

HOW TO LOOK ELEGANT ON A BUDGET



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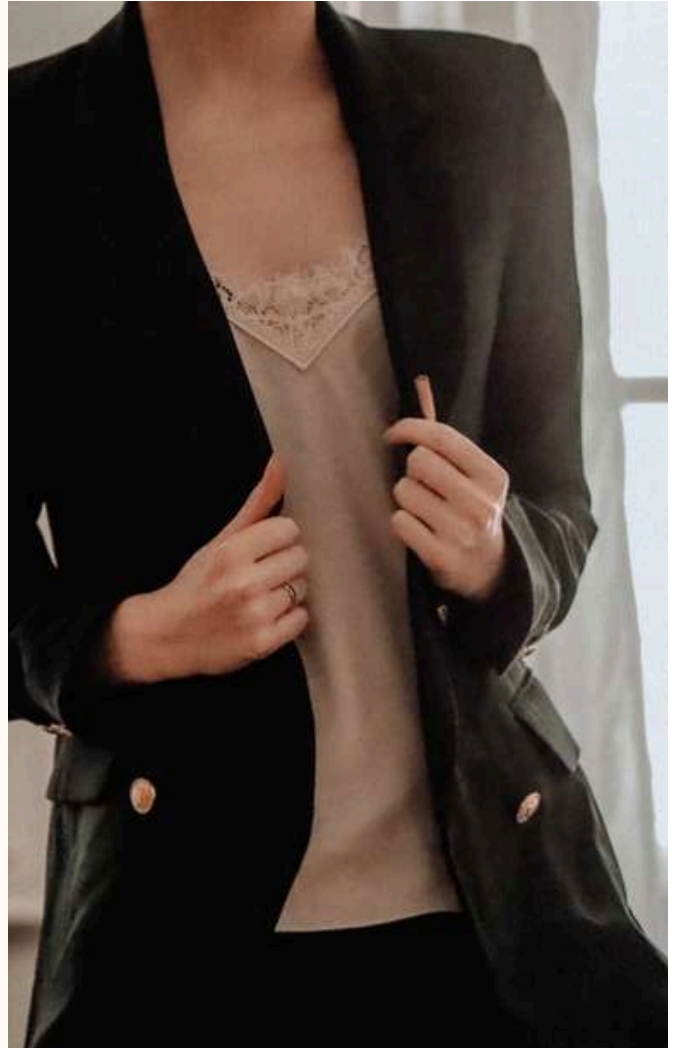
WELCOME!

Welcome to this guide to "How to look elegant on a budget".

Elegance is defined as "the quality of being graceful and stylish in appearance or manner", and when I think of elegant women, some of the names that come to mind include Princess Diana, Audrey Hepburn, Grace Kelly, Coco Chanel and Michelle Obama, to name just a few!

You might assume that to look elegant and classy, you need to spend a fortune, but looking elegant isn't just about flashy bags and jewellery, it's about these little tricks that can make any outfit look more elevated.

Here are my top 10 tips for how to look elegant and classy on a budget.





WHAT'S INSIDE

4-6

Style Message

7-14

KISS, Fit and Flatter

Keep It Simple. How does it feel, does it fit and flatter you? Do the colours make you come alive?

15-17

Quality and Colours

Invest in quality and privilege
expensive colours/ monochrome

18-19

Pay attention to Grooming

Always look immaculate and pay
attention to personal grooming

20-22

Be Shop Savvy

Invest in timeless, statement pieces,
create a capsule wardrobe and know
where to shop.

23-24

Final Thoughts



WHAT IS ELEGANCE?

Elegance is a way of life and isn't solely based on the way you dress, but it encompasses how you walk, how you talk, how you show up in daily life, where you go, what you listen to, what you read, the food you eat, how you interact with other people, and more!

Elegance is a mindset that encompasses all aspects of your life, and an elegant woman carries herself with grace and poise.

However, your outward appearance has a huge impact on how you are perceived, as well as how you feel.

