



a style guide
for men



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CONSULTANCY

Style Guide For Men

Developing Your Image

Fashion and style pre-occupies men more and more these days as they realise that looking good is an asset in every aspect of life: business, personal or, social. The fact is, a well groomed man will get a second look, your personality may be great but first impressions count. In today's world, to stay one step ahead, it's important to look your best. That means developing your own sense of style. If you're in a field that demands a powerful, smooth and professional image, or if you want to generally look more stylish and coordinated and not sure how to achieve it you will to consider using an image consultant. Just about anybody and everybody who's a public figure, who deals a lot with people, who runs a business, who is famous, has one. Today many men are realising that image consultants are not just for the rich they're affordable and acceptable. In conclusion a good consultant can make a huge difference to your quality of life in relation to the costs involved.

This is only a short introduction to some of the areas an image consultant covers and should be read in association with our free colour guide. The observations here are fairly general by nature and if you see an image consultant they will make sure you built an image based upon your own unique style.

Fashion & Style

There is a big difference between being stylish and just following the latest fashions. A fashion victim is someone who wants to follow all the latest trends regardless of whether they suit their body shape looks or, age and is someone who can't put his look together. Looking your best does require a certain amount of effort, but ultimately, your clothes have to fit right, and suit your style, image and personality. Keep in mind, it's not about the clothes you wear - it's about how you wear them. The most important aspect of developing your own style is remaining true to yourself. Just because something looked great on a model doesn't necessarily mean it's for you! There are enough styles out there so that everyone can be comfortable finding their own. The point is that developing your own style should not be a chore; it should be fun. When you discover what works for you.

Your Style: Avoid These Attitudes

Always be yourself

Wear what you think looks good, not what others believe is trendy. You should always feel comfortable with what you're wearing, so stick to items that suit your personality and style, while keeping the occasion and setting in mind. David Beckham may be able to get away with wearing a sarong but this probably is not the best look for you! The same goes for wearing vivid colours: if you're not comfortable wearing pink or orange, don't.

Don't over do it

Don't try and make too much of an effort to look fashionable that you end up overdoing it. You don't have to wear every single trendy item you own, all at once. By all means buy fashionable pieces if they suit you and mix and match them with the basics in your wardrobe. It's a cost-effective and safe way to look your best.

Maintain balance

Keep a good balance of basic and fashionable clothes in your wardrobe. As a rule, no more than half of your wardrobe should consist of trendy clothes, or worse, clothes that are out of style. Before you decide to purchase a new item, ask yourself if you are buying it because it's "in fashion" or because you genuinely like and feel comfortable with it? This will save you time and money and cut down impulse buying.

Don't be a slave to the media & brands

Don't base your look solely on what you see in magazines and on TV. Celebrities and models often overdo trends for attention and media exposure, and their look will not necessarily work well in the real world or for you. Finally, don't buy be influenced by brand names just because a brand has a great reputation, doesn't mean it will look good on you.

The Right Corporate Formal Look

Every man needs at least one stylish, high quality suit. Whether it's for work or a special occasion, we all need one suit that sets itself apart from the crowd. Two factors set a nice suit apart from the pack: the style and the material. Style changes, but you can't go wrong with a single-breasted, solid color suit in black, grey or navy blue and always remember a single-breasted suit will make you look slimmer and sleeker in appearance. For material, wool is the safest option. Of course, there are other materials to choose but wool is natural, wears well, breathes, and accomplishes a stylish, serious look. Suits are the basic component of the corporate uniform. A stylish suit can conjure up a number of images, all of them positive. A suit can make you look powerful, mature, conservative, or sexy. Despite the rise of the casual look in recent years most women still love men in suits!



Men's Fabrics and Patterns As noted above, choose wool. Worsted wools are lightweight for spring and summer. Gabardine wools are heavier for winter. Wool Crepes are lightweight with softer finishes. Flannel wools are heaviest. Patterns for interview suits are limited to solids, stripes (pinstripe, chalk stripe, beaded-stripe, multistripe), Glen plaids, and checks (hounds-tooth, windowpane, and herringbone).

