

How to Be Stylish

Sexy Suits • The Perfect Jacket • Gold Cuffs • Racy Pumps

By Danielle Pergament



Embellished Dress

Extravagant details, like a jewel-encrusted waist, a deep slit, and feathered sleeves, serve dual purposes on dresses this fall: They make a simple cocktail dress about a thousand times more interesting, and they save us the trouble of finding the right jewelry (hint: none). The crepe sheath, the foundation beneath all that flair, keeps things tasteful. Finish it off with a pair of wildly adorned heels.

Embroidered crepe dress by Bottega Veneta. Suede shoes by Nicholas Kirkwood. Velvet-and-leather bag by Chanel. Phone by Nokia Windows. Makeup colors: Sheer Eye Shadow in Pale Barley and Lip Mist in Nude Peach by Burberry Beauty. These pages: Hair, Cim Mahony; makeup, Brigitte Reiss-Andersen; manicure, Tatyana Molot. Models: Angela Lindvall, Stephen Diehl, Michael Kerschbaumer, David Fox Powell, and Steven Priebe. Prop stylist: Lisa Gwilliam. Location: Apella, Event Space at Alexandria Center in New York City. Fashion editor: Siobhan Bonnouvrier. Details, see Shopping Guide.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY REGAN CAMERON

The smell of autumn is in the air—crisp apples, sharpened pencils, newly stitched leather. The best looks right now are just as seasonal, but much more surprising: a frayed-sleeve cocktail dress; a slim, zip-front pantsuit; a turtleneck sweater that's office-appropriate. Like the weather itself (neither skin-baring hot nor bone-chilling cold), these pieces afford balance, blending structure and comfort, glamour and effortlessness. All of which is to say: Your fall wardrobe is ready—bring on the cider.

Felt coat, shearling collar, silk-and-jersey tank, and viscose skirt by Reed Krakoff. Leather boots and satchel by Alexander Wang. Wallets by Smythson and Valextra and Rimowa. Makeup colors: Expert Wear eye shadow in Rose Lights and Super Stay Lipstick in Perpetual Peony by Maybelline New York. Details, see Shopping Guide.

Fitted Coat

There may be no piece that telegraphs style and sophistication as effectively as a knee-length, cream-colored overcoat. The most flattering versions are cinched at the waist and flare slightly at the hem. Wear it with slim trousers or a knee-length skirt (make sure the hemlines match)—and avoid long dresses underneath, which can turn the whole look frumpy faster than you can say “sister wife.”

Below, from left: Coach leather boots, \$395 (coach.com), and Gucci leather boots, \$1,550 (gucci.com).



Boot Camp

On the left, the most flattering, failproof everyday boots. On the right, the most flattering, failproof office boots. The rule of thumb (or foot): A narrow heel and almond toe make leather look sleek.



DAVID COOK (STILL LIFE)



Day Dress

Traditionally, shift dresses are simple, refined, and—someone has to say it—boring. The revamped version has the same graceful silhouette, but with a few key tweaks, like cap sleeves to make it more hourglass and an unexpected zip front for a sporty edge. Throw in a contrasting bag and a pair of tough booties and you've got a look that's cool, versatile, and worlds away from prim.

Wool dress and pony-hair bag by Fendi. Leather boots by Pringle of Scotland. Watch by Swarovski. iPad case by Smythson. Makeup colors: Le Prisme for Eyes in Purple Show and Rouge Interdit Shine lipstick in Beige Shine by Givenchy. Details, see Shopping Guide.



Cashmere-and-leather jacket with belt and wool satin pants by Dior. Watch by Swarovski. Leather sandals by Alexander Wang. Leather clutch by Céline. Makeup colors: Intense I-Color Powder Shadow in Smoky-I for Greens and Wake Up Blush + Highlighter in Pink Rose by Almay. Details, see Shopping Guide.