"YOU CAN HAVE
ANYTHING IF YOU DRESS
FOR IT"

EDITH HEAD, COSTUME DESIGNER



THE IMPORTANCE OF STYLE

It takes just 7 seconds for people to form an opinion about you and 55% of that judgment is based on your appearance.

Your style is sending messages to the world before you even open your mouth.

What do you want your style to be saying about you ?

"STYLE IS
KNOWING WHAT
SUITS YOU, WHO
YOU ARE, AND
WHAT YOUR
ASSETS ARE. IT'S
EXPECTING IT
ALL."

BIANCA JAGGER



In this guide, I'm not going to be going into dressing for your body type, how to create a capsule wardrobe or the must-have pieces that I think you need in your wardrobe in detail. These are the topics that I cover on The Velvet Runway Blog.

But, for now, I want to give you some general tips that will help you to express who you really are and to look elegant and classy on a budget.

How to look elegant on a budget

1 KEEP IT SIMPLE

Remember that less is more. Minimalistic outfits with sharp tailoring, in natural muted tones and with timeless accessories will instantly make you look more polished and elevate your style.

If in doubt, wearing black with classy gold jewellery is a great default option (regardless of whether your budget is big or small).



2 WEAR FLATTERING CLOTHES



So many women forget this, but your clothes have to fit perfectly AND flatter your body shape.

If you have ever seen an outfit on a celebrity and tried to copy their style, only to find that it doesn't flatter you, you will have experienced this first hand!

The most likely explanation is that you don't have the same body shape, but it could also be that you don't suit the same colours or have the same style personality.

In order to look elegant, you need to dress for your unique personality, body shape and colouring combination.



DO YOUR CLOTHES FIT YOU?

Do your clothes fit perfectly?
Or are they too big/ too small?

Do you need to make an
alteration?

Would taking a garment to the
tailor and having it adjusted to
fit you elevate your look?

*Never under-
estimate the
importance of a
perfect fit!*



DO YOUR CLOTHES FLATTER YOUR BODY SHAPE?

Not everyone has the same body shape so we have to select clothes that flatter our specific body type, and showcase our assets.

Elegant women dress for the body they have now, so don't wait for some future date when you may have lost weight to start dressing in beautiful , flattering clothes! You deserve to look your best RIGHT NOW!



Dressing for your body type is a big game-changer, so do your outfits flatter you and highlight your assets?

