

'Don we now our gay apparel'

Style, Fashion and the Everyman

by Daniel Stroupe :: guest contributor

Every morning — and on those afternoons before evenings out on the town — we dress ourselves and we make a presentation for the world to see. Shall this presentation be of style and grace or a “oh honey, no” sort of situation? Of course some guys think they don’t know how to be fashionable and stylish; or they have convinced themselves they don’t have the “gay gene” with clothes. That’s okay, darling. This is where I come in.

First things first, though: There is a difference between *fashion* and *style*. Fashion and style are generally confused with one another, but for me there is a marked difference between the two.

Fashion is reflective of what is going on right now and deals with trends and the looks of the moment. Trends are the playthings of fashion and the industry that thrives on what is *in* and what is *out*. Fashion is important, though. It keeps things alive and moving and can challenge us with how we think about dressing. That’s a good thing. Trends can come and go,

so that bad idea five years ago may be a hot new ticket next year — you never know! Having a few “trendy” pieces is a good thing but I suggest you fill your wardrobe with timeless pieces that will last you for a good few years. These pieces are the building blocks to developing your personal style.

Style is one’s basic manner of dress. It is ingrained through practice and self examination. Style is almost like a feeling — a natural instinct — a guttural aura that one exudes that is truly unique. It can be as simple as favoritism toward a color or shape or an elaborate scheme like a pension for pattern mixing. A major element of your personal style is knowing your body type and what flatters you. We all can have it whether we know it or not and, most importantly, your personal style best reflects how clothing serves you and how you would like to be perceived.

Getting down to the basics is important — a black suit, navy blazer, perfect-fitting oxford shirt, classic shoes and the like. But also consider a list of “New Basics” — the dark wash jean,

basic white tee and aviator glasses. Once you have your base, start to customize your collection and make it really reflect you.

Mixing in the basics of style with hints of the trends keeps one looking relevant and new. I look to the runways for patterns in things like color selection and silhouette and then take those ideas and translate them to things you already own and a couple new items to refresh your wardrobe.

I’m offering you some looks that start with the basic building blocks of style and mixes in this season’s trends. As a basic rule: Explore items from all price ranges and genres. Mix vintage, new, designer and thrift shop finds to create a personal look. Basics can always be bought at Target and discount clothiers. When you go cheap take it as an opportunity to have things tailored so your fit is perfect. What something looks like on you is far more important than who made it. : :

Photography: David Lari
Model and Styling: Daniel Stroupe

Trends:

For the winter months we are beating the cold with bright colors against neutral tones. This is most definitely the most sartorially fun time of year. Now is the time to experiment with layers and rich fabrics.

Basics:

Always have a grey wool suit. You can wear it year round and can be the most functional piece in your closet.
Shirt: Express; Tie: Dior; Vintage Sweater and Belt; Pants: Banana Republic; Glasses: Dolce and Gabbana

Trends:

Slim fitting suits with narrow lapels are still going strong into next years’ trends.

Basics:

The New Basics staple — dark wash jeans makes a fabulous appearance here. Paired with a trusty grey suit jacket we are good to go!

Jacket: Kenneth Cole; Shirt: French Connection; Vintage Belt; Jeans: Rockabilly; Robot Necklace: Custom Shop

Trends:

Retro kick backs! Following the slim-fit trends with luxe details like this Prada cashmere sweater and fun detail like this vintage slim belt.

Basics:

The navy blazer is an absolute must for the Everyman!
Sweater: Prada; Vintage Blazer and Belt; Jeans: Levis; Shoes: Calvin Klein

Trends:

- Color! Reds, purples in vivid viscosity are huge this year paired with blacks, tans, grays and other neutrals.

Basics:

- A good military jacket is as timeless of the pea coat and trench.
- Choose wisely and it can last you forever.
- Jacket: Ben Sherman; Shirt: Burberry; Vintage Crocodile Belt; Pants: H&M

Trends:

All about the accessory! Focusing your look on a fabulous accessory can make your look pop out of the crowd.

Basics:

Know and love black and what it can do for you. A simple black silhouette can do wonders for you.
Scarf: Gap; Sweater: Armani Exchange; Pants: H&M

