



Extension Circular 695

Cooperative Extension Service

Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon

This leaflet is a part of the home economics teaching program of the Cooperative Extension Service, Oregon State University, Corvallis.


For more information on clothing, foods and family nutrition, time and money management, family life and home furnishings you are invited to write or call your County Extension Office.

Among the Extension clothing bulletins that may be of interest are the following:

- EC 576 Making Shirts for the Men of the Family
- EC 579 An Easy Way to Iron a Cotton Shirt
- EC 638 Wardrobe Building
- EC 663 Read the Fiber Label for Clues to Care
- EC 687 How to Make Piped and Corded Buttonholes
- EC 694 Altering Ready-to-Wear Dresses

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**A**CCESORIES, the finishing touches which "dress your dress"—or suits, coats, and sportswear—make your costumes your very own. They are exciting, personal and important! Through them you express your personality, an idea, an activity. They are responsible for giving you that "well put-together" look.

This collection of little things—hats, scarves, jewelry, handbags and gloves, shoes and hosiery—each designed to add sparkle to your appearance, make you and your costume more attractive.

## What should you buy?

Since accessories can either make or mar a costume, it is well to plan for them just as carefully as you do for your basic clothes. Avoid buying articles just because they are pretty. Instead, buy them because they are becoming to you and make your costume more attractive. Each item will become an active part of your wardrobe if it fills a real need. A well-planned accessory wardrobe will considerably expand the versatility of your clothing wardrobe. Through accessories costumes can be made adaptable to a variety of activities.

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## How many should you wear?

A beautifully wrapped box is highlighted with ribbon or a corsage to emphasize the package with its lovely wrappings (color and texture). You can also be highlighted when your costume is completed with *one* outstanding accessory and a limited number of supplementary ones.

The number of accessories you choose to wear depends on the type of accessory, the color, the costume, the activity in which you are participating, as well as the nature of your personality and your figure.

If you are in doubt about your judgment in selecting and wearing accessories in good taste, try this simple exercise. Try on one of your classic dresses. Study your mirrored reflection—just as you are—shoeless, hatless, gloveless, beltless, and without jewelry or cosmetics. Observe your silhouette and the structural details of the dress, its color, and texture. After you have impressed an image of your appearance on your mind, add accessories to the dress as much or more than you wish. Also apply any cosmetics which you normally wear. Study your reflection again. This time keep in mind what your silhouette and your costume expressed without accessories. Have you honestly improved your appearance and made yourself a more attractive individual?



You may be pleased with your picture, but you may also note that accessories are overwhelming you as well as your costume. *They* become the "center of interest." Since accessories are designed to improve your attractiveness, overuse defeats the purpose of wearing them. Continue your self analysis. By removing one decorative accessory at a time (not a basic one like shoes) you will arrive at a point where your personal features become more apparent. This is desirable, since at this point accessories are becoming a part of your total picture, rather than an outstanding feature. Basic (essential) accessories like shoes, should also contribute to the whole picture, and therefore, should blend in line, color, and texture. Continue to remove accessory items until you are wearing the fewest number possible without removing the "sparkle" which accessories are able to contribute to your appearance. At this point ac-

cessories are properly used because your clothing and accessories have helped you to become the "center of interest."

*Simplicity is the key to the successful use of accessories.*

## What Types Are Best for You?

The smartly dressed woman selects accessories to express her personality. She chooses them to emphasize her good features or minimize her poor ones. She considers their scale in relation to her size. She harmonizes their color and design with her wardrobe. She recognizes their cost in relation to other clothing expenditures, their versatility, and her pleasure in wearing them.

Study your personal characteristics, your wardrobe, and your budget.

### Personal characteristics

*What kind of person are you?*

Feminine or athletic minded (spectator or participant), dramatic or casual, dignified or boisterous, vivacious or quiet and reserved.

*What size are you?*

Large, medium, or small with slim or sturdy body structure.

*What type of facial features do you have?*

Delicate or large; softened or pronounced.

*What basic tints of color do your skin and hair reflect?*

Pink, blue, and red tones, or yellow and brown tones.

### Wardrobe

*What type of clothes are in your wardrobe?*

Dressy (many soft details or stark simplicity); classic (simple, can be dressed up or down); tailored (simple, sleek lines, sturdy texture); feminine (softened details, drapable texture); and/or casual (simple, tailored, and comfortable).

*What predominant color is found in your wardrobe?*



## Budget

*How many sets of accessories can you afford?*

One set may have to serve many purposes or it may be selected for only one or two costumes.

*Is your wardrobe built around accessories or costumes?*

When you have arrived at some decisions on what type of accessories are best for you personally, for your wardrobe, and for your budget, you have made your first big step in planning toward well-chosen accessories. Your next step, a challenging and thrilling one, is to make your choices from the myriads of accessories on today's retail markets.