Streamlined Pantsuit

The newest suits have as much in common with standard pantsuits as Rick Santorum does with Rick Ross. Gone are the conservative cuts and dress-for-success shoulder pads. Now, a zipper sometimes appears where the buttons used to, and daring materials, like leather, replace traditional wool. But most notable is the shape: Instead of making everyone look the same, this new suit hugs every last curve. It's sexy without revealing a thing.

Time Machine

It may look familiar, but this Cartier Tank isn't the same Cartier Tank as the old Cartier Tank. In fact, this is the company's first major update to the watch in a decade. Some key changes:



CORNERS
They're rounded, creating a more feminine (and streamlined) look.

CROWN
The dial is inset for a sleeker effect. Plus, it won't snag on your tights.

SIZE
Understated and elegant, with a band just broad enough to hug the wrist and catch the eye.

Cartier gold watch (small), \$22,100, at Cartier stores.

LEATHER
The buttery leather looks even better with age and a few scuff marks.



Céline brass-and-stone cuffs, \$780 and \$900, at Jeffrey, N.Y.C. (212-206-1272).

Cuff Love

One bracelet is a statement. Stacked, they're satisfyingly clanky. Either way, they add a sleek flash of gold to a smart suit.

GRAB BAG

Part slouchy, part structured, and totally practical—it's the satchel the world's coolest doctor would carry.

OPENING
It yawns wide and snaps shut, making it easy to find your belongings (like a tote), while still keeping them safely stashed inside (not like a tote).

Michael Kors leather satchel, \$1,395, at select Michael Kors Collection stores.

TOP HANDLES
Ladylike when worn on the crook of your arm.



DAVID COOK

Paneled Jacket

The hero of your fall wardrobe is the perfect jacket. That means a structured shape in an unexpected fabric, like rubber, leather, neoprene, or a combination thereof. This boxy jacket goes with almost anything (except poufy skirts) but looks especially great with narrow pants or jeans. It's sort of like an anorak—only it's sleeker and more refined, and it transitions easily from outdoors to inside.



Gabardine jacket and crocodile-and-leather bag from Balenciaga by Nicolas Ghesquière. White-gold watch by Cartier. Makeup colors: Beautiful Color Eye Shadow in Romance, Color Intrigue Cheekcolor in Peach Sorbet, and High Shine Lip Gloss in Shimmering Pink by Elizabeth Arden. Details, see Shopping Guide.

Cotton shirt by Calvin Klein Collection. Cotton pants, leather shoes, and leather belt by Proenza Schouler. Calf-hair clutch by Pierre Hardy. Steel watch by Gucci. Details, see Shopping Guide.



Wide-Leg Trousers

The trousers of the moment are crisp, tailored, wide-leg, and a close relative of menswear. Juxtapose masculine accessories—hefty heels, a rugged leather belt, a beefy watch—with softer, more feminine elements, like a collarless blouse with sleeves that show off dainty wrist bones or a swipe of rosy pink lipstick.

Pair wide-leg pants with thick, substantial heels. Stilettos can look cartoonishly thin peeking out from under ample cuffs.



STRAP
The strap keeps these sweet and a bit girly.

CUTOUTS
Strategic slits at the ankles and toes add just a touch of sexiness.

HEEL
They're skinny but actually not that high (three inches), making them office-perfect.

TOES
The pointed toe looks especially cool peeking out from under slim trousers.

Bottega Veneta leather shoes, \$790, at Bottega Veneta stores.

Pump It Up

Are they pumps, stilettos, or Mary Janes? Or all of the above? Bottom line: They're the pair for work.

DAVID COOK (STILL LIFE)

Chunky Sweater

The right sweater looks sleek, posh, and classically feminine; the wrong one looks like you've been ice fishing. Go for a thick knit with a body-skimming silhouette and a surprising detail, like piping down the sides. To offset the weight of the knit, pair it with a narrow pencil skirt.



Wool turtleneck by Sportmax. Wool bouclé skirt by Philosophy di Alberta Ferretti. Makeup colors: Shimmering Cream Eye Color in PK 302 and Shimmering Rouge lipstick in PK 214 in Shiseido Makeup. Details, see Shopping Guide.