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*Director*

DESIGNING YOUR OWN COSTUME

*By*

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UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

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1922

# DESIGNING YOUR OWN COSTUME

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By ANNA E. PRANCE

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WHAT MARKS A WELL DRESSED WOMAN

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"The woman who is well dressed knows what to put on, how to put it on, and when to wear it." She has studied her own features and figure, as well as her personality, and knows exactly what lines, materials and colors will help to bring out her best points, and still more important, she knows her personal defects, and then carefully seeks to obscure or disguise them as far as possible. Having decided what suits her, she invariably adheres to that particular type of hat, dress or coat, merely modifying it to satisfy her desire for variety, and to keep within reasonable harmony with the changing fashions. In this way she is never uneasy as to whether her new costume is a success; she knows it is, and she wears it accordingly. She keeps herself clean and well-groomed; she dresses with modesty and sincerity; she does not buy clothes beyond her means at the expense of other necessities of life, nor does she stoop to imitations. She does not seek to outshine other women; rather she prefers to be distinctly herself. Whether her costume is of costly fabric or of calico, she presents a unified picture of beauty, the central interest of which is her personality. The consciousness of being well dressed frees her mind from all anxiety and self-consciousness on that score, which leaves her free to enjoy herself and to devote her undivided attention to other matters.



# Designing Your Own Costume

\*ANNA E. PRANGE



IT IS THE AIM of this bulletin to be helpful—not only to the clothing project leaders and those associated with them in carrying on their work, but to any other women who, perhaps, have had neither time nor opportunity to study the laws of dress for themselves.

The purpose of costume may be said to be threefold, i. e., to cover, to warm, and to beautify. It is chiefly from the standpoint of beauty that costume is considered here. To say that a costume is artistic, becoming or unbecoming is of little value unless such statement can be verified with a logical reason. Wise judgment and discrimination must come from a more stable basis than personal whim or fancy. The woman who makes and designs her own or her children's clothes, as well as the one who buys such clothes ready-made, should have an appreciation of the beautiful lines and proportions of the human figure; she should know what lines are important to emphasize and what to conceal in a figure which may not be perfect. She should have an appreciation for texture, to guide her in her choice of materials. She should have sufficient understanding of color, namely: its elements, harmonies and psychological effects, to enable her to express truly the purpose of the costume and its suitability to the wearer.

## IMPORTANCE OF BEING WELL DRESSED

Many women acknowledge the wisdom of only the first two purposes of dress, that is, to cover and to warm. They are merely clothed, not dressed. She who ignores the value of true beauty is surely losing sight of the fact that one of the first duties that a woman owes to society in general, and to her home and family in particular, is to be well-dressed. This does not imply an expenditure of money for fine clothes. It means having one's costume always suited to the occasion, also being dressed in such a way as to convey a sense of pleasure to the eye of the beholder. Again, she who is merely clean and tidy is not necessarily well-dressed; altho some persons consider this the height of all feminine virtues. In the business world of today the most convincing

\*Extension Specialist in Costume Design, 1920-21.

arguments and the most powerful reasoning from the lips of a slovenly, badly-dressed personage will not be half so impressive and instill the confidence that a well-dressed girl, with much less ability might give. This may be unfair, nevertheless it is true. There can be no doubt that dress has an influence on personality. The consciousness of being well and suitably attired gives a confidence and self-possession that cannot be acquired in any other way. Dress is a part of one's very individuality, and it is no less an indication of one's character.

Three things are all important to the woman who wishes to be well dressed; namely: *taste, thought and system*. Good taste is not limited to the few who happen to be born with it, for anyone who cares to cultivate it can do so, and most certainly thought and system are within the range of all.

### PLANNING THE WARDROBE

*A complete wardrobe is one that has in it an appropriate costume for every occasion likely to present itself.*

Unless the family budget is sufficiently large to admit of unlimited expenditures, it is always wise to refrain from adding anything to the wardrobe without feeling assured that there is a real need or occasion for the addition. Very often the woman with the limited income is much better dressed than the one who has enough to satisfy every frivolous desire, for she is forced to buy carefully and build up her wardrobe in logical order. Girls and women with sufficient money often buy at bargain counters, things they do not need at all, or they will buy upon impulse when they see a display in the stores of such articles as fancy bags, strands of beads, glittering and often worthless jewelry, fancy blouses and remnants of silk that they do not know how to use. All those things are useless unless there is a certain definite place for each article in the wardrobe. Each should help to complete or enhance the real beauty of some definite costume. No matter whether a woman's income is large or small, the result of impulsive, haphazard buying is always disastrous. The woman is likely to appear in a costume made up of an evening hat, a leather coat, a fancy georgette blouse, a sport skirt, a real diamond next to a twenty-five cent cut glass imitation, perhaps an old pair of gloves, and a pair of lace hose with run-down-at-the-heel oxfords. Every woman so attired is conscious of the inconsistency of her costume, but she will try to justify herself with this excuse: "Well I have these things and I must wear them out". But why should



she have bought them in the first place? Perhaps a more candid statement would be: "You see, I can't control myself when I go shopping, that is why my costume bears such a close resemblance to a crazy quilt".

A complete and consistent wardrobe does not necessarily call for many, nor costly things, but it does call for careful thought, common sense and self-control in selection.

*What Do You Need?* In the first place, a survey of the activities and routine of one's daily life has to be made. We might ask ourselves: what do I need for church wear, for school, for work, for street, for traveling, for sports, for social functions, etc. Of course, there are always the unexpected occasions, but in general a reliable estimate can be made and the wardrobe planned in such a way that every real need is satisfied.

*What Have You on Hand?* Much expense can often be saved by taking a systematic inventory of things on hand, say once or twice a year, and before new purchases are made. Often, with just a little effort, an old suit can be made to look as good as a new one. Perhaps all it needs is a little cleaning and pressing, or the lines slightly changed, or a little touch of something new to brighten it up and make one forget that this is not its first season. All these things need not cost much, especially if the woman is clever enough to do her own dry cleaning, dyeing, remodeling and sewing.

*How Much Can You Spend?* The next step is to consult the family pocketbook to see how much money may be expended on clothing during the year.

*Choose Necessary Things First*—If this allowance is small, only the very necessary things can be counted on; all others must be eliminated. Often such an allowance is spent entirely on cheap, shoddy, showy fads which soon become tiresome and old looking, and there is no money left to buy the substantial articles that really are needed. For example: A girl may need two plain waists to wear to school, but instead of buying these she will come home with a gaudily decorated georgette blouse. It is possible that she made two mistakes at once—she bought something she had no use for, and lost an opportunity to get something she really needed.

*Know What Is Becoming and Appropriate*—In order to economize, a woman or girl must recognize quality and know definitely what is becoming and appropriate. So often this important ques-

tion is left to the sales-person, whose chief interest is, of course, to make a sale. After the garment has been worn once or twice, its inappropriateness is discovered and it is discarded because: "I don't like it".

*Guard Against Extremes*—A limited wardrobe can be made to reach much farther if conservative colors, lines and materials are chosen; and all of these made to conform to one plan. In this way so many more harmonious combinations can be made, and real beauty instead of "chaos" be the result.

*Buy Good Materials*—It is always an economy to buy good materials. They wear better, look better, and it makes one feel that it is necessary and worth while to take care of them.

*Then You Will Have Time for Other Things*—When it comes to individual problems, every woman can judge best for herself. But if she will plan, buy and dress according to some system she will save money, be better dressed and have more time left to think about other things.

### APPROPRIATENESS IN COSTUME

Conventionality and custom dictate to a great extent what is appropriate in dress. From a standpoint of design, a person may be considered as an object against a background. There must be harmony between the object and its background if beauty is to be the result. To think of the problem in this way will do much to help one decide whether or not a costume is suitable for the occasion upon which it is worn.

The background against which the person is seen on the street is made up of stores, people, the traffic and general street scenes. In the home it is made up of walls, furniture and floor covering; when out in the open, it is the big, sunny out-of-doors. In addition to the necessity of making a beautiful picture in its particular environment, an appropriate costume must be made out of suitable material, and so constructed that it will be comfortable and stand the wear and tear to which it is to be put. If garments are chosen for their durability in respect to material and style and conservativeness in line and color they will not only last longer, but they will lend themselves to many different occasions.

*The Street and Traveling Costume*—This is naturally quiet and unobtrusive in every way. The refined woman or girl, however beautifully dressed, would resent being noticed because of a conspicuous costume. An example of a good costume for street



and traveling wear is a dark tailored suit, a nice fresh blouse, furs, gray or tan gloves, dark broad low-heeled shoes, a smart but plain hat with a close-fitting veil, and perhaps a handbag of plain velvet or leather. If it is necessary to carry an umbrella, she will use one that harmonizes with the rest of her costume. It is wise to get a black umbrella if only one can be had.