Shirts

For shirts, you'll either buy them off the rack or have them made for you. In all cases, the most important thing to know is your size. You need to know the length of your arms and the girth of your neck at all times. There is nothing worse than an ill-fitting shirt! Another point to keep in mind is to care for your shirt and make sure its ironed at all times to create the right impression.

Straight: The most standard of men's collars these days. This collar aims in varying degrees of 'down.' There are a number of 'spreads' available in straight collars, the 'spread' being

the amount of space visible between the collars, at the neck, where your tie sits.

Cutaway: A straight collar that's been spread to the point of not being considered straight anymore. This collar is referred to as the 'cutaway' collar, for the large amount of visible space between collar tips. Due to their construction, spread collars are typically slightly less-wide than straight collars. This collar, too, is available in a variety of spread distances.

Button-Down: The collar that's affixed to the shirt i.e. buttoned. Never wear the collar unbuttoned.

With collars it really is just picking the one that suits you. Generally men with narrow faces can choose collars that are wider, to help broaden their faces; conversely, men with wider faces should choose collars that are narrower, to help lengthen their faces. Really though it's a question of what you like what you feel comfortable in and suits you. Finally: colour or pattern. Men usually choose according to one of a few reasons: they trust the color (men whose shirts are all either white or blue), they need some new colors (the men we just mentioned who are now sick of white and blue), or a color has become trendy. Again, the most we can say is choose the style that's right for your look.

Tie

Suits come in basic styles and colors, but ties let you show your individuality within a formal look. Ties don't have to be boring and can really make a statement. As a general rule, if you wear suits regularly, you should buy a new tie at least once every season. Once you've accumulated just about every basic tie you can possibly have, go for a more original color or pattern, like pink, burnt orange, or diagonal stripes. Just because you're in the corporate world, doesn't mean you can't wear an eye-catching tie. If you want to make a bold statement wear a patterned tie with a patterned shirt, make sure that the color schemes are the same and that the patterns go in the same direction. Finally, don't forget the Length: It should hit the top of your belt buckle. Ideal width of ties is between 3 and 4 inches, narrower or wider ties will do you no favours in the style stakes!

Matching tie's, shirts & suits

When choosing a jacket-shirt-and-tie trio, match its level of colour contrast to your personal colouring. Your personal colouring comprises of your complexion and hair colour. If you're colouring is high-contrast i.e. dark hair and light skin, or vice versa--your jacket, tie, and shirt combo should be high contrast, too. But if your hair-skin contrast is softer and lighter i.e. you're blond or gray-haired with pale skin, or dark-skinned with dark hair--you should choose lower-contrast clothes.

Two different scales for balance

When you're combining two like patterns in the jacket-shirt-tie triangle, they should be of different gauges. If your suit has pinstripes 3/4 inch apart, your tie should have significantly broader or thinner bands. If your suit is a striped one (with lines more than an inch apart), your shirt's stripes should be narrower and closer together. If you wear two different designs within the lapel triangle--say, a checked shirt and a striped tie, or a striped suit and repeating-medallion tie--they should be different scales in size. If your shirt has a narrow stripe, your tie needs a wider stripe. Same logic applies for checks: pair large with small.

De-emphasize

Choose garments that de-emphasizes your extremes. If you're short, look for strong vertical

elements: pinstriped suits, two-button jackets. If you're very thin, choose a jacket with wider shoulders. If you have a heavier build then Wear darker colors and go monotone from top to bottom.

Your collar should match your face type

If you've got a long, narrow face; choose spread collars to accentuate the horizontal just a touch. Conversely, if you're a round-faced fellow, favor pointed collars to lengthen your circle.

Cufflinks

If you choose the right cufflinks you'll add a small but significant stylish touch to your overall look and good sets don't have to break the bank.

