



Wardrobe revisited

With interviews for a new job looming and too much black in her wardrobe, Alison Gilbert had plenty of questions for fashion stylist, Kirstie Smillie.

It's known as many things but a wardrobe declutter, edit or detox sorts out the clothes that make you look and feel great with those that don't. Fit is essential, fashion not so. Time is set aside to find outfits for your everyday life and to learn your own personal style. It's about growing in confidence too with a nudge to experiment more and enjoy colour and tone.

Alison, a mid forties fashion lover, often feels a bit confused and asked me to help her decide what stays and what goes. We focused on her immediate needs for now, which meant storing away the corporate dresses and high summer layers and creating outfits for interviews ahead, day layers and options to wear instead of jeans.

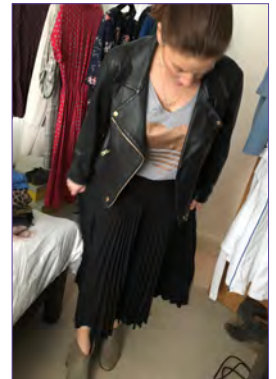
To 'fruit-label' Alison (not sure who started that idea!) I would say she is a slim apple. Full bust and straight waist with neat bottom and great legs. We discussed proportion and the reality of tall, slender

models wearing the brands she loves like Hush and Whistles. Clothes will always look different on real bodies so thinking about your own shape before you buy will save time and energy.

As a guide, if the top half is longer and wider, the bottom half suits slimmer or shorter - and in reverse, if you have chosen to wear wide trousers or a full midi skirt, choose slim fitting or waisted jackets for fit. Alison's grown up ruffle blouse gets balance with her boyfriend jeans and in reverse her midi pleated skirt suited the leather jacket and ankle boots to avoid looking too office-like.



"I feel that I always end up in jeans even when I've got other alternatives... I feel I will be overdressed!"



"I would like to stop buying stuff that I like on instagram that actually isn't suited to my lifestyle....I'm not sure I know my style!"

Alison's quick style guide list:



Wear skinny jeans with oversized knits
Wide trousers need slim fitted knits and cropped jackets
Midi skirts worn with fun t-shirts, waist length or tucked in.
Wear short skirts with flatter boots and black opaques
Wear more colour especially on the top half



Avoid long oversized tops with full skirts or wide trousers
No to matt black near her face, unless there is a pop of colour nearby
We agreed opaque tights and trainers and midi skirts was not for her, instead nude legs with ankle boots or long boots
Try not to over analyse - if it doesn't work, recycle, even if the label is still hanging there - we all make mistakes



What Alison learnt:

Split up two pieces. Her velvet Toast t-shirt looks amazing with her Whistles dark green trousers that we pinned to become ankle length. The long velvet skirt became more relaxed-day with a slim fitting sweater.

Mix up the under layers. If a top comes with a camisole, try a new colour. With Alison's stripy shirt the navy cami relaxed the prim ruffles to add glamour to boyfriend jeans.

Alter to perfect. Spend a little to make a garment fit. Shorten sleeves and see how it lifts the overall look. Alison agreed to shorten a Whistles leather t-shirt and re fitted a navy leather skirt, as these investment items won't date and deserved the attention to detail.

Just wear it. Alison has some gorgeous clothes that were hidden in her wardrobe. By trying on new outfit combinations, she was reminded how great she felt in them. Don't keep for best.

"I thought I might have had lots to get rid of but having Kirstie go through items I was able to rework items which obviously saves money and helps me feel like I'm doing a bit towards my own sustainable footprint in the world. Kirstie doesn't judge your wardrobe but she does ask questions of it. She gets to the crux of your needs always making sure you look stylish and modern.." Ali.



There are rules to follow but as we know these can always be broken. You are an individual so what works for one person will be different for another. Set a morning aside and start the process to achieve a coordinated wardrobe of clothes that you find easy to wear ... a great way to start the year.

For more details on Alison's session, visit my website, www.kirstiesmillie.com.

Kirstie is a Personal Stylist helping you to love your clothes and yourself.

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