**The School Girl's Dress**—Many girls dread to enter high school simply because they feel that they cannot compete with the girls who make of school a place where they display their finery. This not only is unfair to the girl of modest means, who should have an equal chance to get an education, but is decidedly in bad taste. School is a place for work, and a school girl's dress should, above all things, be simple, modest and girlish. It should be made of material that may be kept clean and that will be suitable for the kind of work she has to do, and designed so that it will not interfere with the activities and necessary movements of the body. Her hair should be simply and becomingly dressed and with sufficient security to keep it from tumbling out of place during the day. As a whole, she should make a neat, attractive, yet unobtrusive appearance against the background, made up of girls and boys, and the general spirit of industry, refinement, and culture that the schoolroom represents.

Nothing is nicer for the schoolroom than the conventional middy-blouse and skirt, or a Peter Thompson or sailor suit.

They do not go out of style and are becoming to most girls. In the fall and spring, wash dresses of simple construction and attractive design are most desirable. The gingham dress is just now perhaps the most popular of this type. Never should the school girl be seen with fancy hose and French heeled pumps. These not only are injurious to health, but are very much out of harmony with the kind of costume that a well-dressed girl would choose for school wear. A broad or military-heeled shoe and plain hose are more in keeping with the occasion and they are much more comfortable and better-looking. Glittering rings and other conspicuous jewelry such as pins and ornaments of diamonds set in platinum—or cheap imitations thereof—are very much out of place, and are not a part of a costume appropriate for school work. Ear rings and glittering combs in the hair are also left out of the schoolroom costume by the girl with good taste. A girl's class pin or ring, or a signet ring, is all the jewelry she needs.

**The Business Girl**—The business girl's problem is so much like the school girl's that the same points would apply. She is as a rule a little older than the school girl, and for that reason some girls think they are privileged to overstep the laws of simple artistic dress, and they let themselves indulge in such things as low cut georgette blouses, scanty short skirts, thin silk hose, and French-heeled satin pumps. In addition to this, some girls would need a waiting maid to keep the architecture of their hair dress in shape, so that they would have a little time left for their work. The intelligent girl with an appreciation for simple elegance and refinement, will never make such a ridiculous picture of herself. She will appear with, perhaps, a dark suit of simple and conservative cut, an attractive blouse of cotton or wash silk, or perhaps a one-piece serge dress with a touch of white at the neck to brighten it. The simplicity and durability of her hat does not make it less becoming or beautiful, nor could her plain, well-kept gloves and sensible walking shoes help but be a big item in the composite picture of beauty and appropriateness which she represents.

**Sports Clothes**—For the active sports, such as tennis and golf, it is of first importance to have a dress which admits of free action and sanitation. At the same time there should be beauty in color and line. Bright colors may be worn because of the activity and because of the highly colorful background of the out-of-doors. For motoring the usual street costume may be worn, or perhaps the young girl who drives would enjoy a sweater of a bright, becoming color. Nothing should be worn that flaps and fights with the wind, such as hats with ostrich feathers and silk dresses that do not stay in place. A closely fitted veil is, for some, very useful. It holds the hair in place and protects the face from the wind and sun.

**For Social Functions**—For social functions, especially in the evening, the bright colors may be worn, since the spirit of the occasion is gayety and festivity. The brilliant lights and happy guests make a harmonious background for a woman costumed in gay apparel. Unless many such functions are attended, it is best to invest very moderately in evening clothes. Very often a simple white dress, or perhaps a dainty colored organdie, enhanced with a corsage of natural flowers, will be equally as charming as a costly evening gown, and it is certainly more sensible and economical.



**For Home Wear**—At home, where the background is restful and the woman is away from the public eye, she may again indulge in brighter colors if they are becoming to her and she desires to do so. There is no danger of making herself conspicuous with a brilliantly colored kimono, for she will not wear it outside of her private rooms.

For the work dress, it is important to choose colors, materials, and simple designs that will launder easily and well. There are so many attractive patterns to be had for house dresses, and they are easily made, that it seems a pity to buy the over-decorated, shoddy, ready-made dresses. The material so often fades, the workmanship does not withstand washing, and the material shrinks. There is no reason why a house dress should not be as becoming and as beautiful as the evening gown, for to be beautiful does not mean to be costly; it simply means that the dress will fit its purpose, be well-made and becoming in line, texture and color. Work dresses will appear much more beautiful if aprons that are worn with them do not conflict in line and color. Thought should be given to these possible combinations. Unless the aprons are white, neutral or quiet colors would harmonize better. Gingham and other cotton materials are especially nice for afternoon dresses in the home. Some women prefer to be dressed in light colors when they entertain at dinner or luncheon; this, however, is a matter of choice.

### FASHION AND INDIVIDUALITY

“That person is wise who neither accepts nor rejects fashion because it is fashion; but analyzes its form, discovers its reason for being, and its furthest possibilities.” It seems that the changes in fashion have become less abrupt in recent years. A good example of this is the simple, smart suit of today. This general style has been with us long enough that its virtues have been discovered and its defects eliminated, a costume of true beauty being the result. After all, it is natural that people of the same period should dress somewhat alike. It remains for the intelligent people to save fashion from running into absurdity and extremes.

It is unfortunate that fashion is not always based on common sense nor on the principles which result in true beauty. Sometimes a new fashion so rapidly follows the preceding one that novelty rather than artistry, extravagance, adulteration, high prices, and loss of personality are its results. The women who



blindly and slavishly attempt to follow in its train are kept fairly gasping for breath in their mad desire to appear always in the latest fad. No matter how ridiculous they may look, they are fashionable, and therefore happy. A woman's aim should be to be appropriately and becomingly dressed in a style that is particularly suited to her own personality. Only when fashion makes this possible is it wise to follow it.

### THE VALUE OF POISE

A woman should be gracefully poised upon comfortably dressed feet, with head erect, moving easily forward with free, unconscious motion that denotes full lungs and straight back. It has been said that the graceful woman aims to move in curves; there is no beauty in jerky, angular movements. The woman who walks with a heavy tread, swinging the arms at her side like a man, seems as unattractive as the one who hobbles along helplessly in a tight skirt. The careless slump that has been so popular makes a girl look as though she were too weak to hold herself up, and is a poor excuse for a standing position. If mothers will teach their girls to walk well, and hold themselves well, they can give them no greater accomplishment or charm.

### THE COSTUME AS A UNIT

The word "costume" in its broadest sense, as it is used here, means the sum total of the garments and accessories necessary to make a complete toilette; such as hat, coat, skirt, waist, hose, shoes, gloves, furs, jewelry, and other accessories. To be consistent and truly artistic a costume must impress the observer as one unit, that is, as one beautiful picture in which the personality of the wearer constitutes the center of interest. Every part must be in harmony with every other part, and together they must serve to bring out the best and most beautiful points of the wearer.

#### Costume Based on Art Principles

A beautiful costume is judged by the same laws of art as a beautiful painting or a splendid structure in architecture. Each is a design. In each are considered the relationships of areas, lines, and colors, and their conformity to certain laws.

It is from the big out-of-doors, from nature itself, that the human race has learned to appreciate true beauty. The proportion and arrangement of masses, the ever-changing color harmonies that nature holds before us have such a strong human

appeal that no one has ever tired of them. When these same truths are applied to the things that man makes, they too have the same human appeal—they are truly beautiful.

Countless art treasures have come to us, down thru the ages, all of which have lived because they were good, because they had this appeal to human nature. By the world in general these masterpieces have been worshipped blindly as results only, but the world's great critics, the artists and craftsmen, have turned to them for inspiration. They have sought to get behind or underneath, to discover the principles upon which these old masters based their work. From the knowledge gained thru study by these men, fundamental principles have been discovered and reduced to simple working rules, which may be known and understood by all. No claim is made that a knowledge of these principles will enable everyone to produce works of art, but such knowledge embraces the basic truths on which the world's greatest art has developed, and it will be the means of cultivating appreciation. It may not enable all to design beautiful hats and clothes, but it will, at least, enable us to judge whether our clothes are beautiful or otherwise. Everyone should be able to judge for herself in this matter, at least she should not be entirely dependent upon the judgment of others. Right selection is an economy. Ignorance is no excuse for poor dressing.

A brief outline of the most important principles upon which costume design is based is herewith given; together with examples, to show the practical application to the costume.

#### **Unity Must Be Secured**

A unit in design has been defined as: That to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken, without interfering materially with the beauty and the meaning of the whole. Every costume expresses an idea, when it has said enough then it is time to stop. Often a dress is spoiled by introducing too many ideas, it is overloaded with trimming, jewelry, drapery, contrasting materials and colors, so that the whole effect is confusing.

**Rhythm as Effecting Unity**—To secure unity in a design one seeks first to lead the eye thru all the details of the design. This is done by means of rhythm, which is manifested in the simplest way thru the regular repetition of a certain shape or line or color. This type of rhythm is often spoken of as the principle of repetition.