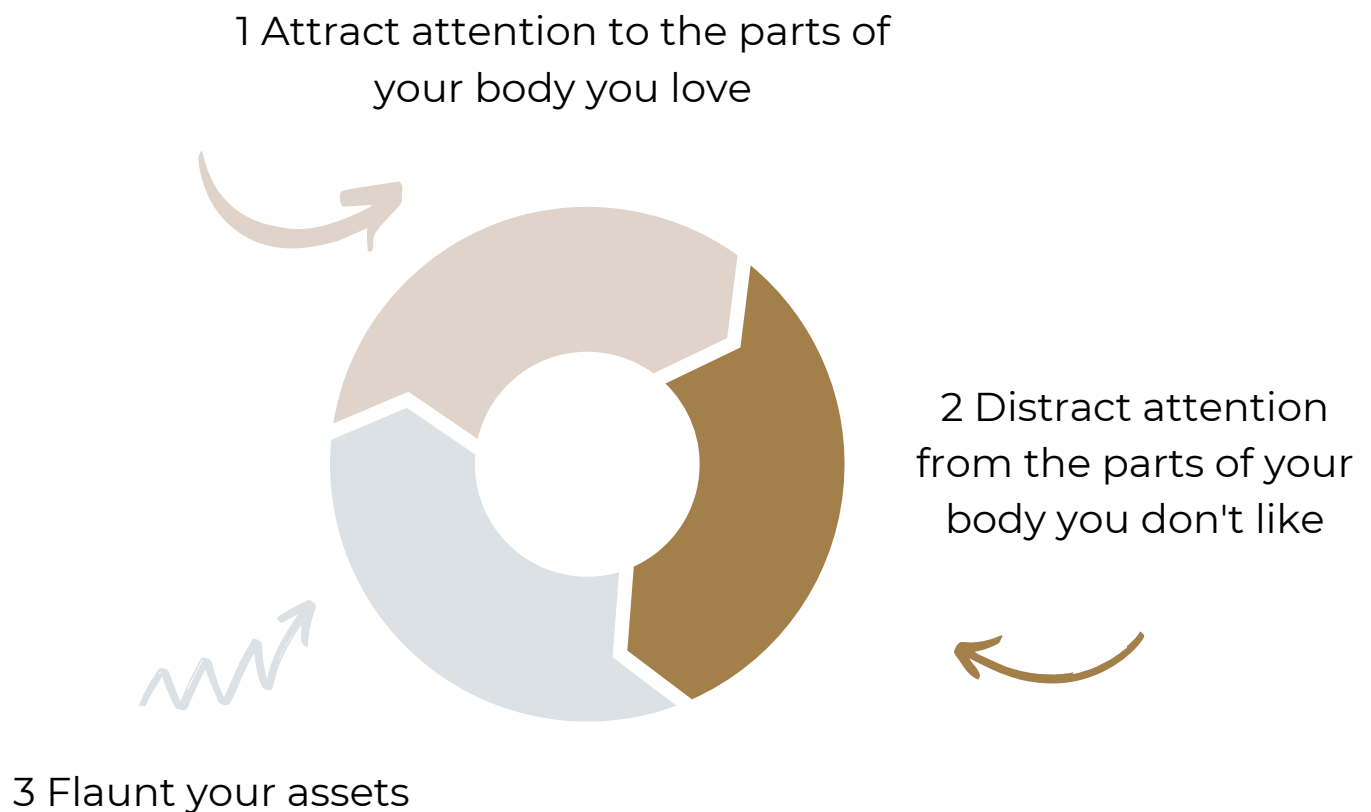
If not, why not? Does your outfit make an area of your body look out of proportion?

Can you make a small tweak to change that? For example, if you think that an outfit draws attention to your stomach and you're not happy with that try adding a statement necklace to draw the eye up to your face.

How about adding a belt to define your waist?

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF DRESSING FOR YOUR BODY SHAPE

Whilst I am not going into all the details about dressing for your body type in this guide, elegant women know that the the key to looking stylish is to focus on their assets and draw attention to the parts of their body that they love. Here is a brief summary of the principles of dressing for your body shape .

