

# Wardrobe Staple: The White Shirt

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With Kirstie Smillie



Just when you think there is nothing in your wardrobe, a white shirt will lift your look to a timeless style goddess, says fashion stylist, Kirstie Smillie.

At this time of year when the shops have already begun the transition for cooler weather (even though it's still summer for most of us), a white shirt looks fresh and bright but adds enough cover for the beginning of Autumn.

It's the one item I always look for with clients on a shopping day - the perfect white shirt to layer under or over or just on its own.

### The rules

It should have a high percentage of cotton, maybe a little stretch for comfort, to look crisp and keep a strong white.

It has to be washable or it will sit in the wash bin for most of its life.

Ideally choose a classic collar that will add a sharp frame around your face.

Don't worry that it's see through - layer over striped tops to show a subtle design through, or wear over skin tone undies to disappear.

Use to layer under cropped knitwear and roll the sleeves over the 3/4 sleeves.

If it's longer, try tucking in at the front to emphasise your waist without the full tuck in.

### My white shirt history

Apart from jackets, a white shirt is my own style favourite. I have a large range from classic fitted with cuffs to loose linen; an absolute essential wrap and tie-waisted (which I will be bereft when worn out) and a couple of long oversized tunic shirts that become perfect beach cover ups.

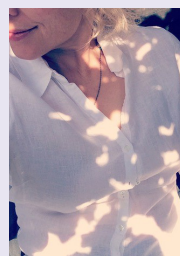
I can't emphasise the super useful status of this simple design classic.

A white shirt will never be a wasted purchase.

### Vintage inspiration, still relevant today:



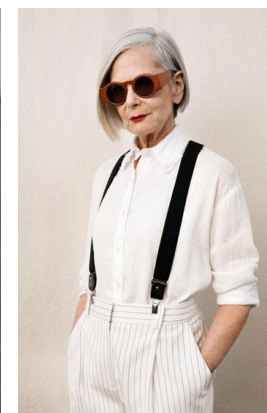
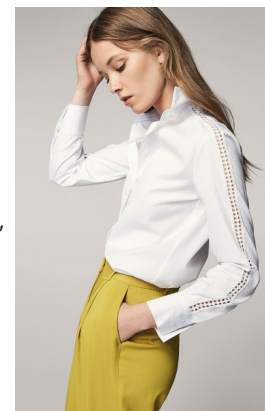
Above, from left, men's style in the 1930s; Ava Gardner during the 1950s; Grace Kelly in the 1960s to Cindy Crawford in Donna Karan in the 1990s.



### White shirt gallery

Oversized on Olivia Palermo (left) to tucked-in and braces on style blogger Lyn Slater (bottom right), these images show the range of a white shirt wardrobe, from dressing up ripped jeans to understating a full-length skirt.

Right: white shirt with lace inserts, Massimo Dutti (£54.95).



Kirstie Smillie is a Personal Fashion Stylist. Follow her style blog [www.kirstiesmillie.com](http://www.kirstiesmillie.com). For appointments, email [kirstie@kirstiesmillie.com](mailto:kirstie@kirstiesmillie.com) or call 07773 234947.

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