

Coming out of the **CLOSET**

The key for all successful dressing is to dress to your personality. By Brittany Monico, Miss Teen America 2006. Photos by Steve Azzara.

Monday is here and getting up early is not always easy, especially when you don't have a clue what you are going to be wearing 30 minutes from that final wake up call. You are rushing against the clock to take a shower, fix your hair, put on some makeup and then comes the dreaded question that looms over the head of every teenager. What am I going to wear?

We all know fashion is about personal expression and therefore your wardrobe should be a reflection of who you are. It is very important to have a wardrobe that works; a wardrobe that is versatile, but still includes the basics. So, let's break it down.



BLACK

Black is a great staple. The color black is associated with power, elegance, and mystery and therefore it is believed to be sexy. Black is also a very slimming color for those not so slimming days. If your wardrobe consists of black pants, shorts, gauchos, a skirt or even a black slip dress, then you are well on your way to a versatile wardrobe. I know what you are thinking, if your closet is full of black how can it possibly be versatile? Well, the answer is in what you pair it with. For instance, black and baby pink look great together, so try a black mini with some great black boots and a pink baby tee.

SPORTY LOOK

If the sporty look is what you are into, remember casual doesn't mean sloppy. **DENIM IS A MUST.** Long jeans, shorts and skirts can be worn in a variety of ways! Try wearing layered coordinates such as a vest, blazer, or anorak style jacket to accent your casual outfit. Headgear like baseball caps are fun and can give many just casual outfits that sporty feel and are super on those days that you just can't get past the snooze alarm and lose the 30 minutes you were planning on spending on your hair. Just remember to check your dress code at school. Hats are taboo in some schools.

DAY TO NIGHT

Dressing up your jeans by embellishing them with a few stones or beads turn your denim into dazzle mode, just in time for that back to school mixer.

CLASSY, ELEGANT LOOK

If you are trying to achieve a classy, elegant look then the trick is to introduce clothes that enhance your curves such as fluid fabrics, deeper necklines, waist treatments, sensual materials like silk, cashmere, slinky knits and leather. Just remember, your choice of clothing is your best showcase. People will make a general assumption about who you are by the way you choose to present yourself to the world.

Some things you should know are...

1. Thinner fabrics are more slimming.
2. Tops and bottoms of one color will make you look thinner and taller.
3. Wear clothes that fit. Avoid trying to squeeze into a size that you think you should be. Try to remember that a size 7 in one designer line will not equal a 4 in another line.
4. Wearing oversized clothes doesn't necessarily hide imperfections.
5. Avoid belts unless you have a slim waist.
6. Use accessories carefully.
7. High collars shorten your neck.
8. Shoes with high heels will lengthen your legs and give the illusion of a leaner body.

REMEMBER...

Dig deep in your closet and resurface some of those oldie-but-goody pieces by mixing and matching colors, fabrics and accessories. The unusual combination of fabrics, the contrast of colors and the mix and match designs are what makes a fashion statement. Some of the best outfits are created by pieces you already own. Use your creativity to create your own unique style. Although there is nothing quite like the feeling of something new, adding a new piece of jewelry can bring an old outfit to life again without spending a tremendous amount of money.