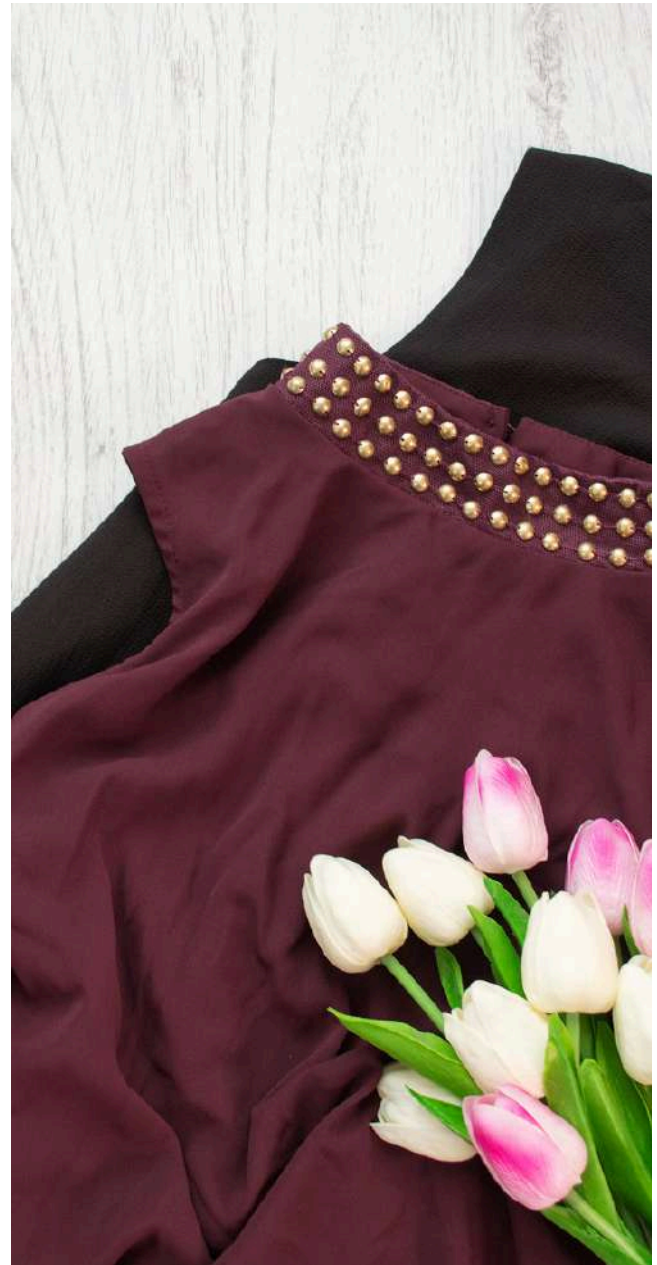


DO THE COLOURS MAKE YOU COME ALIVE?

Wearing the right colours will enhance your natural colouring, make your skin glow, help you to look younger, camouflage redness and blemishes, make your eyes appear larger and brighter and make your face shape look more defined.

Conversely, the 'wrong' colours will drain colour away from your face and make your complexion look dull, grey or pasty, make you look tired and perhaps older, emphasise facial lines and blemishes and make your face look fuller and eye colour duller and most importantly will make your clothes look like they are wearing you!

What do your outfits do to you? Which colours make you look alive and which drain you?



DO YOUR OUTFITS REFLECT YOUR PERSONALITY?

Elegant women wear what they love and what makes them feel good.

Your outfit should be an expression of who you are on the inside, and it should make you feel amazing and ready to take on whatever challenges life throws at you!

Don't settle for something that doesn't make you feel amazing!

"STYLE IS A WAY
TO SAY WHO YOU
ARE WITHOUT
HAVING TO
SPEAK"

RACHEL ZOE



3 INVEST IN QUALITY FABRICS

Invest in quality fabrics such as silk and cotton; timeless, elegant pieces add an air of sophistication to your look.

Opt for natural fabrics such as wool, cashmere, silk, linen, cotton leather and suede (or vegan alternatives), and good quality synthetics such as elastane and viscose.

Does the fabric hang well? Does it flatter you when you move or does it cling to your lumps and bumps?

In general, elegant women opt for quality over quantity. It is better to have one quality piece than ten that hang badly and/or fall apart the first time you wear them!

4 CHOOSE EXPENSIVE LOOKING COLOURS



If you want to look polished and expensive, some colours work better than others.

Natural, neutral colours are always classy, so opt for colours such as cream, beige, grey, earthy tones, kaki, chive and taupe and colours such as black and white will also elevate your look.

Some bright colours such as burgundy, red and blue also look polished, as do pastels.

Avoid some of the bright colours that look artificial, such as neon, bright purple, lime green and (much as I love the last two) bright yellow and hot pink, if you want to look expensive.

