

## 5 Golden Rules to Great Accessorising

*SW fashion panelist, Elena Reed, shows us how to accentuate the positive and control the focus with strong accessorising to complete any outfit.*

### **Size Matters**

It's important to scale your accessories in proportion with the size of your features. Large accessories are great for women with full features and will tend to scale-down bigger face shapes, while small accessories will help to accentuate finer features. Don't overpower a smaller face with huge earrings or a large hat, or make a thin frame more pronounced with oversized bracelets or an elongated string of beads. Take some time with this - it's one of the first places women go wrong when chasing the latest trend.

### **Match the Mood**

Another fundamental principle of good accessorising is creating a unified mood. That means choosing accessories that relate appropriately to your outfit. A summer handbag with winter clothing won't work, wooden jewellery with formal business attire will confuse your image and matching a worn backpack with a garden party dress is another no-no. Mismatching accessories usually happens when we have pieces we particularly love and want to wear them all the time regardless of the outfit we have chosen.

### **Rules of Three**

Outfits that tend to work the best are those that are grounded. The easiest way to ground your look is to use three accessories of the same colour, fabrication, size or shape. These might be red earrings, a red belt and red shoes, or circular earrings, a scarf with a circular patten and a chain-like belt. And except for earrings, shoes and cufflinks, try not to wear more than one of the same accessory. That is, don't put on matching bracelets or two flowers in your hair. Uneven numbers are more pleasing to the eye, so if you remember the rule of three when accessorising, you will always create a pleasing, aesthetic and co-ordinated look.

### **Control the Focus**

When accessorising, your goal is to have one focal point that instantly draws peoples' attention. And you can control your focal point to accentuate your positive features. For example, if you want people to keep their attention on your face and not your hips, wear an interesting necklace or scarf, or make your earrings a prominent feature. Or if you have a great pair of legs, stunning hosiery or a to-die-for pair of shoes is where you should invest. A lot of women don't understand this and either have no focal point or too much going on which creates a cluttered look. It's all about impact, and the best way to achieve it is to focus peoples' attention in one place.

## **Simply Elaborate**

You don't want your garments and accessories to have to compete against each other for attention. Too much to look at and each just ends up diluting the impact of the other. So pair elaborate garments with simple accessories and simple garments with elaborate accessories. For example, if you are wearing a king's ransom of jewels keep your dress simple, or if you're wearing a garment with a complicated pattern or beading, keep your accessories simple to focus attention on your dress.