

Rules of Style

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1 Just like everything else, fashion is first and foremost about fundamentals. Some people think fundamentals are boring, but they make up the base upon which the art form is built. Let's start with the basics which so many people neglect. Begin by making sure your wardrobe is recent -- most items should be less than 5 years old. If something has holes in it, get it fixed or throw it out, no matter how 'comfy' or 'lucky' it may be.

2 A good 80% of good fashion is FIT. As in, make sure your clothes fit. This is a huge issue with the vast majority of men. Most of their clothes are simply too big. Your clothes should not be baggy -- this isn't 1995. Make sure shoulder seams are at your shoulders, pants are hemmed, short sleeves aren't billowing in the wind, and untucked shirts don't fall much past the zipper. No matter how expensive your clothes are, if they don't fit, they'll look worse than the dollar store sales. Throw out ill-fitting clothes or have a tailor cut them to size.

3 You don't have to be a slave to fashion, but watch out for the big fashion no-no's. These apply irrespective of your age, looks, build, or marital status. Watch for things like not matching your socks to your pants (no white socks!), not matching belt/shoes, wearing cross trainers with jeans (never!), wearing light blue jeans from the 1980s, or wearing t-shirts that you got for free (don't).

4 Fashion is a skill set and an art. Treat it as such. If you weren't born with an eye for it, then devote a little time to it. The dividends pay handsomely given that the return-on-investment lasts for the rest of your life. Get a subscription to GQ or your favorite style magazine. Take note of the ads.

5 Create a look book. Tear out the ads in that GQ and put them in plastic sheet protectors in a 3 ring binder. Take it with you when you go shopping so that you have some idea of what you're looking for.

6 Go shopping for clothes twice a month. You don't have to buy something every time. Buy sparingly or only when you have a good feeling about an article of clothing. Going shopping on a regular basis means you can always pick something up next time. The exposure also develops your own unique sense of style.

7 Good haircuts from excellent stylists are worth the extra money. Most women can't tell the difference between a \$200 CK suit and a \$1000 suit made in Italy. But they can definitely tell the difference between a \$60 haircut and a free cut from Mom.

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