Watches & jewelry

A watch is the first and last piece of jewelry most men consider wearing. The first thing to look for in a man's watch is a large face, as everyone as looking stylish generally accepts these designs.

Get a nice belt

Don't neglect your belt you want quality, a good quality belt doesn't have to be expensive and is money well spent. You should also pay attention to style when buying one. A black leather belt with a small silver buckle is good for just about all occasions. Aside from matching your belt to your wardrobe (including your shoes), you need your belt to fit well and the right fit is a belt that will be set at the third hole when done up. Your leather belt color should be coordinated with your footwear - black with black, brown with brown.

Shoes

Black is the traditional safe colour for work but Brown or ox blood colours also work well. You can also use a variety of styles including loafers, wingtips, round-toe, or the trendier pointy-tipped shoe. Shoes are not only functional; they have become all-out accessories. For example, you can go for a tan-colored shoe if you're wearing a light suit. Shoes are no place to economise on quality. You're on your feet a lot during the day; you'll need a combination of quality and comfort. For men, shoes are the final detail and are one of the areas all women notice.

The Rise Of The Casual Look

With the rise of the dotcom companies the work place took on a much more casual feel and even traditional corporate banks got in on the act by introducing dress down Friday. How you dress will depend on the type of company you work for but you can now be as casual in many workplaces as you like. One interesting point regarding the rise of casual clothing at work has been a counter trend of many companies going back to formal dress as they have found staff actually preferred it and it led to increased productivity.

Dressing casually

When dressing casually you need to know how to layer and choose clothes that suit your

colouring and build.

Layering & style

Layering is a great way to combine your favorite pieces and wear something comfortable and flexible, while showing your personal style. It's also very practical, you can slip on an extra layer in the morning when it's cold outside, remove it in the afternoon when it may be warmer, and then slip it back on when it gets colder later in the day. Before you start to layer your clothes there are some basic rules you should follow that are outlined below.

Thinner clothes first

The first rule is logical and the basis of layering: the closer to your skin, the thinner the material. Generally, you should make sure to start with items that are made from thinner fabrics such as a cotton T-shirt, dress shirt or turtleneck, and then layer them with heavier items such as a wool sweater or a leather jacket.

Define the layer

A layer is essentially any item that can be worn on its own and look good if it doesn't look good on its own don't wear it.

Keep it casual

Layering is best used for casual occasions and is generally not appropriate in more formal settings. Keep in mind, however, that a layered combination can include one or more stylish items, such as a tailored jacket and a dress shirt.

Always feel comfortable

As a general rule, you shouldn't wear anything that makes you feel uncomfortable. With that in mind, if you can't put your arms all the way down to your sides or move freely your layering is too thick and will probably not look good or feel good. Add some color, keep it cool, and check out three examples of layering for three different occasions.

Mix in some color

Black, brown, navy, and gray are all good safe colours that suit most people, but try and be a bit more adventurous and try and brighten up your look with different colours to add some variety.

Layering is practical

In general, you're better off wearing two or three thinner layers of clothing rather than one thick one, especially during periods such as autumn, when the weather can fluctuate drastically.

Casual Clothes Basics

Here we are just going to discuss just a few items of clothing and how to wear them. While an image consultant is seen as a person to help people look good in a corporate setting many people benefit from advice in casual clothing as they want to keep pace with the quicker changes in fashions and trends.

The universal appeal of denim

Everyone wears jeans and it is the one item of clothing that has universal appeal. The popularity of jeans never really fades and, depending on the pair and brand, they're relatively cheap, durable, comfortable and easy to maintain. Most pairs also blend well with just about anything you have in your wardrobe. Furthermore, they exude a lot of style and when worn properly. Jeans are a staple of most men, old, young, single, married, and student or professional everyone can wear jeans.

How to get a pair that molds to your body

Blue jeans that were stiff and dark when you bought them become softened and sculpted and battered against your body over time can look great. This look was popularised by Levi's and still has a look that appeals to men and women today.



