



GETTING Styled by THE PROS

WONDER WHAT IT'S LIKE TO USE A PERSONAL STYLIST? WE TRIED IT OUT—WITH SMASHING RESULTS.

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Let's banish a few myths about independent wardrobe stylists—or image consultants, as many of them prefer to be called.

1. You do not need to be a movie star, an heiress, or a size 2 to use a stylist.
2. Stylists do not work on commission, *ever*, so they have no incentive to push expensive items.
3. Stylists won't throw out your entire wardrobe—that only happens for shock value on *What Not to Wear*.
4. They don't limit themselves to high-end department stores—in fact, a professional stylist is probably better than you are at finding the discount gems.
5. The service is not only for people who don't like to, or don't have time to, shop.

Everyone can benefit from a stylist's discerning eye—even magazine editors. Three of our editors were ready to stretch their style. A friend (or co-worker) might have told them what looks bad, but the pros helped to define what looks best on them, specifically. They found totally updated outfits, from head to toe. But beyond those new looks, our editors also got advice that will help them make smarter and chicer buys when they shop on their own. And that service costs less than a pair of designer heels.



MAKEOVER
MELINDA NELSON

CHALLENGE
Dressing for an evening event without looking like her teenager.

STYLIST
Sara Rogers

MELINDA'S EXPERIENCE: I'm a senior editor at *Mpls. St. Paul Magazine*. I have plenty of practical, colorful work clothes, but for parties, opening nights, and other evening events, I'd like to wear something a little more fabulous than just a simple dress.

My secret obsession with opulence was formed during the extravagant 1980s in New York. My first job was at Giorgio Armani, where I learned to appreciate exquisite fabrics and fine tailoring. I even had a wardrobe allowance, so I had a closet full of narrow gabardine skirts, luscious silk shirts, and important jackets with big shoulders.

Those days are long gone, but I still love an amazing jacket made of luxurious fabric and finished with beautiful detailing, preferably priced

to fit a working woman's budget.

Sara Rogers was a high fashion model during the 1980s, so as soon as I said I loved Armani, Etro, Christian Lacroix, and Emanuel Ungaro, she immediately understood my taste. We started at Desigual at Mall of America, where some of the patterns remind me of Etro. When Sara showed me this jacket from their Cirque du Soleil collection, I loved it. We bought a simple navy blue dress and a hot pink baroque ring at H&M, and then we found sky-high purple patent heels at Nordstrom that are exactly the same color as the buttons on the jacket.

The outfit is a little more over the top than my usual style, but that's what I wanted. Sara is wise, kind, and fun, and she made me feel fabulous.



ABOUT SARA ROGERS: A model turned trend specialist for the Mall of America, Rogers recently became the first Twin Cities stylist listed at styleforhire.com, a national network co-created by Stacy London of *What Not to Wear*. Rogers offers one-on-one consults on body type and color palette. She is available to edit and organize closets and to take clients shopping. Cost: \$150 an hour. sarovogers.com



SARA'S TIPS:

• **IF YOU ARE A WOMAN** of a certain age and have concerns about being too trendy, wear one exclamation-statement piece and keep everything else classic.

• **SIZE DOES MATTER** when wearing prints, so choose a scale that works for your frame. If the print is too big, it can overwhelm your body. If it's too small, it can make you look frigger.

• **DON'T GET TOO MATCHY-MATCHY.** For example, Melinda and I found glitter shoes that matched the glitter detail on the Desigual coat perfectly, but they distracted from the impact of the coat. Mixing it up displays creativity and style, and wearing a complementary accessory allows others to appreciate the beauty of the individual pieces.

• **WEAR COLORS** next to your face that complement your complexion. The right colors can illuminate your skin, hair, and eyes and make you look younger and fresher.

On Melinda:

jacket (\$80), from Desigual, Mall of America, 952-854-9000; desigual.com; dress (\$34.95) and ring (\$5.95), from H&M, Mall of America, 952-458-8888; hm.com; heels (\$99.95), by Etro, Nordstrom, Mall of America, 952-853-2101; nordstrom.com