By repeating similar spots of interest in costume by means of line, color, or value contrast, the eye of the observer may be caused to move consecutively from one thing to another, leading to the face, hands, feet, general coloring, or to any part where emphasis is desired.

A peculiar characteristic of a line is that the eye, once having rested upon it, tends to follow the direction of the line; this is why the most skillfully designed curves seem to grow out of each other. Such lines are said to have rythm like a flowing melody in a song. Curved lines should seem to flow into one another or grow out of one another; they should not come to abrupt stops but go on invisibly in the imagination.



Illustration I. 1. Formal balance.  
2. Informal balance.

**Balance as an Aid to Unity**—The second means for securing unity is to impart to the design a sense of balance and repose. The repose or rest that results from equal attraction on each side of an axis is called *formal balance (bisymmetric)*. Example: If a dress is exactly the same on one side as it is on the other, trimming and all, it is said to be symmetrical. (Note Illustration I, first figure, page 14.) This type of balance especially if carried out in straight lines suggests dignity, strength and positiveness. *Informal balance (occult)* is a balance of feeling resulting from spacing and importance of large and small masses. By a well-balanced dress is meant one in which the

weight or mass on one side balances that on the other. (Note Illustration I, 2nd figure.) The two sides of this dress are not the same, still there is a feeling of equal weight. The surplice line of the waist at the left, together with the decorative material set in the skirt, is balanced at the right by a repetition of the same material in the lower part of the skirt. *Vertical balance*: A design which is lighter at the top and darker and heavier toward the base is restful and well balanced. This order of arrangement in nature is illustrated by the light sky the darker trees



and mountains, and finally the still darker color of the ground. For this reason a dark waist with a light skirt is bad, and white shoes with a dark skirt or dress are distracting.

**Harmony Essential to Unity**—As a third means of securing unity, one should give to the various parts of a costume some common factor. Two or more things are said to be in harmony with each other when they have sufficient likeness to seem to belong to each other, and if at the same time, there is enough difference to give interest. Example: The skirt of a dress might be trimmed with five rows of braid, the sleeve with one row and the neck with three rows. Since the braid is all of the same kind and color, there is enough likeness, and the fact that a little different arrangement is used in each place gives interest.

**Subordination as a Factor in Unity**—To produce an arrangement of lines, masses or colors so that one dominates, so that there is a leading thought or dominant mass; this is a fourth device for securing unity. It is called subordination. All lines, colors and contrasts in costume should be kept subordinate to the wearer, so that she will be the most interesting part of the whole.



Illustration II. 1. Monotonous uninteresting proportion. 2. Good spacing, pleasing proportion.

#### Proportion in the Costume

To produce a pleasing relation of the parts of an object to each other and to the object as a whole, is proportion. Equally with unity, it is essential in the successful costume. The charm of pleasing proportion is in its quality of interest. Interest is gained thru line arrangement or spacing which divides the object into parts which have sufficient likeness to make them seem related. At the same time the divisions of the object or the shapes and sizes combined

must not be so nearly the same that monotony is the result. There must be enough difference to give variety and interest. Example: Mathematical divisions, such as division into two, three or four parts, are detected at once. (Note the first figure in Illustration

II, Page 15.) The spacing and proportion is monotonous and uninteresting. In the second figure the same pattern was chosen but the braid is spaced and grouped in such a way that there is variety and interest. Variety in the width of the braid also helps to make a pleasing effect. The human figure is an example of fine proportion, and the costumes which have been considered beautiful thru the ages, regardless of fashion, are those which have conformed to the structural line and natural divisions of the body. (Note illustration IV, the ideal figure, Page 19.)

Subtle relationships are most interesting. The study of Greek art, which was based upon this principle, has led to the following law: Two lines or areas are comparable, interesting, subtle and desirable when one is between one-half and two-thirds the length or area of the other.

### THE COSTUME RELATED TO THE WEARER

In this age of ready-made clothing frequently a garment, beautiful in itself, has been selected and worn by the wrong type of person. Often a dress is chosen from a picture in a catalog or a window display, and because it makes a good appearance there, it is taken for granted that it will be equally as attractive or suitable for anyone who can manage to get on the inside of it. No matter how artistic, costly or fashionable a dress may be, unless the lines, materials and colors are suitable and harmonize with those of the wearer, it is ultimately not a success. But how can a woman or girl tell what to look for when she buys ready-made garments, or when she makes them? What is a becoming costume? The answer is simple: *A becoming costume is one that harmonizes with the personality of the wearer and emphasizes her best points in line, texture and color. By doing this the less attractive features are obscured.* The question to be answered next is: How can I design such a costume and how shall I begin?

In the first place, every woman and girl should make a careful study of her physical makeup, and understand it as well as she does her disposition, its strong points and weak points. She should study herself in the same impersonal manner in which she studies other people. She should know the kind of lines she can most successfully wear, the types of material best suited to her, and the colors that are most becoming. The average or ideal type of figure is not difficult to clothe attractively, but the more extreme types, the slender, the stout, and the extremely angular need careful attention.



The woman who designs a becoming costume must analyze herself as to *line, proportion, texture, color and personality*. The information thus gained about herself, together with a knowledge of art principles, will serve as a guide in the right selection of lines, materials, color, and style, which make up the costume. There is no definite set of rules that would be altogether practical in each individual case. However, in addition to the woman's general knowledge and feeling for the things that are in good taste, the plan of making a classification of types based on line and proportion, as given on the following pages, has proven very helpful.



Illustration III. 1. Meaningless lines. Effect is confusing. 2. Lines of grace and beauty. 3. Lines of strength and dignity.

**Study Your Own Lines**—Then decide what lines contribute most to your individual attractiveness. Desirable lines of face and figure may be emphasized by a repetition of the same lines in the costume or by using lines of contrast.

By line in costume is meant, first of all, the general outline or silhouette of the whole costumed figure. Altho fashion usually dictates what the silhouette shall be, the lines should conform to the figure and the laws of good proportion be applied. Lines within the silhouette are made up of such details as seams, creases, folds, plaits and tucks; such trimmings as rows of braid, lace or buttons; and pattern of material, such as stripes, plaids or figures. In general, stiff materials produce straight lines, soft materials produce curves.



Many women have not really seen themselves as they are seen by others. They use a mirror so small that only the head, or perhaps the figure down to the waist or hips can be seen. Why should one be indifferent about the rest? Others consider it a sure sign of vanity to look into a mirror, and they pride themselves upon the fact that they seldom look into one. Such a woman is either so well satisfied with herself that she thinks it impossible or unnecessary to make improvements, or she does not have the courage to look facts in the face.

In order to get a true conception of the lines and proportion of the figure, so that a proper choice of lines in costume can be made, it is necessary to make this study before a mirror large enough to reflect the whole figure at once. A careful study of the appearance of the figure, as a whole, should first be made.

**Curved Lines**—Are the predominating lines of your face and figure made up of curves which express beauty and gracefulness? Have you an easy bearing? Are your movements graceful? In costume these lines may be emphasized or suggested with the softer materials, such as crepe de chine, georgette or cotton voile. The materials may be draped or allowed to hang in natural folds. Curves also may be introduced by means of trimmings, such as embroidery. (Note Illustration III, second figure, Page 17.)

**Straight Lines**—Are your predominating lines straight or perhaps angular? These lines suggest strength, dignity and positiveness. In costume these lines may be repeated and emphasized if desired. Example: The strictly tailored, mannish suit and the straight sailor hat. (Note Illustration III, figure three, page 17.)

**Meaningless Lines**—Often the lines of a costume are so inconsistent and varied that no definite thought is expressed except that of weakness. This is often the case with the extreme and ultra-fashionable type of dress. Such a costume has no meaning and can have no real beauty. Note Illustration III, figure one, page 17.)

Not every woman represents a definite type, but it is very much to her own advantage to know what her lines are. The lines that help most to express her as a beautiful personality should be repeated in the costume, and thus emphasized. Defects may be obscured by leading the attention elsewhere. Further application of line is given under proportion.

### Study the Proportions of Your Figure

To serve as a definite working basis, a study is here made of four types of figures, the ideal, the tall-slender, the short-stout, and the angular. In order to make the distinction more clear the last three extreme types have been chosen. The classification of the first three types is based upon both line and proportion. The fourth type is merely dependent upon line.

Since there are no two persons exactly alike in appearance, there will, no doubt, be as many variations and combinations of these types as there are people in the world; but with a definite knowledge of what is best suited to these extreme types all others can easily be understood and their problems solved.

A list of suggestions follows that is based upon the laws of repetition (rhythm) and contrast, together with concrete examples of bad and good lines, and materials in costume, for each type.

The length of the head serves as the unit of measurement.

#### VERTICAL MEASUREMENTS (From head down to floor)

Whole figure	8 heads
Top of head to chin	1 head
Length of neck	$\frac{1}{3}$ head
Shoulders	$1\frac{1}{3}$ heads
Bust line	$2\frac{1}{3}$ heads
Waist line	3 heads
Hips	4 heads
Knees	6 heads
Elbow at waist line.	
Wrist	$\frac{1}{2}$ head below hip.

