

# Classic Clothing and Accessories Styles and Combinations



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## 10 Classic Clothing Pieces

You hear about "classic" cars and "classic" movies, but what, exactly, are "classic" clothes? Old styles from long ago that were hot in their heyday but that no one wears anymore?

Hardly!

Classic clothes are styles that look good on just about everyone and that have been popular for years. Like the humble chicken that can be batter dipped and fried for a casual occasion or simmered with vegetables into Coq Au Vin for formal guests, classic clothes can be dressed up or dressed down for any occasion. With classic pieces, a little can go a l-o-n-g way, so invest in these wardrobe staples so you can wear them for years to come. Classics include:

### A Crisp White Shirt

A crisp, white, button down shirt can be worn under suit jackets, with a skirt or pants, under a vest, over a tank top whatever you want. Dress it up with a silk scarf or a strand of pearls for work, or tuck it into jeans for a more laid-back look.



White Shirt

### A Form-Fitting T-Shirt

A simple style, form-fitting t-shirt can take you to meetings when worn under a jacket, to a picnic when worn with jeans, and help keep you warm when layered under a shirt or sweater. Forget the logos, cute sayings, or goofy details - just stick with white and fitted for maximum versatility.



Form-Fitting Tee

### Straight Leg Dark Pants

Dark, straight-legged pants in a simple style can take you to work during the day, to evening events at night, and to casual events on weekends, depending on what you pair with them. Dress them up with a beaded top and sandals for night, dress them down with a sweater and flats for errands.



Straight Leg Pants

### **Straight Leg Jeans**

A simple style, straight-leg dark denim jean can see you through LOTS of casual activities. Pair them with a silk top and heels for something a little dressier, a t-shirt and tennis shoes for something a little more casual.



Straight Leg Jeans

### **A Dark, Fitted, Single-Breasted Jacket**

Want to command respect and immediately set a more formal tone? Put on a dark, fitted, single-breasted jacket. It's appropriate for meetings, funerals, church - you name it - and will immediately upgrade any outfit you wear, including jeans. If you can only afford one jacket, make sure it's this style.



Single-Breasted Jacket

### **A Knee Length Skirt**

Whether your lower half looks best encased in a straight, A-line, or wrap style, strive for a dark or neutral color with a hem to the knees. Knee-length tends to flatter most women, whereas thigh high or calf length tend to work for very few.



Knee-Length Skirt

### **A Day Dress**

A day dress in a simple style can take you just about anywhere, from church and teas to funerals and work. You can dress it up with heels and jewelry, dress it down with flats and a trendy jacket.



Day Dress

### A Cocktail Dress

This can be the traditional LBD (little black dress) or another color in an evening style and fabric. Wear it for cocktail parties, semi-formal dinners, drinks with friends, or the theater.



Cocktail Dress

### A Trench Coat

A classic, belted trench with a zip-out liner can take you anywhere in the world three seasons a year. It will repel rain, sleet, and snow in style, and fold up compactly when not in use. Originally designed as an all-weather coat by Thomas Burberry for use by British soldiers "in the trenches" during World War I, the trench does exactly as intended - keeps you warm in all sorts of weather.



Trench Coat

### Walking Shorts

A dark or neutral-colored, flat front, straight-leg walking short is a summer staple. It should fit you properly without gaping, pinching, or riding up, and the hem should hit just a few inches above the knee. Wear them with tennis shoes for a very casual look, or upgrade a bit with strappy sandals or cute flats.



Walking Shorts

All clothes in this section from [Chadwicks.com](http://Chadwicks.com)

Now I have to admit that if I'd seen this list at the height of my clothing consumption ("fashionista") days in my 20's, I would have shouted, "boring!" and immediately dismissed it.

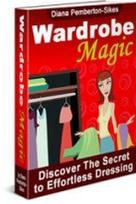
But take a closer look at these clothes. They look great all by themselves, but they also offer an elegant background to more interesting pieces. Have a stunning top you want everyone to see? Pair it with your black pants or dark skirt. Have a gorgeous new necklace? Put it with your classic day dress and show it off properly.

It's like the difference between walking into a white room with light blue carpet and being asked to set it for an elegant dinner party on a \$500 budget, and walking into a lime green room with orange carpet and being asked to do the same. The first one allows you to focus

## The Best of the Clothing Chronicles: Classic Clothing and Accessories

on the table; the other forces you to cover up the backdrop before taxing your imagination (and what's left of your budget) on the table. See the difference?

Yes, trends are fun and certainly have their place, but classics are VERSATILE and allow you to do more with less. Dress them up, dress them down, wear them out - and still look good. That's the power of classic pieces, and that's why you should [have plenty of them in your wardrobe](#).



## 10 Classic Fashion Accessories

Looking for accessories that might be missing from your wardrobe? Want to add a little "pizzazz" to the mix? Here's a look at some classic fashion accessories, not including shoes or jewelry. We'll look at those another time.

### A Wide Brimmed Hat

A wide-brimmed hat is both stylish and practical in keeping the elements at bay. A felt hat for winter will keep your head warm and the snow out of your face, while a straw hat for summer prevent sunburn and provides instant shade.



[Macys.com](http://Macys.com)

### Dark Sunglasses

Sunglasses help keep the sun out of your eyes and can immediately increase your "cool" quotient. Find frames that work with your face shape, and go cheap if you like variety, tend to lose them, or have small kids at home who can't resist playing with your stuff.



[Macys.com](http://Macys.com)

### A Silk Scarf

A large, square silk scarf with a beautiful pattern can last for years and enjoy endless uses. Fold it various ways and use it as a headband, wind protection for your hair, a splash of color around your neck, wrist, or handbag, or even as a belt. While scarves go in and out of popularity, they're never out of style.



