



June 2006

Style Tip of the Month

80 Things You Need for a Fabulous Wardrobe!

Last year, as I became a hurricane Rita evacuee, leaving Houston for safer ground in Austin, TX the first thing that I thought about was my family that was staying behind. Having seen the effects of Hurricane Katrina, I could only pray that they would fare well. Although a bit vain, my next thought was what would happen to my humble one bedroom apartment and all of my favorite things. Would the building still be there when I got back, or would it go twirling through the air like on the Wizard of Oz? The latter vision had me picturing all of my clothes and shoes flying out the top of my apartment, all to the enjoyment of the people below. To heck with my chaise lounge and bar stools; I didn't want any of the residents of Emerald City walking around in my new Christian Louboutin espadrilles that had just miraculously fallen from the sky! Well, needless to say, my family, as well as my apartment (and Christian Louboutin's), fared well in the storm. Unfortunately, others in the community were not as fortunate, and my thoughts and prayers went out to them then and now as we enter this year's hurricane season.

Where is she going with this I'm sure you're saying(just hold on – I'm getting there)! What would I do if I did suddenly lose all of my wonderful clothes, shoes and accessories and had to start over? I couldn't possibly go out and replace everything. I would have to start somewhere, but where? Or perhaps I haven't lost anything, but just want a closet makeover instead. As I pondered these two notions, I came up with a list of 80 essentials that I think any great closet should have. Now, I know 80 seems like a lot--actually, it shouldn't to any one of my readers, as I've seen some of your closets and 80 items doesn't even touch the surface! If 80 items seems like a stretch to you, think of it as a goal.

Evaluate what your wardrobe needs are-- both personal and professional-- and build from there. Some items will be more important than others based on what your needs are. A few *key* pieces however are the foundation for any great wardrobe and can always be built upon to give you a wardrobe that is the envy of many! So, check your closets; I'm sure many of you already have these items but if not, happy shopping!

The LIST

- 1 killer suit – Should be in a basic color, such as black, brown or camel and can be either a skirt or pant suit (Ann Taylor, Brooks Brothers, Jones New York)
- 3 pair of well tailored slacks – in a seasonless fabric-- such as wool. 1 pair of casual pants in another fabric such as linen, rayon, or cotton/spandex blend (Neiman Marcus, Ann Taylor, Banana Republic)
- 2 cashmere or silk sweater sets – These are great to wear with slacks when you want a pulled-together look with minimal effort (Loehman's, Saks or Off 5th Ave., and Marshall's)
- 5 classic button-down shirts in a variation of regular and French cuff. Of course, at least one of these should be a WHITE button down(see Style on Demand's, Style Tip of the Month , Apr. 06)! (Banana Republic, The Limited, TJ Maxx, Ralph Lauren – misses and women's sizes)
- 3 Miscellaneous blouses and shirts – These can be for going out on the town, such as halter or strapless or other fun/out of the ordinary styles (Off 5th Ave, Marshall's, Express, The Limited)
- 5 pairs of pumps/heels – 2 pair for work, 2 pair for fun and 1 dressy pair (DSW, Dillard's, Marshall's, TJ Maxx and Aerosoles – yes, believe it or not, they have some great new styles!)
- 4 pair of flats/sneakers – 1 work appropriate, 4 others (DSW, Dillard's, Marshall's, TJ Maxx)
- 4 Dresses – 1 Basic Black Dress (every girl should have one!), 1 dress that works for work or church, 1 formal (that isn't a former bridesmaid dress!), and 1 WOW dress (for when he calls for that impromptu date!) (Images Boutique, Nordstrom's, BB1 Classic, ZARA)

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- 2 Blazers – 1 that can be worn with slacks to work, and 1 that can be worn with jeans or khaki's (Ralph Lauren, Loehmann's,)
- 1 Casual Coat (Loehmann's Marshall's, TJ Maxx)
- 1 Warm Coat (Loehmann's, Marshall's, TJ Maxx, Victoria Secret Catalogue)
- 10 T-shirts and tanks – in a mixture of basic colors, embellished or fun prints (GAP, Marshall's, Gadzook's)
- 3 pairs of great fitting jeans – you can never have too many, but 3 will get you started! Some great brands are 7 for All Mankind which can be found at most department stores and also at Images Boutique. 7 also comes in women's sizes and can be found at Lane Bryant, LUCKY jeans (found at the LUCKY store) House of Dereon, which can be found at Macy's and Dillard's and GAP jeans (Long and Lean are my favorite) -- found at – you guessed it – GAP!
- 14 pairs of seamless, no-visible panty line undies – NO VISIBLE PANTY LINE being the key phrase here! I always opt for neutral colors, but you can wear whatever your taste dictates. Just remember, red undies don't look good under WHITE slacks, neither do pink and green polka dot ones! And remember, PANTY LINES ARE NOT OUR FRIENDS! (Top Drawer Lingerie, Victoria's Secret, Foley's lingerie department)
- 7 bras (in a combination of black, nude, with 1 pretty color). With the variety of low cut dresses and blouses out there today, you should also incorporate 1 convertible bra that can be worn as a strapless, halter, etc. (Top Drawer Lingerie, Victoria's Secret)
- 3 combinations of workout gear-- because face it--being physically fit is oh, so stylish! (Oshman's, Marshall's,)
- 2 sets of nice pajamas – not the holey boxers and Hello Kitty T-shirt from high school that you wear every night, but the ones that you won't mind taking on vacation with you (TJ Maxx, Dillard's)
- 2 proper-fitting swimsuits (Dillard's, Newport News.com)
- 4 Handbags - 2 classic bags for work or casual, 1 clutch or "going out" bag, and 1 WOW bag. My personal preference is to have one designer bag that will carry you season after season. Whether it's

Louis Vuitton, Gucci, or if you're fortunate enough to purchase a Hermes Birkin Bag, these bags are well made and worth the investment. And whether you have on a fabulous dress or a t-shirt and jeans, this bag will carry your look. Nordstrom's also carries several designer bag lines, as well as other well made styles. Loehmann's Marshall's, Saks Off 5th and TJ Maxx also have tons of great styles at fabulously affordable prices.

- 1 pair of Diamond or Pearl Studs – Whether you're fortunate enough to have a pair of Mikimoto pearls or a pair of studs from Tiffany's, a classic pair of earrings are the perfect accessory to top off any outfit. (TJ Maxx's jewelry department is a great resource for real pearl studs and also faux diamond studs with sterling silver or 14 carat gold backings)
- 1 Classic Watch – there are tons of fun styles out there, but a classic watch is one accessory that will transcend time and styles (Movado, Raymond Weil, and Rolex – can be found at any reputable jeweler and more affordable, yet equally stylish classics, such as Seiko and Timex, can also be found at these same jewelers or major department stores).
- 1 pair of fabulous sunglasses – Let's face it – squinting causes wrinkles and like panty lines, wrinkles are NOT our friends! So block that sun, stop the squinting and buy a pair of fabulous shades! (Chanel, Chanel, and Chanel) you guessed it – I like Chanel shades! Major department stores also have other fabulous designer shades that will suit your fancy as well.

Andrea L. Bonner

*Personal Shopper/Decorative Consultant
Style On Demand*

2910 Camelot Lane

Missouri City, TX 77459

p: 713.206.2494 | f: 281.499.1050

e: style_personalshopper@yahoo.com