#### HORIZONTAL MEASUREMENTS

Shoulders	$1\frac{1}{2}$ heads
Waist	1 head
Hips	$1\frac{1}{2}$ heads

#### HEAD MEASUREMENTS

Width of head	$\frac{2}{3}$ head
Widest part at upper third	
Top of head to eyebrows	$\frac{1}{3}$ head
Eyebrows to end of nose	$\frac{1}{3}$ head
End of nose to tip chin	$\frac{1}{3}$ head
Mouth	$\frac{1}{3}$ of the distance down from nose to chin.
Length of ears	$\frac{1}{3}$ head

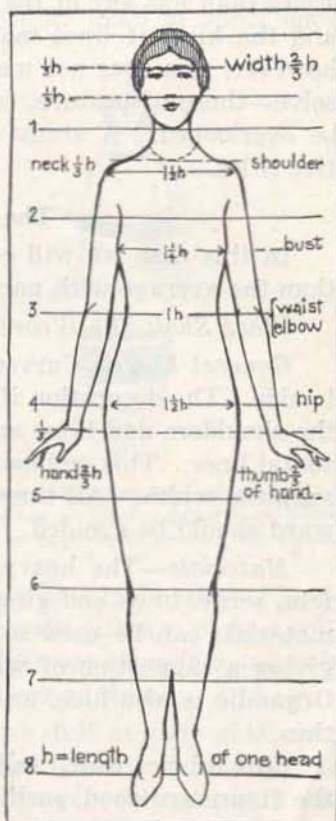


Illustration IV. Proportion of the Ideal figure.



### The Average Figure

Authorities claim that the average figure of a woman is seven and one-half heads high, while the ideal figure is eight heads high. A study is here made of the eight-head figure. (Note Illustration IV, page 19.) Notice length of arms and width of shoulders; bust, waist and hip lines. How does your own figure compare with this? You may be large, small or medium in size, and still be of ideal proportion; that is, the length of the head would go into the whole figure eight times and the whole figure be of average fullness. For a detailed diagram of the average head refer to Bulletin No. 51, "Making Your Own Hat".) Study your own figure. Do you think that approximately you could be classified as ideal or average in proportion? The woman who is near this size and proportion naturally has a wider choice of styles than has any of the other types given. The style of dress and the kind of lines may be left to her personal preference; however, this does not mean that she has no problems at all to solve—those of posture, color, texture and personality must not be overlooked. A study of these is made under their respective titles.

### The Slender Figure

In this case we will consider one that is taller and thinner than the average with narrow oval face and long thin neck.

*What Shall She Wear?* (Note Illustration VI, page 22.)

*General Lines*—Curved lines leading from the eye from side to side. The decoration if used should be placed at the side near the shoulders and hips, and on the sleeves, or arranged in horizontal lines. This emphasizes roundness of face and figure, and suggests width. All lines that lead the eye upward and downward should be avoided.

*Materials*—The heavy, slightly stiff materials, such as taffeta, serge, linen and gingham can be used to advantage. These materials can be used so that they stand out from the figure, giving a suggestion of width and fullness to counteract height. Organdie is also nice, unless the arms and neck are unusually thin.

Soft fabrics which fall in graceful curves, yet do not cling to the figure are good, such as soft taffeta, satin, and heavy crepe. Tricolette and georgette might prove too thin and clingy. Care must be exercised when the very thin, transparent and clinging

fabrics, such as georgette and tricolette, are used for the slender woman. Unless the garment is very carefully and cleverly designed, these materials are likely to show quite plainly the thinness of the figure. If these materials are used at all, it is best, so far as possible, to build up the dress on a solid foundation of the same color. Garments should be of medium fit, not so tight that the outline of the figure shows too plainly, nor so loose that they seem like a lot of cloth draped on a fragile frame.

*Horizontal Lines* expressed in ruffles, tunics, short skirts, tucks and wide hems in the skirt, wide belts, and sashes, all tend to produce width; as do pockets or other decorations such as plaits or buttons if placed at the side, because the eye is led from side to side. Decorative sleeves, especially loose or short ones, also give a suggestion of width.



Illustration V. These figures are equal in size and proportion. Vertical lines placed near the center suggest height; vertical lines at sides suggest both width and height; horizontal lines emphasize breadth and apparently shorten the figure.

*Neckline*—A round neckline repeats and emphasizes roundness in the face. A high collar which covers a thin neck or a rolling collar which shortens the distance between shoulders and hair line makes the neck seem shorter and not so thin.

*Hair Dress*—The hair may be worn full at the side and brought down a little over the forehead. Hair worn over the ears makes the neck seem shorter. The general outline of the hair should suggest roundness.

*Hat*—A hat with a low crown and soft, drooping brim medium in width is a becoming type. This shortens the distance between the hat and shoulders and makes the face seem wider



and more round. Soft materials, such as velvet, duvetyn and fur and trimmings, such as ostrich feathers, lend softness and fullness to the face. The hat may also be of contrasting color, which helps to decrease the appearance of height.



Illustration VI. Tall slender type accented by vertical lines; the height of the same figure is reduced and roundness suggested by horizontal and curved lines.

*Furs*—The long-haired furs, such as fox, raccoon or wolf, are, in general, most becoming, not only because a large fur piece will cover a thin neck, but also because its softness will give an added look of fullness and softness to the face. The short-haired furs may be equally as attractive; much depends upon the style in which they are made up.

*Foot-wear and Gloves*—Apparent height may be reduced by a contrast between the dress and footwear. However, the shoes and hose should not be much lighter than the dress. Example: White shoes with a dark dress are very bad. Low heels are best because they do not give height. Contrasting gloves may also

be worn, provided they harmonize with the remainder of the costume.



Illustration VII. A short, stout figure adds height by the use of vertical lines; the same figure appears more plump when curves and horizontal lines are used.

### The Stout Figure

The type considered here is shorter and stouter than the average, with round face and very short neck.

*What Shall She Wear?* (Note Illustration VII, page 23.)

*General Lines*—Choose vertical and straight lines. Decoration, if used, should be kept in a vertical line near the center of the figure. This causes the eye to travel up and down, giving an impression of height.

Tailored suits, dresses and hats are very becoming, because with these it is possible to introduce straightness of line, and they are void of the frills and fluffs that suggest bulkiness of figure.



*Corseting*—She should be well corseted. If possible, the corset should be fitted by an expert, in order to be assured of the best results from a standpoint of health, comfort and beauty. This is an economy. To be well-corseted includes the brassiere, which is an absolute necessity.

*Simplicity*—Decidedly simple designs should be chosen. The material should carefully be molded over the figure, and a few points of interest added, in such a way that graceful, gliding lines will be the result. These will seemingly reduce her flesh and add to her height. When this has been accomplished the design is complete.

*Fitting*—Garments should fit easily and comfortably. So often, when the bust is large, the waist spans and draws at this place, and the sleeves look as tho they might pull out at any minute. A skirt fitted too tightly will wrinkle crosswise over the hips, producing a set of horizontal lines which make her hips look larger. A dress that is too tight makes a woman look decidedly larger. It makes one feel that she probably bought the biggest thing she could get, but still was too big to feel comfortable in it. On the other hand, if the material stands out from the figure and is so loose that it seems bulky, it is equally bad. Blousy waists, tight belts, and very full skirts must be avoided.

*Materials*—Materials of average weight and softness may be used, such as serge, tricotine, crepes and linen. Stiff materials like taffeta and organdie, are too bulky and must be avoided. The stout woman must also deny herself silks and satins with a high lustre, for the high-lights present a series of lines which tend to call attention to width and roundness of figure. Neither can she wear large checks, plaids, figures or all-over designs because they make one look larger. Plain materials, of neutral tones and dull finish are much more suitable. They are inconspicuous and will not emphasize size.

*Interest Kept Near Center*—With the larger part of the costume of plain material and simple lines, it is then possible to add a few touches of interest and make them mean something. The interest should be kept near the center as much as possible, and the flow of line should be up and down. This may be accomplished by means of a V-neck or collar which comes to a point or a vest, or a bit of embroidery, or an appropriate pin. If there are any decorations on the skirt they should also be kept

near the center. Pockets on the hips, tunics, accordion plaits, ruffles, wide hems and tucks in the skirt must be avoided. Skirts should be long. Long sleeves are better than three-quarter length or short sleeves. Wide or contrasting belts should never be used, narrow ones made of the dress material are much better. Sometimes it may be preferable not to mark the waistline with a belt, or the belt may come part of the way and slip under a panel.

*Neck Line*—A neck line that comes to a point at the center is best. If a collar is used it should follow the same lines, come close to the neck at the sides, and should not roll, so that all of the neck can be seen.