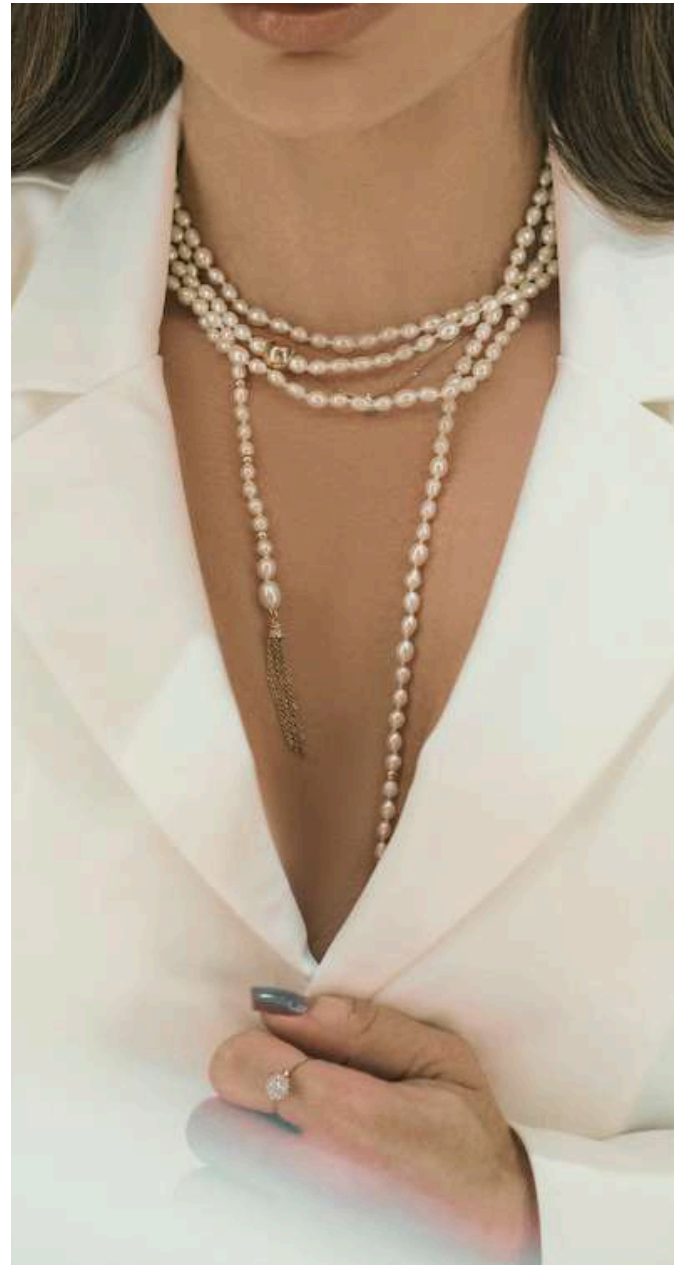
5 WEAR MONOCHROME

Wear an outfit in JUST one colour. It's slimming AND it looks expensive.

You can never go wrong with a simple LBD. They look chic and elegant, because of the simple lines and style

And you can easily *dress down a LBD* if you want a more casual look.

Any monochrome look makes an outfit look more sophisticated but an all-white outfit is really ultra-expensive looking because it conveys the message that you can afford to risk a stain and to travel exclusively via cabs and Ubers.