Make sure Jeans fit correctly

If you can see any of your frontal anatomy defined through your jeans, they're too tight and tight jeans are a complete fashion disaster. Conversely if you can see any of your gluteal anatomy above your jeans, they're too loose. There has been a trend towards baggy jeans in recent years but they are and will remain for the younger generation only. If you're over 30 don't try and get away with this look.

Jeans go with everything

Blue jeans, which by rights ought to be casual, have evolved into the ultimate in clothing of versatility. Worn correctly they can work in many different situations. For example, combining jeans with cashmere sweaters can work well. The mix of rough and smooth works and creates a flexible look that can work in both a casual or formal setting.

Different colours

Experiment with different colours you have lots of shades to choose from light blue to black so have a few pairs in different colours for different occasions and combinations.

Balance your look

If you're wearing slim-fit jeans, wear a looser shirt or jumper Conversely, if your jeans are a more baggy, go with a more fitted shirt or top. The combinations will balance and break up the look.

Belts for jeans

Jeans look best with a slightly wider belt, one that has a flat-finish buckle that's heftier than a go-to-meeting clasp.

The right jeans for your body

Slim build: Look for slim-fit, low-rise jeans with straight legs and slim thighs. Avoid baggy jeans, full thighs, and small, tapered bottom openings.

Large build: Relaxed jeans with looser fit are best here and will give more room in the leg and thigh area. Avoid jeans that are too snug, or too baggy.

Mr. average: Most fits and styles will work for you and it's really down to your personal preferences here.

Short: Look for low- to mid-rises, straight legs, and regular or slim fits. Avoid baggy and full-fitting jeans and anything that bunches at the bottom

Jumpers

Invest in cashmere

Woven from the hair of Tibetan goats, cashmere gives a soft and luxurious feel. Wearing it marks you instantly as a man of style, but be prepared to shell out. Yes it's expensive, but if you take care of it, cashmere will last and provide you with value for money. When buying cashmere buy a classic V or turtleneck. To build your wardrobe, go with neutral colors--black, navy, charcoal--and then add more earthy colours.

Wearing V-neck jumpers

How many times have you seen a TV celebrity in Jeans V Neck sweater with A T Shirt underneath? This look is universal and can be worn by anyone. When buying V neck jumpers invest in quality cashmere as we have already said it exudes style and class. A cheaper option is wool, go for a thinner sleeker look rather than bulky look. Feel free to be adventurous with colour, black is always a safe option but experiment with other colours to.

Wearing turtleneck jumpers

Layer with a zip-up cardigan or jacket. Layering for colder weather is a balancing act between fashion and functionality. The solution: a lightweight zip-up cardigan or jacket so you can remain stylish and remove and add layers in response to temperature changes. For a top-layer turtle, opt for better fabric and more texture. For example, a chunky cable-knit jumper goes great with jeans. Finer-gauge lightweight merino-wool or cashmere turtles look stylish under suit jackets, but are casual enough to complement a pair of casual trousers.

A white shirt for all occasions

The white dress shirt is a must for both formal and casual occasions. Crisp, clean, stylish it has numerous applications. Paired with blue jeans, it gives a strong wholesome image that is both relaxed and stylish. Paired with a suit, it can look stylish strong and conservative. A white dress shirt is a backdrop against which to play out a multitude of different looks for all occasions.

Khakis & trousers

Many of the classics of male style, our much-loved khakis included, have military origins. A British officer, billeted in India during Queen Victoria's reign, had the stain-hiding idea

of dyeing white uniforms with a mix of curry powder and coffee. The resulting color, khaki (from the Hindi word for “dusty”), gave them their name and they can be a flexible and important part of anyone’s wardrobe. You can wear khakis all year-round (darker tones and heavier weights in winter), but they can also be worn as the weather heats up their as comfortable as jeans and less restrictive.