*Hair Dress*—The hair should be dressed high on the head, leaving most of the forehead uncovered. The hair should be worn close at the sides, leaving the ears uncovered or letting a little hair fall softly over the top of the ear. One thinks of the distance between the neck lines and the hair line as belonging to the neck. When the ear is uncovered it makes the neck seem longer.

*Hat*—A close-fitting hat, the lines of which lead out and upward is usually becoming. A high crown gives height, and a brim irregular in shape is better than a round one, because it does not repeat the roundness of the head. Large drooping hats should be avoided.

*Furs*—Short-haired furs, such as sealskin, mink, and mole-skin, are most suitable because they are not very bulky. They should be made up in pieces that lie flat if possible. A heavy fur coat makes one look larger and is not becoming to a stout woman.

*Footwear and Gloves*—Under no condition should she wear hose and shoes that do not match in color. For example: White hose with dark shoes, or vice versa. This is never in good taste, but for the stout woman it is especially bad, because this spotted effect makes her seem shorter. Neither should footwear contrast with the dress or suit, especially when they are lighter. Example: Light gray or white footwear with a dark dress is very bad; too much attention is directed towards the feet and her apparent height is cut by the spotted effect this produces. When a white dress is worn, white footwear is the most harmonious and does not inhibit vertical movement, but dark shoes may also be worn with it. Altho this contrast apparently re-



duces her height a little, the whole effect is not bad because it makes the feet inconspicuous, the general outline being lost somewhat in the shadows from the skirt or the figure. High shoes are given preference, because this leaves the space unbroken between the sole and bottom of skirt; when oxfords or other low shoes are worn, this space is cut at the ankle. A well built and graceful high heel is becoming and appropriate for dressy occasions. It gives her additional height. Many French heels, however, are so small and spindly and the foot is so badly balanced, that they do not serve as an adequate foundation for a heavy woman. This is not only physically harmful, but aesthetically bad.

The large areas of the costume should be kept unbroken as much as possible, therefore conspicuous and contrasting gloves should not be used.



Illustration VIII. Angularity of face and figure may be obscured by soft lines and materials. The same figure looks much more severe when sharp points and straight lines are used.

### The Angular Figure

Pronounced angular lines may be found among persons of all ages, but more often during and after middle age; and among all sizes and proportions except the stout.

Some of the characteristics of this type are sharp features, pointed nose, and pointed chin; cheeks somewhat hollow, and the neck quite long and thin. When to this is added a drooping mouth and hard, severe expression, much care and thought is required in the choice of lines.

The shoulders are often too square, and the back forms a straight, uninteresting line. Sometimes the shoulders droop and the chest is flat. In some persons certain bones seem unusually prominent, such as the collar bone, bones of the hips, wrists and ankles. Then there is the angular type, commonly called raw-boned, that is, a person who is not necessarily thin, but whose bony structure is large.

*What shall she wear?*

*General Lines*—Soft lines and materials will soften the expression, and curves repeat roundness of face and figure and make one forget the angles. The strictly tailored mannish suit should not be worn.

*Materials*—She should choose materials that drape well, such as soft silks, duvetyne, velvet, georgette and other crepe materials; lace and fur are also very desirable. If it is not practical to use these materials in large areas, they may be used in combination with other materials or as trimming. In general, almost any material would be suitable, except that which is stiff and produces hard, set lines. The fabrics also with a high sheen or lustre, such as some satins, silver or gold cloth, and patent leatherette, must be avoided. They look cold and unsociable on a woman of this type.

*Neck Line*—She needs soft, round lines around the neck; rolling or high collars and soft frills are also good. If lace is used, a pattern should be chosen with round motifs instead of angular or pointed ones. This applies to any kind of ornamentation around the neck line. A neck line or flat collar that comes to any kind of point is bad and should be avoided. Any severe decoration, such as geometric designs or pointed lace around the neck, should not be used, because the points and angles of the face and neck are repeated and therefore emphasized.



*Hair Dress*—Any hair line that gives a softening and rounding effect to the face may be chosen. The hair might be puffed a little at the sides, making the whole outline of the head round instead of angular. The length and thinness of the neck will not be noticed so much if the hair is dressed low on the neck and a part or all of the ear is covered. Sometimes if the hair is naturally very straight, a slight artificial wave to give a softening effect around the face will be very much worth while. Unless this can be done in such a way that it resembles naturally wavy hair, it is better to leave it uncurled. The hair should never be arranged in such a way that it gives an angular shape to the head, nor be brought to a sharp point on top of the head. The hair brought straight back above the ears and dressed high in the back causes the neck to appear longer and an opportunity whereby one might make the cheeks seem a bit fuller is lost.

*The Hat*—A hat with a soft crown and soft, medium-sized brim is usually becoming. It is possible that a turban of soft lines might be worn. A slightly drooping brim, especially one with a facing of a light, becoming color, is good because the reflection of light and color upon the face gives a suggestion of fullness. The trimmings should be soft, such as ostrich feathers, fur, graceful bows of light-weight materials, ribbons or bunches of small flowers of soft coloring and texture. The severely tailored hat, the hat with a square crown and an irregular brim made up of points must not be worn. Trimmings such as quills, pointed bows, or perhaps a cut steel buckle, should not be used because they emphasize the undesirable lines of the face and make the expression seem more severe. A very large hat makes the face seem thin and small, and by deepening shadows in the face, emphasizes angularity.

*Furs*—Long-haired furs, such as wolf, raccoon, opossum, dyed rabbit, and fox, are especially becoming. However, collars and neck pieces of seal or moleskin and mink may be equally as appropriate if made up in such a way that they come up high on the neck. The small or thin woman cannot wear a heavy-looking fur piece or coat. These would make her look small and weak by contrast; they would seem too heavy for her.

*Jewelry*—The thin woman or girl with angular lines has to be especially careful in her choice of jewelry. Heavy looking beads and chains or sparkling jewelry are not becoming; it

makes her look weighted down, and unless she is unusually vivacious, an array of sparkling stones and glittering gold is likely to outshine her. Something smaller, less pretentious and less conspicuous, beautiful in line, and of definite color value is much more appropriate and becoming.

*Shoes, Hosiery and Gloves*—Her hose and shoes should match in color; contrasting hosiery calls attention to the ankles. Loud or spotted shoes should never be chosen, not even for sports wear. They emphasize angularity. High spindly heels not only are unhealthful but they give an appearance of insecurity and frailty to a thin person. The color of her footwear need not necessarily be of the same color as the dress or suit. Gray, brown, black or tan may be worn with most any color of dress, provided there is harmony. Gloves quiet in tone and inconspicuous are best. White gloves with a dark costume are very trying, especially if the hands happen to be large or in any way unattractive.

#### Common Defects of Figure

A perfect figure is the greatest beauty, but it is also the rarest. Frequently the problem of dress is to bring into prominence one or two fine points and conceal the many deficiencies. The woman who acknowledges to herself her own deficiencies and bases her dress upon her finest points, will make the most pleasing impression. Some of the common defects found in the analysis of individual figures, with suggestions for improvements, are herewith given:

*Square Shoulders*—Use a round neck line or a rolling collar; the armholes should be cut out considerable at the top, or kimono sleeves may be used. Avoid square neck lines or any severe, angular lines.

*Round or Sloping Shoulders*—The shoulder seam should be moved back a little. Kimono or other loose sleeves are desirable. If a rolling collar is used it should fit closely to the neck in the back.

*An Extremely Small Waist*—A one-piece dress which is loose at the waist makes the waist look larger.

*Large Hips*—An easy-fitting skirt, loose at the waist, suggests straight lines of figure.

*A Short Waist*—Wear a low waist line or use vertical lines in the waist to give length and horizontal lines in skirt.



*A Long Waist*—Slightly short-waisted dresses or wide girdles may be worn. Horizontal lines in waist and vertical lines in skirt will produce a balance between the two.

*A Long Neck*—A round neck line, rolling or high collars should be chosen. The hair dressed low over the ears also helps to make the neck seem shorter.

*A Short Neck*—With a pointed or V-shaped neck line or a flat collar, length may be suggested. The hair should be dressed high on the head.

*A Flat Chest*—Frill at the neck or a loose full waist would help to suggest fullness of figure.

*An Over-Developed Bust*—A plain waist, loose waist line, vertical lines for decoration, and dull materials should be chosen.

*A Sway-Back Figure*—The waist-line should fit loosely in the back to make the line of the back seem less curved.

*Large or Unattractive Hands*—Avoid three-quarter length, or conspicuously decorated sleeves. A plain long sleeve does not call attention to the hands.

*Large or Unattractive Feet*—Choose plain, well-fitted, and inconspicuous footwear.

### TEXTURAL RELATIONSHIP

The effectiveness of dress depends greatly on the texture of the materials that have been chosen to carry out the design.