[Macys.com](http://Macys.com)

### Gloves

Once upon a time, hand touching was considered too intimate between strangers, so women wore gloves of various lengths and styles throughout the day and evening to prevent inappropriate touch. Today, we wear gloves mostly for warmth, but they have much more use than that: they prevent blisters in sports, protect hands when gardening, and look elegant with evening attire. Wear them and draw comments.



[LoveToKnow.com](http://LoveToKnow.com)

### A 1" Leather Belt

Belts, like scarves, go in and out of style, but a dark, 1" leather belt is a classic that will last you for years with proper care. Wear it with jeans, dresses, skirts, and shorts to fill those belt loops and finish the ensemble.



[Macys.com](http://Macys.com)

### Thigh-High Stockings

Women have worn hosiery for a thousand years to keep legs warm, and in the last century, to make legs look good with shorter hems. Wear thigh high stockings to add polish and keep you cool in summer, comfortable during pregnancy, and forever sexy to your man.



[Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)

### Trouser Socks

Wearing closed-toe shoes without socks or hosiery will make your foot sweat and your shoes damp and smelly. So don't do it. Use trouser socks with pants and jeans to wick away foot moisture, polish your look, and extend the life of your shoes.



[Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)

### A Leather Handbag

A dark, well-constructed leather bag in a simple style can take you to most day functions three seasons a year. If you opt for a color that goes with most of your wardrobe (black, brown, taupe), you can invest a lot, use it a lot, and get your money's worth by the time you have to replace.



[Macys.com](http://Macys.com)

### Straw Handbag or Tote

A flat-bottom straw handbag or tote in a simple style will look fresh and appropriate with most of your summer-time wardrobe including - quite possibly - your business wear. Avoid cutesy things like beaded animals or sea creatures if you use it for work and want to be taken seriously.



[Zappos.com](http://Zappos.com)

## Evening Bag

Evening is a time for dressing up and being elegant, so put on your heels and leave your big daytime bag at home. Evening clutches need to be large enough to carry credit cards, money, lipstick, and your keys, and can have a short chain handle that can be tucked in or left out. If you invest in one dark one and one light (or metallic) one, they should see you through years of use. I have a beautiful pearl bag my mother carried in the '60's that I still use a few times a year.



[Zappos.com](http://Zappos.com)

Now if you see things on this list that you don't or won't use, don't buy them. That's fine. But if you're trying to fill out your wardrobe and cover all your accessory bases, use these as a guideline to fill in the holes.

Need more help finding the right fashion accessories for you? Download a copy of [Accessory Magic](#) to see how you can use accessories to define your style and extend your budget.



## Classic Color Combinations

What's the easiest way to extend your wardrobe without buying a lot of new things? Use your existing pieces in different ways.

If you build a core wardrobe of basic pieces in simple styles and neutral colors, it's really easy to do. Simple styles like pencil skirts, oxford shirts, straight leg pants, and single-breasted jackets offer the most mix-and-match possibilities, while neutral colors like black, brown, white, navy, and beige pair well with a variety of colors. Neutrals can also be worn TOGETHER for a classic, evergreen style.

Here are a few classic color combinations you should try, depending on your coloring:

### Black and White

Always a favorite, always simple yet elegant, black and white is so easy yet it packs a big punch. Try black with white accents in cool weather, white with black accents in warm weather, and equal parts black and white for year 'round chic.



[Chadwicks.com](http://Chadwicks.com)

### Black and Red

Red is the color of fire and blood and has long been associated with strength, power, and passion. While men can only get away with a little red in their business attire (like a tie), women have a lot more leeway. Wear a red jacket with a black skirt when you want to establish authority in business, or wear all red or all black with touches of the other color when you want to turn heads and stand out.



[Chadwicks.com](http://Chadwicks.com)

### Black and Gray

A hot look on a cold day, lots of black with gray touches or lots of gray with black touches will keep you looking warm as toast. Want something a little lighter but still in the gray family? Try taupe, which is a very light grayish-putty color that offers an easy chic factor all year 'round.



[Chadwicks.com](http://Chadwicks.com)

### Navy and White

Another perennial favorite, navy blue and white offers a crisp, clean look that means business without being

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overbearing. Worn by the military, the police, and business people for centuries, navy blue and white consistently ranks high for instilling trust and credibility. So what's a casual navy and white look? Why blue jeans and a white shirt, of course!



[LaRedoute.com](http://LaRedoute.com)

### Navy and Beige

Navy and beige also offer a crisp, clean look, yet it comes across as being more approachable than navy and white. Try a navy top with beige pants or skirt for a decisive, business-like look.



[Chadwicks.com](http://Chadwicks.com)

### Ivory and Brown

Tend to look better in warm colors than cool colors? Try ivory and brown to look strong and authoritative. You'll find plenty to choose from this season in a wide variety of browns, from beige and camel to rusty browns and dark chocolate.



[Chadwicks.com](http://Chadwicks.com)

### Camel and Brown

Like gray and black, camel and brown can be very flattering, depending on your coloring. Try wearing the darker color on body parts you want to minimize, the lighter color on parts you want to emphasize.



[Chadwicks.com](http://Chadwicks.com)

See how easy this is?

By using tried-and-true color combinations, you can use neutrals to extend your wardrobe immeasurably, not only with other colors you like, but also with each other. Just pull them together for a quick yet elegant look on those crazy mornings when you can't figure out what to wear - or for those special occasions when you want to add a little punch to the equation.

[Just try it yourself and see!](#)