If you’re over 40, the phrase wool trousers are a must and they don’t have to be boring. Wool trousers are available in every conceivable weave and weight, from heavy flannels to light summer wools. Buy high-quality wool trousers and pair them with casual jackets. Wool drapes well and will add an immediate sense of style to your look.

The above just gives a few ideas in relation to casual classics and of course here we have only covered a few items and scratched the surface of dressing casually. There are a huge range of clothes that are classically stylish that can be combined to help you stand out from the crowd and your image consultant will be able to advise you on the look that’s best for you.

The Importance Of Grooming

Ok, you may not be into the gym and you may not have six-pack, but there are quick and easy ways (that don’t require any sweat) to make the parts of your body that are on display look their best. A clear complexion, a winning smile and nice hands all create an impression and it’s important to maximise what you have at all times. Below find some rules for presenting a well-groomed look which will make you look and feel good with very little effort.

Your Skin

Cleansing

The first rule of cleansing your face is don’t use soap! Soap is an Alkaline and destroys the acidic protective barrier of sebum oil and water in your skin – which acts as protection against external aggressive elements such as chemicals and Fungi. It also prevents water loss that, which can lead to dehydration and dry and red irritated skin. There are plenty of non-soap alternatives for you to use.

Exfoliation

You should exfoliate once or twice a week. Exfoliation will give your skin a healthier glow, as it removes the layers of dead skin cells that otherwise sit on your face and dull your complexion... If dead skin builds up it pores can become clogged causing unsightly blemishes and black heads. Exfoliating reveals the fresh plump skin underneath and helps your skin look healthier and more radiant.



Shaving

First off, you should examine your face (try waiting for the growth to be a little longer than usual so that you can inspect the growth direction easier) and see how the hair on your face grows. This is very important since the general rule of thumb when shaving is shave in the direction of the hair growth. This does not offer the closest shave, however it does provide the least amount of skin irritation, razor burn, and ingrown hairs.

Start off with a clean face. When you are ready to start shaving, use a clean washcloth soaked in hot water and rung out. Place the towel over the beard and let it sit for about 30 sec. The steam helps to open up your pores and softens your beard making it easier to cut. If you keep hairs moist, it decreases by two-thirds the force you need to cut them. Next, apply your shaving lubrication whether it is a cream or a gel. The use of a shaving brush is often used in this process to help apply the cream, and lift the hairs making it easier to cut. Should your schedule allow, try not to start shaving right away. Leaving the cream on your skin longer will allow the formula to soften the beard and provide a more effective shave. Using a razor with multiple blades such as a Mach 3 will provide the closest shave, but should be replaced every 3 to 5 shaves. A heavy beard growth will wear out a blade quicker.

Post shave

Apply a splash of cold water to your face immediately after shaving. This will help to close up the pores on your skin, and soothe your face. Do not rub your face with a towel, but rather pat dry to avoid irritation. Use a clean towel to avoid infection.

Moisture

Using a moisturiser is essential in protecting your skin against the elements unless you moisturise your skin will suffer from such problems as premature aging in sunny weather and in winter extreme cold and central heating increase dehydration and aggravate razor burn. Moisturisers don't just rehydrate skin they actually increase the skin's ability to retain moisture. The two ingredients that are key are humectants (normally hyaluronic acid), which attract water into the skin and emollients, which soften the skin forming a protective layer and sealing in water. Many moisturisers also contain a sunscreen to help protect against premature aging from the sun. Sun damage is the major cause of prematurely aged skin.

Your smile

Everyone reacts to a nice smile and it can be a major asset so make sure you not only brush your teeth but also floss and whiten your teeth if necessary to make sure you have a smile that gets you noticed.

Floss

Many people take great care over brushing their teeth but ignore flossing. Although brushing is important, it won't remove the plaque and particles of food between your teeth. You'll need to floss these spaces at least once a day.

The type of floss you choose depends on how much space you have between your teeth. Although unwaxed floss is often recommended because it is thinner and easier to slide through small spaces, studies have shown that there is no real difference in the effectiveness of the different types of floss used.