Texture is that quality of an object which seems to convey

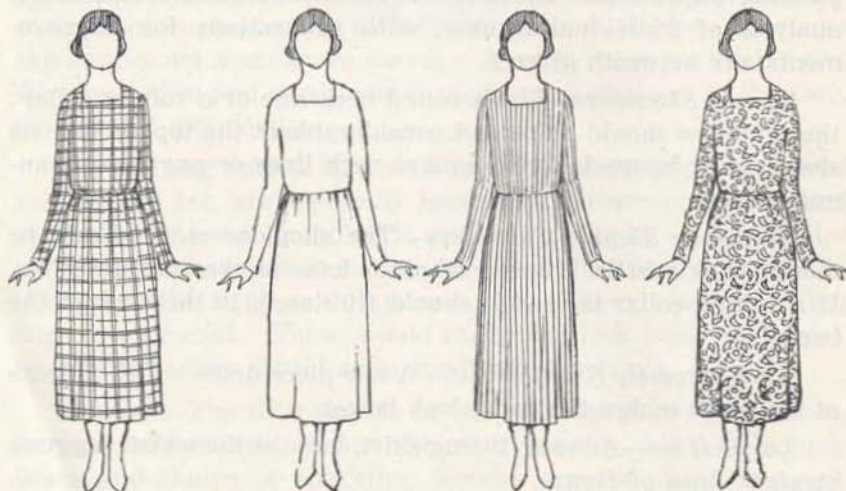


Illustration IX. These figures are the same in size and proportion. Stripes make the person look taller and more slender; plaids and figures apparently increase the size.

the idea of how it feels, such as softness, stiffness, coarseness, and hardness. One finds this quality in the weaves of different textiles, in feathers, furs and other materials. It is the sense of fitness in textural feeling that forbids the use of coarser, heavier, and more resisting fabrics with soft, impressionable, and destructible silks, georgette and malines.

Material often governs the design of a dress. Soft materials, such as crepe, velvets, satins and soft taffetas, lend themselves well to beautiful lines in folds and draperies. They are used when long, graceful lines are desired. When straight, severe lines are wanted, the heavy materials are more suitable.

Furthermore, not all textures are becoming to all people. The woman with a fine skin, delicately chiseled features, and fine, silky hair, and perhaps a reserved personality, should choose materials of fine weave, giving a suggestion of daintiness, softness and refinement. On the other hand, the woman with a coarse-grained skin, coarser hair, large features, the athletic type, would find the coarser weave and heavier fabrics more suitable and in better harmony with her personality.

Very closely related to texture is the pattern of materials. When a design has been chosen that calls for trimming, such as lace, embroidery, tucks, ruffles, or in fact any decoration, a plain material should be selected, so that the ornamentation that is to be used will have a plain background. This is always a wise choice, because it offers an opportunity to lead the interest in any direction by placing the trimming to form the kind of lines desired.

Plaids, checks, all-over or spotted materials make a person look larger, because attention is called to every part of the figure. Very simple designs should be chosen when this type of material is to be used—straight skirts are best. Such materials need very little or no trimming; perhaps the best way to introduce variety is to use a plain material which harmonizes in texture and color. Fine stripes suggest height; broad, conspicuous stripes have the same effect as a plaid. All stiff materials, such as organdie or stiff taffeta, make a woman look larger because they stand out from the figure, whereas the softer materials which fall in straight folds, such as crepe de chine and voile, give a suggestion of slenderness and height. Materials with a high lustre, such as satin and panne velvet, have the same effect as spotted materials and make one look larger. Dull finish material makes one look smaller.



## CHOOSING THE COLOR

As in all branches of art in which color is used, so in matters of dress, there exist laws which regulate its combinations. The refined and artistic repose in costume depends not only upon the type and arrangement of line and the nature of material used, but upon the colors chosen; their harmonious combinations, and upon their accordance with the color of the hair, eyes and skin of the wearer. Great care should be taken in choosing colors which are to be placed next to these, so as to enhance their natural beauty and not injure the color by forming discords or throwing objectionable color upon the face by contrast or reflection.

### Elements of Color

Primary—Yellow, blue, red.

Secondary—Green, purple, orange.

### Attributes of Color

Color has three qualities:

Hue—The quality which distinguishes one color from another, the name of the color, as blue or green.

Value—The quality of lightness and darkness, as light blue, dark blue.

Intensity—The quality of brightness or dullness, as bright blue, dull blue.

### Psychology of Color

Yellow looks most like the sun, so it expresses the quality that the sun seems to give. It stimulates, gives warmth and cheer, and vibrates happiness. It is the reflection of yellow everywhere that makes one feel happier on a sunny day than on a cloudy, gray one. Variations of yellow are ecru, cream, light buff, and taupe.

Red suggests heat and fire. It is associated with excitement, activity, aggression and passion. It stimulates and is irritating. Variations of red are wine color, maroon, Indian red, terra cotta, henna, pink, and old rose.

Blue is the most restful color. Its reactions are coolness, restraint, repose, distance, and dignity. By association one thinks of the blue sky, which is cool and distant, and the cool breezes from the blue waters of the lakes and ocean. Variations of blue are delft, Alice, royal, cadet, navy, and turquoise.

Green is a combination of the happy qualities of yellow, with the coolness and restraint of blue, making it the most livable and usable of all colors. Its restful, soothing and cooling effect is well illustrated by the large distribution of green in nature.

Variations of green are moss, sage, Nile, olive, peacock and blue-green.

Purple expresses the combined qualities of red and blue. Objects so distant that they can barely be distinguished, such as distant trees and mountains, appear as a hazy purple. This association has made purple a color of mystery. It is a color much used by secret orders. Its use by the royalty in full brilliancy has made it a color of dignity and grandeur. To some people it is depressing, hence its use for second mourning. Variations of purple are lilac, lavender, mulberry, London smoke, and mauve.

Orange, since it is a combination of two warm colors, yellow and red, is the hottest and most aggressive color of all. Because of its aggressiveness, its stimulating, exciting effects, it should be used very carefully and sparingly in its full intensity. A very pleasing and much used variation of orange is brown, which in reality is neutralized orange in a dark shade. Other variations are tans, red buff, and champagne.

#### Harmonizing Colors

Two or more colors are said to be in harmony with each other when there is enough likeness to make them seem related and enough difference, or contrast, to give interest.

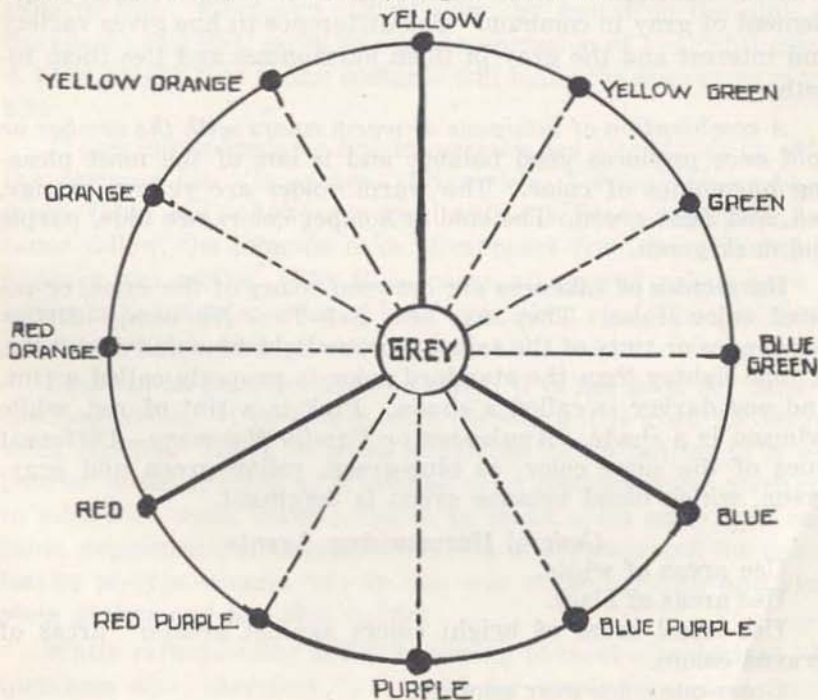


Illustration X. The color wheel.



Sometimes the element of likeness is the predominating one, and sometimes it is that of difference or contrast.

Harmonies that are based chiefly upon the contrast between colors, are called *harmonies of contrast*. Those that are based chiefly upon likeness of the colors are called *harmonies of likeness*.

*Harmonies of Contrast*—This is between colors which are most unlike each other. It is perfect when the colors are *complementary* or directly opposite in the color wheel, such as blue and orange or yellow and purple. (Note Illustration X, page 33.)

The combination of opposite colors is usually too bright if the colors are in full intensity. It is necessary to gray or neutralize one or both colors to make them harmonize. The gray tones make a more quiet harmony and are therefore more pleasing. A pleasing harmony of three colors is *the triad*, any three colors which form an equilateral triangle on the color wheel. Example: Yellow, blue and red; green, purple and orange. (Note illustration X, page 33.) Again the grayed tones are much more pleasing than the intense colors, because all colors then have the element of gray in common. The difference in hue gives variety and interest and the gray in them harmonizes and ties them together.

