

Accessorize Your Look

Accessories that coordinate with each other and with your outfit will help you achieve unity. The three most important elements to accomplish unity are material, dimension and colour.

MATERIAL

The most important element is the material that your accessories are made from, whether you're coordinating jewellery, shoes, bags, belts, scarves, or hats. The more the materials relate in character, the easier they are to combine. Here are some common materials, and how to coordinate them.

Wood, Natural Stones

The look: Sporty, casual, natural, creative.

Wear with: Natural, textured fabric, such as linen, hemp, cotton, and tweed. Can work with trimming that is also natural and sporty, such as rope or braid.

Appropriate for: Smart Casual.

Most suited to: People with texture in the hair and complexion – such as curls and freckles. If the wood is in a natural colour, it's great for people who have been colour analyzed as Autumn – those who are best in the warm earthy tones.

Semi-Precious and Precious Gems (or their look-alikes)

The look: Dramatic, classic, elegant, refined.

Wear with: Highly refined, elegant fabric, that may have a soft sheen, such as fine silk. When worn for evening, they are great with a high sheen such as satin, or a luster such as velvet.

Appropriate for: All occasions, but a must for Formal Evening.

Most suited to: People with straight glossy hair and a smooth reflective complexion. Brilliant jewel colours are great on people who have been colour analyzed as Winter – those who are best in cool, intense colours.

Gold or Platinum Jewellery

The look: Professional, successful, elegant, classic.

Wear with: Anything! Important for highly refined fabrics such as fine wools and silks.

Appropriate for: For all occasions, but a must for Business.

Most suited to: Yellow gold is best for those who have naturally warm colouring – Springs and Autumns. White gold and platinum are best for those who have naturally cool colouring – Summers and Winters.

Silver, Pewter, Bronze, Copper

The look: Casual, creative, sporty.

Wear with: Low to medium refined fabrics; great with texture or fabric with some surface interest or pattern.

Appropriate for: Casual, Smart Casual, Business Casual.

Most suited to: Silver, when it has a high sheen, is good for Winters, who have cool, bright colouring. Brushed silver and pewter are good for Summers, who have cool, soft colouring. Bronze and copper are best for Autumns - people with warm, earthy colouring.

Rope, Braid, Macramé, Embroidery

The look: Bohemian, casual, creative, natural.

Wear with: Low to medium refined fabrics, and especially cotton.

Appropriate for: Casual, Smart Casual.

Most suited to: People with texture, and a creative look to the hair or face.

Patent Leather

The look: Elegant.

Wear with: Sheen and higher refined fabrics.

Appropriate for: Evening, Smart Casual.

Most suited to: People with sheen – primarily Winters and Springs.

Crocodile, Snake Skin, etc.

The look: Dramatic, strong, sporty.

Wear with: Texture, knits, leather.

Appropriate for: Smart casual.

Most suited to: People with texture, drama, or a strong bone structure.

Glass, Ceramic, Paper Maché, Plaster

The look: Creative, free-spirit, individualist.

Wear with: Texture or surface interest; cotton, linen, hemp, etc.; patterns such as tie-dye, floral.

Appropriate for: Smart casual

Most suited to: People with a fine bone structure or creativity in the hair or face.

DIMENSION

Combine accessories that are similar in size and strength with each other and with you.

Chunky

The look: Strong, casual.

Wear with: Thicker fabrics; plaids, strong patterns.

Appropriate for: Smart Casual and Casual.

Most suited to: People with a strong bone structure

Fine

The look: Refined, elegant.

Wear with: Thinner fabrics; pinstripes, fine patterns.

Appropriate for: All occasions.

Most suited to: People with a fine bone structure.

Large

The look: Dramatic.

Wear with: Larger scale items, large patterns.

Appropriate for: Casual.

Most suited to: People who are tall.

Small

The look: Understated.

Wear with: Smaller scale items, small patterns.

Appropriate for: All occasions.

Most suited to: People who are short.

COLOUR

Use no more than 3 obvious colours in an outfit.

- a. If your outfit is one-colour or monochromatic, the accessory colour can be contrasting in order to accent and add interest.
- b. If your outfit is two colours, the accessory colour can harmonize with the outfit.
- c. If your outfit is three colours, the accessory colour can match a colour in the outfit.

If your outfit has an accent colour, it should appear 2 or 3 times. If the accent appears only once, the outfit may look unfinished or disconnected. If the accent appears more than 3 times, the outfit may look over-done and contrived.

Choose today's fashion accessories that reflect you personally, and coordinate with confidence!

*Karen Brunger is Director of International Image Institute Inc., and
a Past President of the Association of Image Consultants International*

www.imageinstitute.com
905.303.8636