Insert the floss between two teeth, using a back and forth motion. Gently bring the floss to the gumline, but don't force it under the gums. Curve the floss around the edge of your tooth in the shape of the letter "C" and slide it up and down the sides of the teeth. Repeat this process between all your teeth.

Whiten your teeth

In recent years tooth bleaching has become an increasingly popular way of combating teeth that have become discolored and you can get advice from your dentist or buy directly over the Internet. There are many causes for teeth to lose their whiteness. The most common include genetics, aging, consumption of staining substances (smoking, coffee, tea, and colas), tetracycline (antibiotic) staining, excessive fluoride, and old fillings; this is known as extrinsic staining. Whitening toothpaste and professional dental cleanings will not change the color or intrinsic staining of the teeth. That is why tooth whitening (sometimes called tooth bleaching) has become so popular. A whitening gel is placed in a tray that fits over your teeth. As the active ingredient in the gel, carbamide peroxide, is broken down, oxygen enters the enamel and bleaches the colored substances. The structure of the tooth is not changed; only the tooth is made lighter and whiter. The gel can be then re applied regularly to keep teeth to optimum whiteness. The cost of this method is presently around £200 and falling and it's a small price to pay for a smile that will get you noticed!



Your hair

Trim excess hair. Excess hair is a matter of taste and style, but there are basic areas to groom for all men: eyebrows (there should be two), ears and nose, there shouldn't be any hair growing out of them and the back of your neck. To keep clean and neat, invest in a razor with nose/ear attachments.

Your nails

Cut and clean your nails. A lot of women look at men's hands so make sure yours look good. Long or, dirty fingernails can easily give you away as a man who doesn't care about his appearance. Clip your nails short, just to the tip of your finger, and use the attachment on the clippers to clean dirt under your nails. If you want to go a bit further, file your nails to a soft edge; clean your cuticles and apply cream to finish the job. In fact many men are now going for a professional manicure which is inexpensive and should only take about 15 minutes.

Your Lips

Apply lip balm. Lip balm is essential in the winter, but it's probably a good idea year round. Why? Take a look at your chapped lips and ask yourself if you would want to kiss lips like those. I rest my case. Lip balm restores the moisture to your lips and keeps them from chapping

again. Find a brand you like and apply it discreetly. Applying lip balm takes five seconds.

Your eyes

Get a new pair of glasses. Glasses don't have to be boring. A simple change can go a long way in giving you the attention you want. Try rimless glasses if you're used to clunky specs. If you're looking to draw attention to your glasses, try bigger frames, like thick, plastic, rectangular frames.

Stylish sunglasses

Take a cue from celebrities who know that the right pair of sunglasses can add instant mystique, chic and polish to any look regardless of whether you are small or large build. Keep in mind that sunglasses are more than just a fashion statement: they are a necessity to protect your eyes from harmful UV rays.

When buying a pair of glasses keep in mind the following:

Protection: The color and degree of darkness of a lens doesn't tell you anything about sunglasses' ability to block UV rays that can harm your eyes, according to the American Academy of Ophthalmology. Look for sunglasses that block at least 99% of harmful UV rays (check the label!).

Choice of lens: A sunglass lens can be made of glass or plastic and can have special hi-tech treatments. **Mirrored** - Thin layer of metallic applied to lens that may reduce visible light to reach eyes, but not UV rays according to AAO. **Gradient** - A tinted lens that is darker on the top fading to no tint on the bottom. **Polarised** - Cuts the glare from smooth surfaces such as water, snow or pavement. **Photochromic** - These lenses are sun-sensitive and transition from light to dark shade according to light conditions. **Tints** - A color called neutral density gray will shade but not change your lens colour.

Change Your Life Now

This document has gone through just a few areas in which an image consultant can help you improve the way you look and feel about yourself. So contact us today and we will be delighted to discuss your individual requirements and create a look that will allow you to look and feel better and live life to the full. We look forward to hearing from you.

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