A combination of luminous or warm colors with the somber or cold ones produces good balance and is one of the most pleasing harmonies of color. The warm colors are yellow, orange, red, and light green. The cold or somber colors are blue, purple and dark green.

**Harmonies of Likeness** are between colors of the same, or related, color scales. They may be: *Self-Tone Harmony*—different shades or tints of the same color, as light blue and dark blue. A tone lighter than the standard color is properly called a tint, and one darker is called a shade. Pink is a tint of red, while crimson is a shade. *Analogous or Family Harmony*—Different hues of the same color, as blue-green, yellow-green and gray-green, which blend because green is dominant.

#### General Harmonizing Agents

Use areas of white.

Use areas of black.

Use small areas of bright colors against greater areas of grayed colors.

Cross one color over another.

Interlace—outline one color with another.

### Effect of Colors Upon the Wearer

**Contrast**—When complements or opposite colors are placed side by side, they intensify each other.

Sallow skin is made more yellow by blue purple. Red purple brings out the greenish hue in the skin.

A brilliant skin is made more florid by blue-green or green.

Navy blue brings out yellow lights in brown hair.

Purple strengthens the color of blonde hair.

An auburn or red-haired woman can make her hair seem more brown by wearing blue, more yellow by purple, and more red by blue-green or green.

Hair and eyes that are neither dark nor light and of no definite color may be made more colorful by using complementary or opposite colors in the costume. Example: Navy blue brings out yellow in the hair. By using a very dark color next to the hair, it will by contrast make the hair seem light, and vice versa.

**Repetition**—The repetition of any color intensifies itself. Repeat with a color note in the costume the best color in hair, eyes, skin or lips. Example: Coral color, by repeating the pink of the cheeks and lips, gives an added impression of healthful color. A little bright blue in the costume will make the eyes seem more blue.

*If two colors having a hue in common are placed side by side, the common hue disappears.* Example: Yellow-pink or blue-green (blue and yellow) are good with a sallow complexion, because yellow, the common color, disappears from the skin and it appears less sallow. For this reason all grayed colors have a tendency to brighten color of hair, eyes, skin, etc. The quality of grayness which both possess is lost.

**Black** in large areas absorbs color; it is not good for sallow, colorless skins. It decreases size; therefore it is good for large, stout figures. Black in small quantities as an outline of a design or in small spots of trimming on a costume gives strength to otherwise weak colors. Black, in small spots on a light costume, repeats and strengthens the idea of contrast and the colorless or no-type woman may in this way make her hair and eyes seem darker and her skin lighter.

**White** reflects color and is becoming to most complexions. It increases size; therefore it is good for small figures. A pure white next to a dark skin will by contrast make the skin seem



darker. The dark-skinned woman should wear an off-white or cream.

**Intense Colors** are good only on people with strong value contrast and brilliant clear coloring. Weak or neutral color in hair or eyes is easily overpowered or weakened by contrast if the colors in costume are too intense. Because intense colors are aggressive, they increase apparent size; therefore, large women should not wear them. They are inappropriate for general street wear, for church, or in fact for any place where the general background is sufficiently gray to make a person clothed in bright colors seem unnecessarily conspicuous.

**Bright Colors** should be used in small quantities for accent or spots of interest and to create a certain eye movement. A good rule to follow is, the larger the area, the more grayed the color should be; the smaller the area, the more intense or brighter the color may be.

**Neutral Colors**—A neutral color, like a neutral person or nation is one which favors nobody very much and supposedly gets along with all. Neutral or grayed colors are worn more successfully by most people because they absorb gray and cover up defects by their softness. They are restful and pleasing to the eye because they blend into the surroundings. They are inconspicuous; therefore they are good for large figures. They express dignity, reserve and refinement.

**Colors for Seasons**—Warm colors and their variations, such as yellow, orange, brown, red, and red-purple suggest excitement and warmth. For this reason they are not suitable for hot or warm seasons, but very desirable for the winter months. Variations of the cool, receding colors, green, blue and purple, are most suitable for summer wear. If these are not becoming, light tints or subdued intensities of the warm ones may be used, such as pink, cream, and tan. When any color is neutralized or grayed, its suggestion of either warmth or coldness is much lessened.

#### DRESS FOR DIFFERENT AGES

As the years pass on, the human body changes, and with it the outward appearance; the light golden locks of the child may be golden brown at sixteen, dark brown at twenty-five, and gray at forty. The fair skin mellows with time, the faint pink flush gives way to a clear pallor; the roseate skin takes on a robust color. Traces of wrinkles will tell the story of character and

years upon a skin that was once firm and smooth. All these changes demand changes in dress. Let a woman see herself without prejudice, and not dress upon a delusion; nothing is worse.

The changes from year to year are by no means always for the worse. Each age has its own beauty, and the wise woman recognizes this and does not attempt to make the present age a poor imitation of the past one. So often the young girl of fifteen or sixteen tries to appear as old and sophisticated as her sister of twenty-five; then after having reached this age, she will aspire to appear again as sixteen. On the other hand some young women, who are married at twenty, consider it their first duty to make themselves feel and look old, just because they are now married.

There are no definite rules of dress, based upon years, and if there were, they would not be applicable. A white-haired woman of fifty may have a clearer skin than her daughter who is sixteen. Besides, who would ever know how many years a woman has to her credit at this time when "it is no longer good etiquette" to speak of age? Proper dress, for different ages, depends entirely upon appropriateness, personal becomingness, and personality. A few very general suggestions, based upon these principles, are herewith given:

**For the Child**—Pure, fresh dainty colors may be worn by children because of the perfect, unblemished color of their skins. They may also wear very intense colors such as bright red, because their little bodies are nearly always in action, flitting about, here and there. The garments should be so constructed that they do not interfere with action. Simple lines and materials, as well as colors, that will admit frequent laundering must necessarily be used. Simple decorations, such as tiny edges of lace or fine embroidery, are always in good taste. Interesting colors may be introduced by means of stitchery or embroidery based on design motifs, such as animal or flower forms. These are always a source of interest and joy to the child.

**For the Girl**—Much depends upon her color, her vivacity and habits of life, as to the becomingness and appropriateness of her dress. As a rule her skin is smooth, her eyes lustrous and her color clear and bright. For this reason this type of color may be repeated in the costume. Usually the figure is lithe and graceful, the defects not having as yet come to the surface, so she will



select lines that emphasize the beauty of her girlish figure. Above all things she should retain the charm and beauty of youthfulness by wearing simple garments. Heavy velvets, richly brocaded silks and much elaborate jewelry are very much out of keeping with her type of beauty and the activities which should fill her life at this age.

**For the Mature Woman**—The mature woman finds that her color has lost a little of its early bloom and freshness, and tho still attractive, has become a trifle duller. Her skin is a little less fine in texture, and the firmness and smoothness of her face is altered by muscles that have an inclination to sag, resulting in lines and wrinkles. By and by her hair will lose its first color and change into a gray, and then perhaps into a beautiful white. All of these changes are merely traces of the life that has gone before, and altho the whole expression is changed by them, they do not make her less beautiful. She is simply another type; and with her added experience, dignity and poise, her character is strengthened, and her charm and attractiveness increased. If she chooses lines and colors in costume that express and emphasize these qualities she will make a beautiful picture, no matter what her age may be.

The mature woman will find her best colors among the neutralized and quiet tones. If she wears bright colors, she will use them only in small areas lest they make her own color look faded by contrast. Some women think because they are past thirty and forty that they must always wear black or gray. This is an old custom almost out of usage now. It is true that black or gray is becoming to many women, especially when relieved in some way by a touch of white or color, but very often the beautiful grayed colors are used to much better advantage.

### UNDERWEAR

It is in the matter of her unseen apparel, far more than in her outer garments, that a woman reveals her natural refinement. There is nothing so commonplace and decidedly inartistic as some of the cheap, shoddy, over-decorated underwear of today. This is especially true of ready-made underwear. The idea seems to be to see how much cheap lace and poorly designed embroidery can be loaded onto one innocent garment and then sold for ninety-eight cents. With all this gaudy decoration it is, of course, necessary to sacrifice quality and good workmanship.

The result is a shoddy garment, which will barely hold together after it has been laundered once, and it is an eyesore as long as it does wear.

Many persons think that because a thing is hand-made it is necessarily beautiful. One of the many results of this idea is illustrated by the yards and miles of hand crocheted lace, made by women, and used as a decoration for anything from a piano cover to a case for a man's house slippers. Some of this lace is beautiful, but much of it not only is coarse and poor in design, but is used inappropriately. Is there any beauty in a dainty blouse of georgette when its only foundation is a coarse crocheted camisole with perhaps a colored ribbon run thru the top? The underwear in this case does not harmonize with the garment worn over it, and because it is conspicuous, it is not in good taste. A plain soft foundation would not detract from the blouse, and would be much more modest and refined.