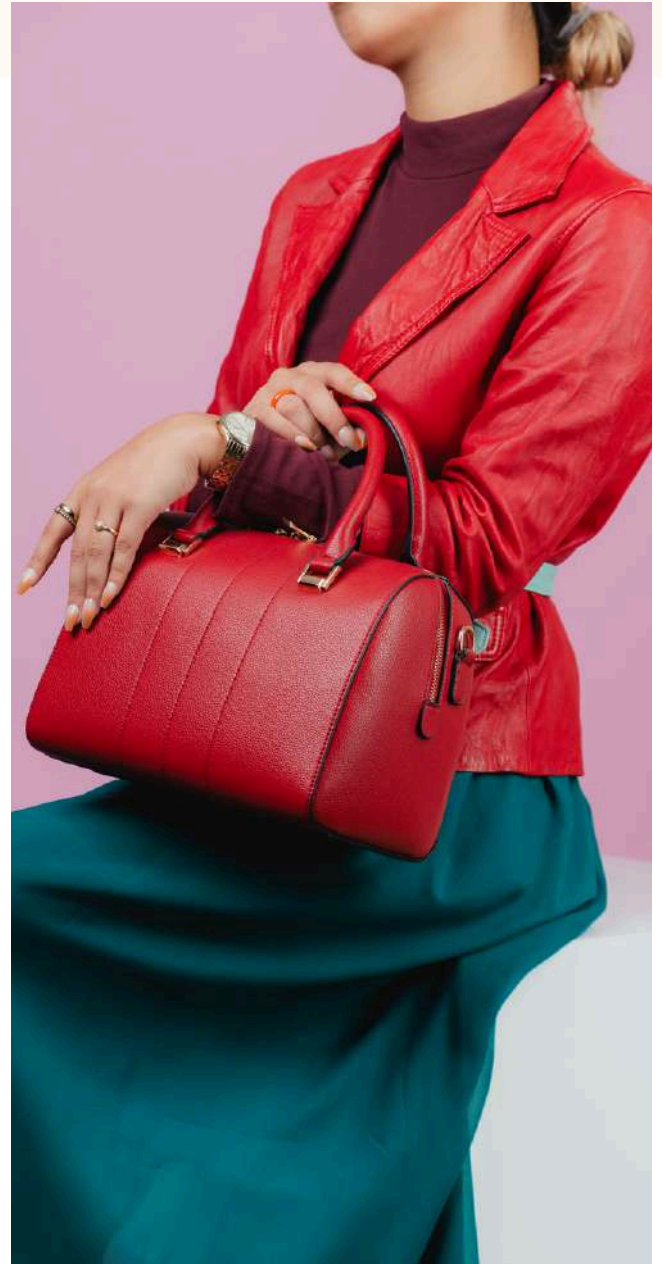


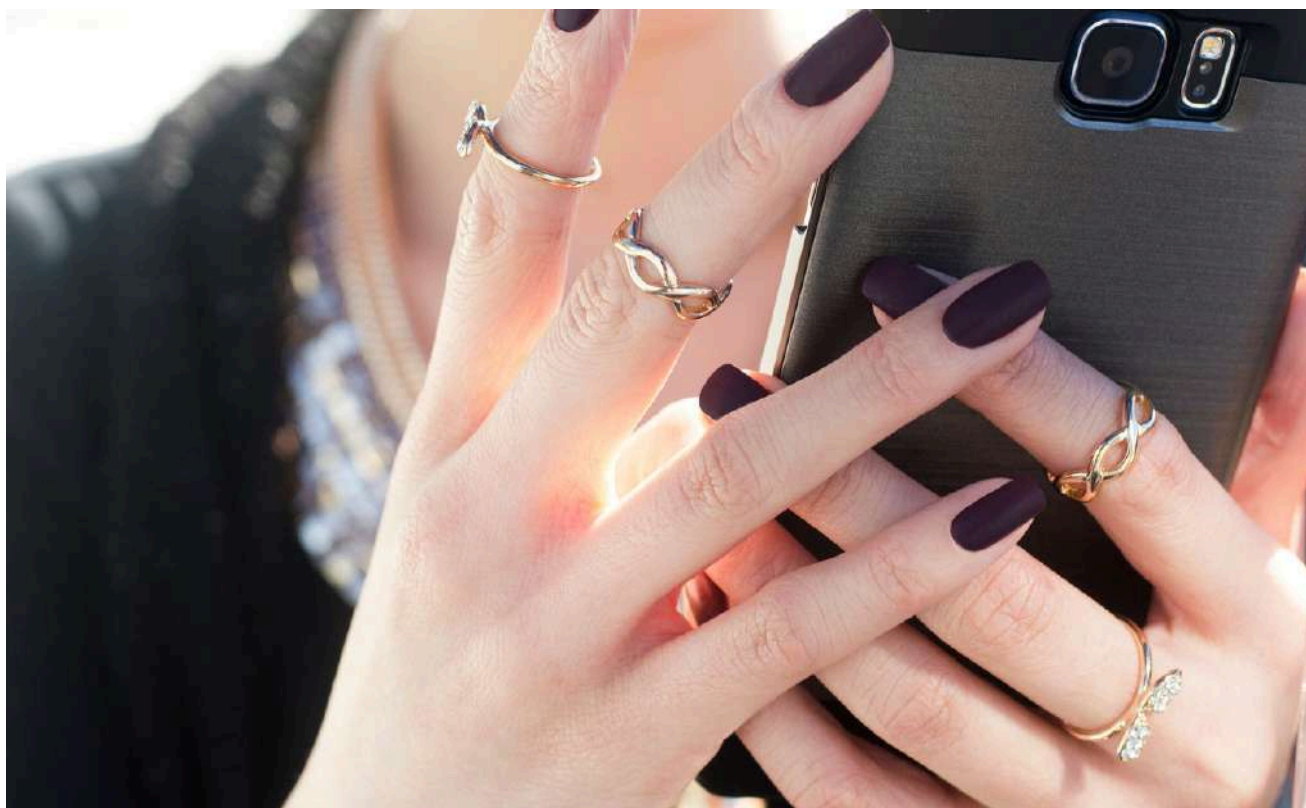
6 ALWAYS LOOK IMMACULATE

An easy way to look expensive is to make sure your clothes are as immaculate as possible.

Make sure that your clothes are always clean and pressed and that there are no loose threads or missing buttons.

Taking care of your clothes regularly is one of the best ways to look your best. Wash your clothes with detergents that'll ensure that the colors aren't washed away and invest in shoe-shining kits, so that your shoes are never dirty or scuffed.





7 INVEST IN YOUR GROOMING

Not only must your clothes be immaculate, but so should your personal grooming.

Always make sure to pay attention to your skin, hair and nails, invest time and effort in your hair and make-up and NEVER ever wear chipped nail polish!

"GROOMING IS THE
SECRET OF REAL
ELEGANCE. THE BEST
CLOTHES, THE MOST
WONDERFUL JEWELS,
THE MOST GLAMOROUS
BEAUTY DON'T COUNT
WITHOUT GOOD
GROOMING"

CHRISTIAN DIOR

8 INVEST IN TIMELESS, STATEMENT PIECES

A statement piece, correctly chosen and worn correctly will instantly make you look more polished.

The number one statement piece is a good quality handbag – it doesn't need to be a designer handbag, but it's definitely worth investing in leather.

Statement jewellery and a classy watch will also elevate your look. A simple classy watch is much more chic than scrambling for your phone to check the time.

Another reason to invest in timeless, quality pieces is for ethical reasons, and finally the resale value of a timeless, quality piece is much higher! You can usually sell a designer bag for the same price you purchased it.





9 CREATE COMBINATIONS THAT WORK TOGETHER

Elegant women create a wardrobe where everything fits together. All the pieces work together, which means that you can create many different looks with less clothing.

