

Fashion to Flatter

Successful fashion is all about feeling great and letting your natural confidence shine through. SW fashion panelist, Elena Reed, spouts the seven secrets to putting your best foot forward and dressing for a leaner you.

Monochromatic Magic

An outfit comprised of two different colours tends to cut you in half, so wearing one colour head to toe is an illusionary way of dressing and will draw together your look. It doesn't have to be dull and boring -- you can mix textures of the same colour, like teaming wool with organza. Also think about adding interest to your outfit by wearing different shades of the same colour, breaking up grey with a touch of slate and charcoal is a good example.

Forget The Funeral

Black has always been an obvious pick in terms of making us look leaner and taller, but if you're going to wear a black suit, a contrasting blouse underneath it will add new life to your look and allow you to add a splash of personality to your wardrobe. However, if you're no rainbow child, think about using a scarf to break up the black, or mix in some striking feature accessories. Alternatively, navy or charcoal can be equally effective in corporate fashion and add a subtle touch of interest to your wardrobe.

Get In Focus

Control the focus by accentuating the top half of your outfit. Use a great necklace, scarf, earrings, or choker as your feature piece. And if you're going to wear a mixture of colours, wear the lighter colour on top and the darker on the bottom to avoid appearing bottom-heavy and short. Also opt for prints on top with plain bottoms, again to keep the focus of your ensemble moving upwards. Above all, it's about thinking how your attire works as a whole and delivering focus to the top of your outfit through keeping the bottom simple.

Right Not Tight

Tight clothing is not always a good choice when trying to dress for a leaner look. Wear garments that don't cling to the body but rather flow from the body, which will avoid emphasising flaws you'd prefer to keep under the radar. Fabrics that fall straight and pull away from your body tend to be more stylish and slimming than anything too tight. However, be careful not to dress yourself in over-sized clothing or hide under shapeless tends. Bulky clothing, padded or quilted garments, cable knits and fluffy sweaters visually add weight. And remember that posture is everything.

In Her Shoes

Your footwear acts as an exclamation point to your outfit, so be sure to finish off your concept with great shoes. If you're looking to add height, go straight for wedges, espadrilles or stilettos. Chunky heels will always balance out heavier legs, but be careful when choosing boots. It's important to make sure the boot is tall enough to reach over your calf, otherwise it may emphasise your calf by cutting it in half.

In the Know

Shimmer and Shine

Gold and silver is back this summer, and giving your wardrobe the Midas touch couldn't be easier. A pair of metallic sandals will keep you in-step with beach fashion, while a metallic bag and matching shoes will help you glitter through those hot nights.

If the Shoe Fits

Can't find what you're looking for in the shoe department? G & L Bros are craftsmen of hand-made shoes and have retail outlets in Paddington (Sydney) and Prahran (Melbourne). And if you like the in-store shoes, but need them in a different colour, or want a different heel, they are happy to tailor their creations to suit you. For details contact (02) 8354 1005.