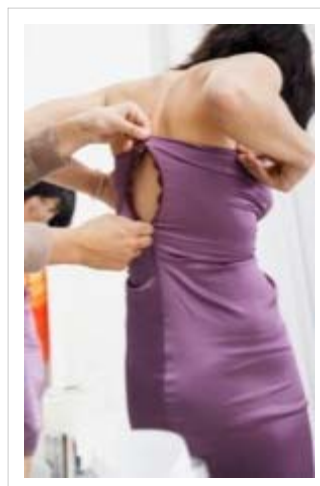


## The Importance of Fit

18/06/2007 12:45:19 PM

**Too many of us get trapped in a cycle of ill-fitting clothing.**



Over the past few weeks, I have been introducing some of the newest trends and best looks for the spring/summer season, everything from swimsuits to eveningwear. Yet having the most up-to-date wardrobe with all the latest and greatest means absolutely nothing if none of it fits properly.

Fit is probably the most important aspect of buying clothing, because no matter the quality, brand or how much you spend, an ill-fitting article will never look good. Properly fitting garments can mean the difference between looking good and looking FABULOUS, which I'm fairly certain is at the top of every woman's list when she walks out the door.

From undergarments to shoes, read on to find out how you can achieve the best fit and silhouette. After all, you deserve to look amazing everyday.

### **Size...Does it Really Matter?**

Look through your closet. Go on, pull out the garments you wear on a regular basis. Now, look at their tags and really soak in what they say. I would be shocked if everything was the same size. One of the most important things to remember when buying clothing is that sizing is completely made up!

I hope you were sitting for that one. Think about your favourite stores. Are you the same size at each one? Have you ever bought something, whether it looked good or not, from a store simply because it was tagged at a smaller size than you think you usually wear? This is called vanity sizing.

Here is another shocker, clothing companies are allowed to tag clothing with any size they wish, which is why you may be a 4 at one store, an 8 at another and a 12 at the next. Unless you have been professionally measured by a tailor or seamstress and know your exact body measurements, you have no way of knowing what size you really are. The point I'm making is, you should not define your wardrobe by the sizes hanging in it, but by how your clothing fits and looks on you.

### **Know Your Body**

Now that you know the truth about sizing, let's tackle the next most important part...the 411 on you. It is of the utmost importance to arm yourself with the facts about your body, such as your measurements, your problem areas and articles you own that work, that don't work and why.

To get an idea of the kinds of measurements you should know, look on the back of a pattern package. All of those little numbers are crucial to achieving a precision fit. For the sake of accuracy, however, I suggest heading to your local fabric store and asking a professional to measure you instead of blindly trying yourself. Once you have been properly measured, you can then look to see what size you accurately fall under, which will guard you against falling into the trap of arbitrary fashion sizing. Knowing those dimensions will give you a greater understanding of your body, therefore giving you the confidence to be you.

Next, think about problems you tend to run into when shopping for clothing. Is it difficult to find pants that are the right length? Do sleeves hit at the proper point on your arm? Do you have a problem finding pants that fit your waist and legs equally well? Remember, most clothing is not made to fit everyone. Clothing manufacturing is very generic and with so many body types, it would be impossible for mass manufacturing to be any other way.

If you can pinpoint the areas you have problems with then you can work to find a solution. If length is an issue, stores such as the Gap offer pants in ankle, regular and long versions. If finding shoes that fit in width properly is a problem, then look for shoes labeled A (narrow), B (regular) or C (wide). Clothing companies are beginning to take notice that fit is becoming a priority, but it starts with you.

### **Made For You**

If you have completed the preliminary steps above and you still cannot find solutions, then it is possible you need professional help. Sometimes clothing stores are too broad to address those with specific body types, and many times specialty stores do not offer enough of a selection to appease everyone. It used to be that people got all of their clothing hand-made to fit their bodies so everything was made to order perfectly. This kind of bespoke tailoring is still alive today, although not used nearly enough.

Finding a really amazing fit, something that hugs every curve and accentuates the good while hiding the bad, is becoming more and more important and even demanded, so I predict a surge in the handmade market for the future. Even if you don't have a problem with fit at stores, try having something tailored especially for you. It will change your life!

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**ready, set...shop!**

Now that you know what to watch out for and what to look for when shopping for that perfect fit, there can never be any excuse for donning anything other than perfection. No matter your size, shape or age, if you know what fits and works on your body, then you can always look your best. It is every woman's right to look and feel fabulous, but it's up to you to make it happen!

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