book, or if you have any questions please don’t hesitate to contact her.

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