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**latitude.**  
 canterbury's own lifestyle magazine

# Fashion Styling

words: chryssie russell images: supplied

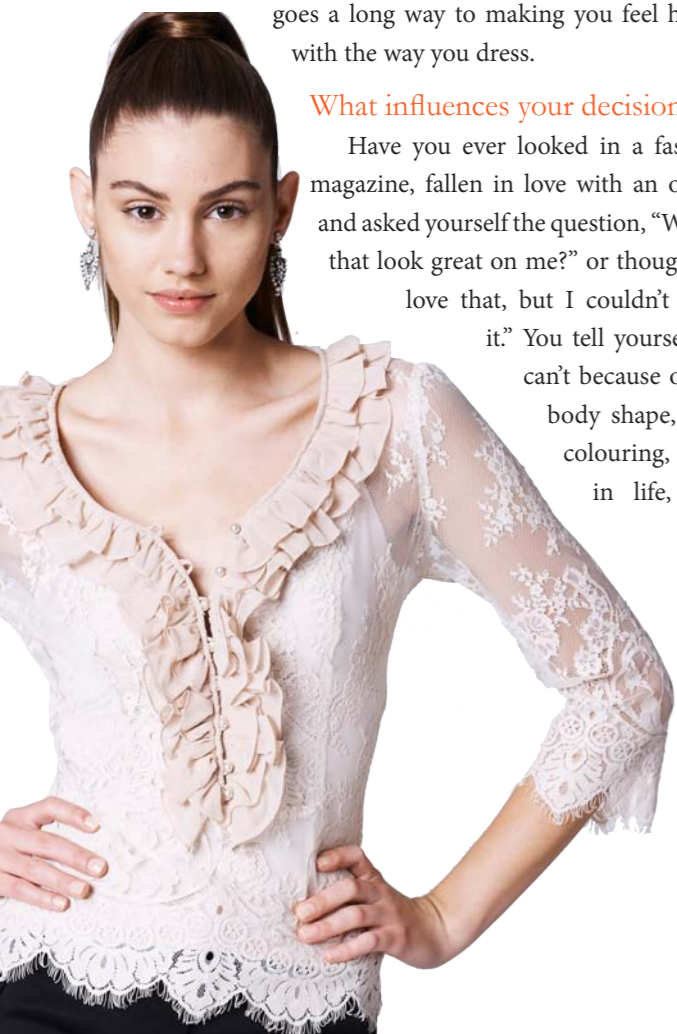
## What is your style personality?

For thousands of years we have adorned our bodies one way or another - and our clothing is very much about expressing ourselves; it is the first impression you give the world. Clothing tells a story of who you are, and the clues are in the colours, and combinations of colours, fabrics, patterns, textures and general style lines you prefer. There are many styles of dressing and your personality and general lifestyle will influence the way you dress.

When you look in your wardrobe ask yourself if you are happy with the clothes in it. What do you think? Do your clothes give a true impression of your personality? I have found in my vast experience as a personal stylist that knowing your look, and what elements make up that look, goes a long way to making you feel happy with the way you dress.

## What influences your decisions?

Have you ever looked in a fashion magazine, fallen in love with an outfit, and asked yourself the question, "Would that look great on me?" or thought, "I love that, but I couldn't wear it." You tell yourself, "I can't because of my body shape, size, colouring, stage in life, age,



profession, or comfort level."

Does this sound familiar?

I have found in my style workshops that these are the most asked questions. We laugh about it but it is very close to our heart.

Past beliefs about what we think we 'should' do, what others have said about us, what we have been told by fashion personalities, read in magazines and newspapers, or watched on the big screen all influence our buying decisions and the way we view ourselves.

Once you discover that you can leave all those influences behind and start with a clean slate, so to speak, you can move on to looking at how you would truly like to dress.

## Feel great in your clothes

You might ask yourself some questions that will give you a clue of what you enjoy wearing such as "What type of fabrics do I like wearing, and why?" "How do I truly like to wear colour, accessories, and jewellery?" These questions will enlighten you as to what you are intrinsically attracted to.

Do you like fabrics that feel soft or structured, fluid or stiff, light or weighty, natural or synthetic (stretchy), lace, textured? What type of patterns - simple, complex or merging? Abstract, floral or traditional like stripes, check and plaids. Style lines, whether they are straight or flowing. Accessories that are simple, ethnic, bold, or dainty. How you wear colour, whether you like lots of neutrals and then add a splash of colour, or would you love to wear more than two colours together?

## Create your unique combination

These are the four main style personalities:

- *Classic* - simplicity and structure
- *Natural* - casual, comfort, relaxed
- *Feminine* - soft and flowing
- *Creative* - unique and different



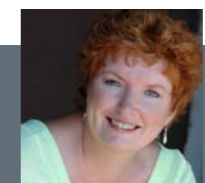
Your look will evolve as you become more confident but the trick is to know what your objective is and stick to it when you shop.

To create your unique style is to combine two of these main personality styles together, and sometimes you might even take one element from a third personality to combine with the first two, just to make it a little more complex. Most people have two basic style personalities. For instance, I am a feminine creative dresser. My main style is creative, as that is more visible in my look than the feminine. Your look will evolve as you become more confident but the trick is to know what your objective is and stick to it when you shop.

Like your life, your wardrobe develops through time and I have generally found that life cycles, careers, babies, body changes and fashion trends are a reminder to ourselves that to enjoy our clothes we have to be on the alert as to how we feel. The one thing that we all have to do every day is decide on what to wear, so opening your wardrobe should be a pleasure; and knowing your look goes a long way to feeling fabulous in your clothes.

Happy shopping! ■

Chryssie Russell, Director of Unique Style Ltd hosts style workshops and also works with individuals to discover their own unique style.  
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