

DRESSING FOR THE AGES

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I am often asked “how do I dress for my age?”. I see it as not so much dressing for your age, as dressing for your body type, personality, and situation. As much as these may change as you go through life, your way of dressing may change to be appropriate.

Here are some of the “all-isms” I hear that I would like to throw out.

“If you’re more than 40, you can’t wear shorts.”

“If your teen-age daughter is wearing it, then you can’t.”

“If you wore it the first time around, you can’t wear it the second.” (e.g. a style that comes back in fashion 20 years later).

“If you’re 40+, don’t be ‘mutton dressed as lamb’.”

Here is how I see dressing for the ages.

20’s: The Starter / Learner

In your 20’s you may be experiencing any of the following:

School

Entry-level job

Socializing

Clubbing

Dating

Partying

Experimenting

Changing

Envisioning the future

You are spreading your wings, experiencing the freedom of an adult, and most likely enjoying a myriad of relationships. As you are not yet established in a career, your

income is entry-level. You are getting to know yourself and your style. Your body is youthful, and most likely toned and in good condition.

Style suggestions:

Enjoy the trends. As you're getting to know yourself, you're not ready to invest in serious long-term clothing. You're probably going to want a variety of colours, styles, and choices. You can wear clothing that is more body conscious.

Caution: If you work in an office, don't go too cheap, trendy, or body-conscious. You may be sabotaging your credibility.

30's: The Builder / Creator

In your 30's you may be experiencing any of the following:

Establishing your career

Starting a family

Building a home

Developing credentials and credibility

Setting goals

Balancing home and work

Your life may have taken a more serious approach than in your 20's. If you are developing your career, you are looking for ways to increase your professionalism and credibility. If you have young children at home, your personal life may require casual comfort. You will probably want to engage in some type of fitness regime or sport to maintain your shape and tone. Your main challenge right now may be juggling your various responsibilities and commitments.

Style suggestions:

Be appropriate for the situation. An investment in key pieces can help propel you forward in your career. If you work in an office, dress professionally. A skirt is knee-skimming. A jacket can add some authority and power. The look can still be edgy and youthful, without being boring.

For your personal and family time you can wear outfits that are easy to manoeuvre in, but still stylish. Be true to your body type and personality. If you have more “yang” characteristics, you have a more angular body and features, and are better in more tailored outfits. If you have more “yin”, you have a more curved body and features, and are better in more draping, feminine outfits.

Caution: With your balancing act, make you sure you don't drop the balls on your grooming and self-care. Pay attention to your appearance. Make time for yourself. Avoid shopping for escapism, as that's a great way to accumulate an abundance of cheap clothing.

40's: The Achiever / Attainer

In your 40's you may be experiencing any of the following:

Career advancement and success	Recognition and acknowledgement
Achievement of goals	Established home
Manifesting	Accumulation of possessions
Personal growth and development	Self-awareness and confidence

You're probably achieving your goals and are established in your career. Your income level is quite comfortable. You know yourself and have a strong core of self assurance and confidence. You need to do more intensive work-outs to maintain your body shape

and tone. As everything in your life has expanded, you are probably willing to explore new hobbies, and new ways of being.

Style suggestions:

With the higher income, you are justified investing in high quality designer pieces. (Armani is a good choice!) With your position and achievements, elegance is important. Your clothing would reflect your position and your personal style. You're not following the crowds, but doing your own thing, and it's fabulous. It's important to keep the edge, and make sure your clothing is current.

Caution: Don't dress 'old'! This is the decade when many women 'let themselves go'. I've had clients who have lost themselves in the role of 'mother'. They box out their curves and sabotage themselves with cheap clothes. Remember who you are, and be yourself unapologetically.

50's: The Teacher / Sage

In your 50's you may be experiencing any of the following:

Downshifting career

Working less hours

Mentoring

Travelling

Golfing, skiing, etc.

Relaxing

Listening

Enjoying, appreciating

You're achieving the heights of your career. Your family is grown. It's time for 'me'. You are probably looking for ways to ease your workload and spend time in fun activities. You are now more at peace within yourself, and you bring that sense of calm to all of your activities. Your exercise program may need to be escalated, as you'll

probably be experiencing hormonal changes. You may also feel compelled to eat healthier.

Style suggestions:

You've already proven yourself, so your style is authentic, easy, and credible. Dressing for your body type is becoming more important. Pay attention to your weight distribution. If you have curves in your bust, have shaping lines under the bust and lengthen your waist. If you have a fuller waist, generally avoid detail in this area. Alternatively, a wide belt can help diminish a wide waist. Look for jeans and pants with a higher waist. If you have curves in your hips, wear flowing skirts and soft draping fabrics in this area. Trousers with stretch can help. Wear colours that suit you.

Caution: Don't dress cheap and old. Keep an edgy style!

60's: The Rejuvenator / Explorer

In your 60's you may be experiencing any of the following:

Freedom!	Socializing
Following your passion	Charity
Starting a new business	Sharing, giving
Travelling	Changing
Hobbies	Newness
Adventure	Liberation

You may have left your career, and now have the freedom to start something new. You may start your own part-time business, take up a new hobby, travel, or do something to give back to the planet. You may move to a new location to match your new lifestyle. The liberation from past responsibilities and commitments can lead to a lightness of spirit, and opportunities for adventure.

Style suggestions:

Now, more than ever before, you have the liberty to dress for your soul. Wear the clothing that calls to you. Here are some ideas. Dramatic – wear bold, edgy dramatic clothing with high contrast. Aristocratic – wear comfortable, elegant, sporty clothing in knits, textures, and natural colours. Natural – wear comfortable, casual clothing like jeans and t-shirts. Classic – wear blazers, and elegant refined clothing. Creative – wear off-beat, colourful clothing with details. Romantic – wear sensuous clothing that feels good to the touch.

Caution: Don't wear your ex-business clothing as casual clothing! Take advantage of a new relaxed style!

Whatever your age - enjoy all it has to offer!

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