



Sometimes Less is More When Creating Your Basic Style

By Adrienne Yancey

Unlike the glorified, lush catwalks that feature statuesque models in luxurious designs twice each year for A/W and S/S, the modern day student, workaholic and breadwinner in the past decade has opted for the simple life—or at least the simple wardrobe. Yes! The white T, black jean, daily leather, and comfort shoe (among others) have become #BASIC.

As we age, a sense of self-awareness and appearance develops by the day. Working with a muted palette in which volume is created individually is the ultimate grasp of self. It is one thing to *wear fashion*, and another to *craft style*. For those boys, girls, men and women who have stumbled out of bed on numerous occasions with no idea of how to manage their style have no fear, your solution is here.



IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU: Whether casual or cutting edge, your fashion choices reflect your personal style. Photos (opposite and top) courtesy of Kirk Johnson (BSU '14) of KirkMcGurk Photography. **TAKE FLIGHT:** Trina Q ascends to new heights in sleeveless ball gown. Photo courtesy of Trina Quirindongo (BSU '14).



CONFIDENCE! Make a statement in this red velvet jumper paired with strappy platform shoes. Photo courtesy of Kirk Johnson (BSU '14) of KirkMcGurk Photography.

Determine Your Basic

Deciding on which particular basic to work with is practically the easiest part of styling. There is the top, bottom, footwear and outerwear. For the top, it is best to gravitate toward neutral shades—white, black, gray, and nude. With these hues, it allows an easier transition into developing a styled look. For bottoms, if the wash is dark, light or medium, the choice will be manageable to work around with other elements of the outfit (even if you decide to go for vibrant bottoms). Trousers, skirts, shorts, and dresses are options as well. Footwear is a playful, yet defining piece to a look. Sneaker, stiletto, sandal, or square-toes, all could work as the focal point or the foreground. The outside should complement what is on the inside. If the outerwear is your focal point, allow all eyes to draw there. If it is not, approach the inside (top or bottom) as the focal points and let the outerwear blend minimally.

Use Color, Texture or Prints as Your Focal Point

Here is where the creative freefall begins. The eye leads in determining your focus. Color, texture and print all break up the eye's initial glance. All colors of the spectrum, textured fabrics, and wacky prints are up for grabs. Imagine this: A woman floats down a New York avenue (5th for kicks) decked in a red, crepe, cigarette trouser, grey v-neck, and black suede pump. Where does the focal point lie? Exactly—the RED trouser. As you develop your personal style and styling techniques it gets easier. For example, you begin to balance more than one focal point.

- A leopard printed blouse paired with a black jean, and a red pump becomes a *killer* set of styling. Can you see it? The minimal element is the jean.

The two focal points are the break in color and print—leopard and red suede. Fur, flannel, lace, or embellishment? Incorporating a change of texture gives the look a three dimensional break up.

- Look 1: Brown, faux-fur waist length coat, a white crew neck tee, mid-wash jean, and a nude, faux leather, pointed bootie.
- Look 2: Black, long-sleeved, lace top, black, cotton, thigh length shorts, and a pink, faux croc leather pump.

In both looks, the textures add an element of dimension. Not only can you see the break up, but you can *feel* it.

Geometric, tribal and abstract prints could probably be the second easiest part to styling. They become the full focal and break up.

- Visualize: A pink, green and red abstract, silk, splatter blouse, a black pencil skirt, and strappy, black pumps.

All eyes are on top.

Add Accents/Accessories

Now that your focal/minimal palette is adapted, the last element to your look is the accents and accessories. Jewelry, handbags, hats, gloves and the rest act as finishing touches. These, too, could become focal points. It is YOUR style—YOUR styling.

- Gray, long-sleeved, V-neck, a dark wash jean, three, gold, layered necklaces, a gold watch, a mustard yellow fisherman beanie, and black Converse.
- Black graphic T-shirt, black *ripped* jean, neon yellow messenger bag. Cream mohair sweater,

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cream jeans, cream suede pumps, and red leather gloves.

The accents and accessories are commanding the focal areas of the entire styling. They structure the explosive, closing scene to a slow-paced dialogue.

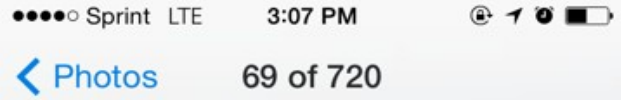
Micaela Erlanger, stylist of 2014's award season *IT Girl*, Lupita Nyong'o says, "...Styling is about expressing oneself through one's appearance, creating a look...creating a moment."

With these tips in mind, you become your own inspiration. You are who you are for a purpose; the outside complements that idea.

Minimal styling is the most logical as far as comfort. Slouchy, warm, short sleeve, long sleeve, and the long list of other basics are made for this—styling that is.

Money could rack up Prada, Pucci, and Proenza, but it could never equal the value of personalized style.

French columnist and editor, Diana Vreeland, of *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue* once said, "Style—all who have it share one thing: originality."



DOWN TIME:
Trina Q relaxes in style. Photos courtesy of Trina Quirindongo (BSU'14)