Simple designs, good quality and good workmanship should be looked for in underwear. Its lines should conform with the outer garments with which it is worn. Since so many dresses of today are made of soft, clinging materials, and slender lines seem to be popular, soft underwear has become a necessity. There is nothing nicer and more practical than soft linen or cotton material for general wear. Some, however, especially those who are not hard on underwear, consider it equally as economical to wear underwear made of wash silks. This is especially true of the girl who is away from home and tries to economize by doing her own laundry, in many cases without much equipment.

The more expensive the ready-made garment, the better the quality of material and the simpler the design. By buying the material and making her own underwear, a woman may have the very best quality at the same price that she would pay for an ugly, ready-made garment or for a lot of useless and inartistic so-called decoration. A little touch of good lace, a few tiny tucks or simple well-chosen designs worked out in feather-stitching, French knots or embroidery will add much to the daintiness and beauty of the undergarment. Ribbons of bright colors do not find their way into the stock of underwear chosen by the woman with taste; white or flesh ribbons are much better.

#### SPECIAL EMPHASIS BY CONTRASTS

The effect of contrast must be recognized and may be very helpful in producing certain desired effects. Examples:



*Light and Dark*—The beauty of a white neck may be emphasized by a black velvet gown left perfectly plain at the neck.

*Short and Long*—If a very tall slender person appears with a short, stout one, both types will seem more extreme. A very long skirt will make the waist seem short by contrast.

*Coarse and Fine*—Coarse, cheap lace will look coarser when used in connection with sheer, fine material.

*Old and Young*—A woman of forty will make herself look older by contrast if she wears the short skirts, youthful lines and fresh colors becoming to a girl of eighteen.

*Dullness and Brilliancy*—The faint suggestion of a healthy red in a woman's cheeks and lips are lost entirely when a brilliant cerise costume is worn.

### THINGS NEVER IN GOOD TASTE

The same garment may be appropriate and becoming in one case and in another be all wrong. There are some things, however, which are never appropriate or becoming or in good taste, no matter when or by whom they are worn. True criticism, in this respect, must be based upon art principles. According to this standard the things enumerated here could not be considered artistic and in good taste.

**Display of Jewelry**—Jewelry should seem to be a part of the costume with which it is worn. Some women think they must wear all the jewelry they have every time they dress up. Why? Because they do not want to lose an opportunity to show how much of it they own. Such a woman is likely to sit down and put on as many rings as she has, then she puts on her watch and chain, next she fastens her beautiful old cameo at her throat—she always wears this because it has been in the family for nine generations. Then she happens to think of the lovely jade beads her daughter sent her from Japan, and with this she completes her toilette, but no, she almost forgot her glasses, which she wears fastened somewhere on the front of her waist by means of a hook. Then while studying herself in the mirror, she notices that her waist gaps a little, so she pins this neatly with her lodge pin or perhaps a Red Cross pin. Each piece may be beautiful and worthy in itself, but when worn together is it any wonder that she resembles the front window of a pawn shop?

**Too many collars** unrelated in every way, when worn at the same time, are in bad taste. Example: The collar of a waist worn on the outside of a jacket, which in turn has a white lace

collar tacked over the regular jacket collar. Then as a finishing touch, a fur choker is worn over the other three collars.

**Distorting Veils**—Veils that have a distorting effect upon the face are not artistic. Example: Veils with large spots, conspicuous floral designs or borders of wide bands. The portion of the veil that covers the face should be sufficiently plain to show the lines of the face.

**Horn-Rimmed Glasses**—There is perhaps nothing so entirely disfiguring to the human face as the very heavy horn-rimmed glasses now in vogue for general wear. No doubt the glasses are needed, but why put them in a frame that makes them resemble a windshield?

**Garments Out of Season**—Altho it is fashionable, it is neither appropriate nor comfortable to wear heavy furs and velour hats in the summer, and nice cool straw hats in the winter.

**Improper Use of Boudoir Caps**—A boudoir cap or so-called breakfast cap worn at any time except when one is dressed in negligee is in bad taste. Its place is in one's private rooms, hence the name, boudoir cap. It may be worn for breakfast provided that breakfast is served in one's own room. It was never intended for the family breakfast table, or general wear in the home, much less for street or sports wear. A woman would not think of wearing a kimono and bedroom slippers while motor-ing or calling, still these would be no more out of place than a bedroom cap. For the kitchen or for cleaning a cap is often quite essential, and serves as a protection for the hair. Such a cap should be simple in design, so that it can easily be laundered, and it should seem to be a part of the house dress with which it is worn.

**Dark Hose With White Shoes**—Dark hose should not be worn with white shoes, nor white footwear when the remainder of the costume is dark. It is impossible to make the costume seem well-balanced vertically when the upper portion is dark and the base is light. It also makes the feet too conspicuous.

**Decoration That Is Too Realistic**—Decoration that is too realistic, such as a fur neckpiece that might easily be taken for a living animal; a feather hat that looks like a real bird; and embroidered butterflies that resemble an illustration in a biology textbook, are not artistic.

**Distorting Lines**—Lines that contradict, or seem to distort the natural lines and proportions of the figure should be avoided. Examples: An extremely high, or extremely low waist line. The historical hoop-skirt and wasp-like waistline. A very large hat,



or a hair dress that makes the head seem proportionately too large.

**Superfluous Trimming**—Decoration or trimming that looks as tho it were merely stuck on is never in good taste. Unless it really beautifies and seems a part of the structure upon which it is placed, one would be better off without it.

The purpose of decoration is to beautify. This may be done in color, line, and value contrast. There are three types of motifs used in decoration. First, the naturalistic motif strives to imitate some natural object. This is rarely successful because there is so seldom a suitable place for it. Second, the abstract motif does not have its source in nature. Beauty is obtained by space and line arrangement, often resulting in geometric forms. On a dress this type of design may be applied in the various ornamental stitches. Third, the conventional motif takes a natural thing and attempts to translate it into form and color which harmonize with the material and the shape to be decorated.

### GOOD WORKMANSHIP IS NECESSARY

In order to make a success of a garment made at home, two phases of the subject must be understood. They are: First, a knowledge and appreciation of that which is proper and best for the individual in line, texture and color; second, the skill in carrying out the idea with actual materials; in other words, the construction of the garment. Altho it is not the purpose of this bulletin to give principles and methods of construction, the two phases, design and construction, are so closely related that the following points could not be omitted:

**Placing the Pattern**—When laying the pattern on materials such as plaids, stripes or figured materials, it is necessary to lay it on in such a way that, if possible, the plaids and figures will match when joined, and that the lines in plaids and stripes run in harmony with the figure. Often a beautiful design is ruined by neglecting this and also by neglecting to test such materials as broadcloth, duvetyn or velvets, for an up and down before they are cut. As the light strikes the garment, the parts with the nap running up will appear much darker than the parts where the nap runs down, giving an appearance of having used two kinds of materials that do not match. Before laying on the pattern, brush your hand over the material and feel which way the nap has been pressed. The nap should brush downward in a dress.

**Cutting**—In cutting, it is best, wherever possible, to leave liberal allowance of material, in order to make it possible to make

alterations in line, if necessary, when the dress is tried on. In order to follow the exact line of the pattern for basting, the outline of the pattern may be accurately marked on the material.

**Fitting**—The proper fitting of a garment cannot be over-emphasized. If a dress fits too tightly or is too loose, or has wrinkles running at any angle, the beauty of it is marred, no matter what the original plans for the dress might have been. The dress form will help much in the problem of fitting.

**Stitching**—The stitching must be absolutely straight and even, whether it is used on the outside of the garment or on the inside, such as the stitching of the seams. If these are not stitched straight they will pucker and destroy the lines of the dress.

**Trimming**—Unless trimming and ornamentation is of the best and is perfectly applied, it is better to do without it.

**Pressing**—It is necessary to press or steam a garment so that all lines have been eliminated except those that are a part of the design. Many women purposely try not to press out the original creases of the material. These lines are likely to occur anywhere in a costume and are certainly out of place.

**Dress Form**—The value of the dress form as an aid in both design and construction to the woman who makes her own garments, cannot be estimated. In the first place, it gives her an opportunity to study the proportions and lines of her figure, which is most essential. It also simplifies the matter of fitting and gives an opportunity to study different effects of line, by draping and pinning the material in place for the sake of study and criticism. However, she should not make the mistake of letting the dress form take the place of trying the garment on herself. She should study a dress by putting it on and then moving around to see how it behaves while she is walking, stooping, reaching or sitting down in it.

### HOW TO CULTIVATE GOOD TASTE IN DRESS

By learning to know the laws and principles upon which design is based, and by constantly applying them.

By observing people who are well dressed, being able to tell just what it is that gives this impression.

By studying good fashion books.

By learning to appreciate nature; no better place could be found for studying color harmonies.

By the study of portrait paintings by the masters, or any good pictures.

By striving to dress well at all times.