This is the principle of creating a capsule wardrobe, and you can have a look at [How to create a capsule wardrobe](#) to find out more.

When you have a wardrobe full of clothes that work together, it not only takes less time to choose an outfit in the morning , but it also takes less time to pack for holidays.

10 BE SHOP SAVVY

The final point is to “shop like a pro”, ie. Know WHERE to spend and WHAT to invest in.

If you are on a budget then only invest in timeless, classic pieces that you can reuse A LOT and keep investment in trends to a minimum.

Invest in good quality bags, shoes, jewellery and outerwear (a tailored coat or classic trench instantly elevates any outfit.) and save on dresses, t-shirts, trousers and fleeting fashion trends.

Have a look at where to buy designer clothes at high street prices. You may want to consider shopping on sites, such as the Outnet, where you can pick up designer picks at a fraction of the price.

Finally, shop pre-owned/ preloved and thrift, which enables you to invest in high quality pieces without spending a fortune.



FINALLY, REMEMBER TO REVIEW AND REFINE YOUR STYLE

As we evolve as women, we learn to know ourselves better and we have different priorities at different stages in our lives.

We also change physically, our body shape and colouring change and we may also have different lifestyles.

As we evolve, our style needs to evolve with us! It's a continual journey of growth and self discovery!

So, enjoy the process, and remember to be authentically you!



**BE UNIQUELY AND
AUTHENTICALLY YOU**

I hope you find these tips helpful!

Most importantly, remember that the key to any style is to wear what feels good on you and what makes you happy !

Julia x



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