

FOREVER IN FASHION

When it comes to great style, AGE DOESN'T MATTER—but dressing for it does. These chic ladies offer us their tricks of the trade.

Even the most fashionable women obsess about fashion; they've just figured out the rules that work for them during every decade. "If you look at people of great style, like Grace

Kelly, you see they developed a trademark," observes design guru India Hicks. Here, some of the most well-dressed women around share their secrets for growing into your own style.

IN YOUR 20s

This is the time to experiment, as actress Camilla Belle did with a winged Valentino for a bash in January. "I'm starting to feel brave enough to wear things that are outlandish and crazy," says the 23-year-old. Meanwhile, Brit It girl Sophia Hesketh, 25, says she is taking advantage of her leggy youth to wear "super short dresses with no tights."

On the darker side, DJ Leigh Lezark, 25, favors black for her many nights out. She plays with fabric and texture, from a sheer Dior top with a skintight pencil skirt to a risqué Davidelfin peekaboo skirt with transparent panels. "I've been incorporating more lace and feminine silhouettes into my wardrobe," she says.

The 20s are fun, but there is a lot to look forward to. "I'm too young to be dripping in jewels," says Belle, "but I can't wait to wear diamonds and emeralds."

Camilla Belle in Valentino

"I'm starting to feel brave enough to wear things that are outlandish."
—Camilla Belle

IN YOUR 30s

Roopal Patel, 36, a senior market editor at Neiman Marcus, has sworn off the voluminous frocks that were once her staples. "They don't feel feminine. I got rid of all the Empire waists and baby-doll dresses in my closet."

Young mom Eleanor Ylvisaker avoids trendy pieces. "I still gravitate to edgier designers like Balenciaga, Givenchy, and Balmain, but I'm no longer obsessed with having the look of the moment," explains the 33-year-old fashion consultant, who by day relies on "my gray button-down shirt from Rag & Bone, a blue-and-white-striped Alexander Wang tee, Evisu jeans, and Etro scarves." This spring, her picks include Proenza Schouler's racer-back tanks and multicolored tube dress.

Patel also has a penchant for tribal patterns. "I have more confidence wearing bold prints," she says. "I love the idea of wearing a great safari jacket to the office or a crisp white shirt with leopard-print wedges."

IN YOUR 40s

"What I love about being in my 40s is that I know what suits me," says Julie Janklow, the 42-year-old owner of Manhattan restaurant Sweetiepie, who swears by a uniform of Current/Elliott jeans and flat-heeled boots mixed with Balenciaga jackets, Isabel Marant shirts, and vintage Lacoste sunglasses. "It's a matter of finding your comfort zone," explains Janklow, whose sweet spot this summer will be Adidas by Stella McCartney separates and a ▶

"I'm no longer obsessed with having the look of the moment."
—Eleanor Ylvisaker

Eleanor Ylvisaker in a Peter Pilotto dress

Leigh Lezark in Dior

new multicolored Carlos Falchi bag.

When she hit 40, model mom Veronica Webb, 45, started to build a closet of luxe classics like trench coats and black cocktail dresses. "I depend on those like transportation."

Likewise, India Hicks, 42, relies on formfitting basics like Day Birger et Mikkelsen T-shirts and Stella McCartney ribbed tanks, punctuated with statement accessories like Paul & Joe studded belts, lace-up men's brogues, and a camo fedora by Patricia Underwood. "Ever since wearing that really hideous bridesmaid dress at Princess Diana's wedding in 1981, I have had an intense aversion to frills," she says. Most of all, she avoids "in-between lengths" in skirts and shoes. "I prefer a heel the height of the Eiffel Tower or a shoe as flat as a pancake."



India Hicks in Day Birger et Mikkelsen



Nina Griscom in a Derek Lam top and a J. Crew sweater

IN YOUR 60s+

Marisa Berenson, 63, takes a turn from the eclectic dressing of her youth with statement-making looks like her white Roberto Cavalli tuxedo. "There were a lot of things I could wear [in the past] that I don't now," says the actress, who now cherishes the chance to wear a fancy frock from John Galliano or a vintage Versace evening jacket. "I think it's important to keep the glamour in life."

Her style staples include Fendi furs and bags and Manolo Blahnik flats. When she has to get basic (for example, on her frequent trips), she packs Ralph Lauren jeans and Donna Karan shirts in

"I prefer a heel the height of the Eiffel Tower or a shoe as flat as a pancake." —India Hicks

IN YOUR 50s

Nina Griscom, 55, still has fun with her look, but she's learned what to avoid. "Sadly, I can no longer pull off that black suede miniskirt with the fringe that I'd kill to wear," she laughs. Instead, she takes risks with accessories like Anya Hindmarch's silver snakeskin hobo bag. For day, "a Lanvin T-shirt dress and Miu Miu flats work better than a cotton polo dress with sandals, which makes me look frumpy," says Griscom, who's swapped stilettos for Christian Louboutin wedges.

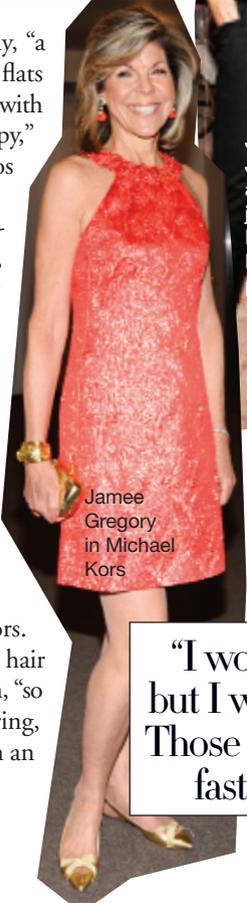
Society doyenne (and grandmother of three) Coco Kopelman, 59, opts for chic comfort. "I get more mileage out of Chanel jackets paired with Ralph Lauren jeans, or a white Anne Fontaine shirt with skirts," she notes. Kopelman mixes high-end pieces with Banana Republic shells, Vince cardigans, and J Brand black corduroys and avoids complex footwear. "I love rubber-soled Tod's, ballerina flats, and Jack Rogers in the summer."

Both ladies stick to neutral colors. "Over the years, my skin tone and hair color have changed," says Kopelman, "so bright fabrics may not be as flattering, which I discovered when trying on an old raspberry suit."

"What I love about being in my 40s is that I know what suits me." —Julie Janklow



Julie Janklow in a Balmain jacket and Ralph Lauren pants



Jamee Gregory in Michael Kors



Marisa Berenson in Roberto Cavalli

black, white, and gold. As author Jamee Gregory enters her 60s, she stays current with pieces like trousers by Tory Burch, Madewell denim, Wolford turtle-necks, Gap T-shirts, and Roger Vivier buckle flats. Gone are the days of anything short and tight. Instead, she wears simple A-line shifts by Chanel and Michael Kors. She's also put aside her oversize handbags in favor of more manageable purses like her mini red snakeskin Dior or Hermès's new pink Constance.

And don't expect to find Gregory dusting off her '80s frocks to run with the current revival trend. "I wore Lacroix and poufs, but I wouldn't go there again," she says. "It was fun, but those exaggerated styles date fast."

One style secret all these women agree on is the importance of finding a talented tailor. "Alter the jacket, the skirt, or the dress so it fits you perfectly," advises Patel, "and you'll know you look great without looking in the mirror."

And as Kopelman says, when it comes to fashion, you can't go wrong if you follow these two words: *know thyself*. **Maura Kutner**

"I wore Lacroix and poufs, but I wouldn't go there again. Those exaggerated styles date fast." —Jamee Gregory

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