## How will you make choices?

### Pay attention to design

Your accessories, if well coordinated, will express the same idea as your costume in design and function. Since repeated or similar lines and shapes emphasize one another, also note their size and shape in relation to your silhouette. Select a design which will enhance your good features and detract from less desirable ones. Example: A hat with a round brim or crown will emphasize the circumference of a round face. Since oval-shaped faces are considered more ideal than round, a round-faced person is more attractive when wearing a hat with an irregularly shaped brim or crown.

### Harmonize accessories and costumes

Skillful blending of colors and textures of costumes and accessories adds interest to the costume and the wearer. There are no absolute rules to determine the degree of contrast or similarity which may be used effectively or within the bounds of good taste.

*Colors* may match, blend, or contrast with a costume. A pleasing effect is achieved if one color is emphasized in one center of interest and all other areas of accessory color are kept as a supporting interest or background.

*Texture* refers to the surface appearance or feel of the accessories and costume. Variations in texture create interesting costumes. Care must be taken to





combine only those which enhance one another. Like and opposite textures will emphasize each other's characteristics. Coarse materials suggest sturdiness and large-scale accessories. Fine textures suggest daintiness and small-scale articles.

## Strive for simplicity

Plan to emphasize or accent one attractive feature in your costume. Other accessories may give support to this center of interest, but they should not detract from it. A good practice to follow is that if you are in doubt as to whether jewelry or other accessories will add either color or interest, it would be wiser not to wear them.

## How can you guide purchases?

### Hats

Hats can flatter or detract from your appearance. They can be youthful or aging, gay, fantastic or conservative. They can make a costume appear dressy or tailored, dowdy or smart. Since hats have such a significant influence on your appearance, you will be well rewarded for special care in selecting "just the right hat" to complete your costume.

As each season changes, designers add a new flair, a new touch to hats to add interesting notes to costumes. Whatever the fashion, choose a hat which makes you look fashionable, rather than choosing one just for the sake of fashion. Select a hat which is complimentary to the shape of your face and the style of your hair, one which is in keeping with your size and expresses your personality. A modified design of a high fashion, if more attractive on you, will make you more attractive than one which is not becoming.

Hats should also be selected to be suitable for the occasions for which they will be worn. If you have only one hat it should be so designed and made of the type of fabric which will look equally well with coats, suits, and dresses. A softly tailored felt or velvet hat with modest trimming will serve many purposes. If your budget allows for two or more hats, your costumes would be enhanced if you had a semi-tailored hat for street wear, and another hat





softer in texture with more feminine details for luncheons, teas, and other special occasions. Unless you lead a busy social life, elaborately veiled, flowered, or beaded hats are luxury items.

When buying a hat, try it on with the costume with which you intend to wear it. Study your silhouette from a standing position as well as a sitting position, viewing its overall effect from front, sides, and back in order to be sure that your hat is contributing a final touch of loveliness to your appearance.

## Scarves

Scarves are the accessory which give costumes a lift any hour of the day and are a must for every woman's wardrobe. Their delicate texture and beautiful colors glamorize facial features, protect necklines from soil and skin from irritations, and unify the individual colors used in a costume. If worn at the waistline they add a flair of femininity and a dash of color to a dress which might otherwise lack distinction.

Fashions in scarves (size, shape, and how worn) change from season to season, but their usefulness in the wardrobe remains the same. Watch window displays, fashion models, magazines, and advertisements for the newest trend in scarves. Include them in your accessory wardrobe and enjoy the special effect they give your ensembles.

## Jewelry

Earrings, a pin, necklace, or bracelet might be just the right touch to complete your costume. Wear only a few pieces at a time. They are the accent which may emphasize personal coloring or highlight your costume. For this reason be selective about your jewelry. Avoid choosing accessories "here and there" and wearing "this and that" or you may acquire a busy, cluttered look.

Jewelry that is blended in color, texture, or design—not necessarily a matched set—should be worn together in order to express a similar idea. To be dressed in "good taste," minimize your jewelry and wear only as much as your costume and you can carry smartly.

Wear jewelry suited to the occasion. Brilliant jewelry is dressy and best worn for late day and



evening when its beauty is reflected with the glow of artificial lighting. It might look wonderful on your black or navy dress, but it is not suited to streetwear and does not go with fabrics suited to casual living.

Metal jewelry (silver, gold, and copper) is very versatile in use and suitable to many fabrics, but the distinctive color tones of each of the metals causes them to combine more handsomely with some colors than with others. Colors with underlying gold tones will be more beautifully complemented with gold than with silver. Those which have blue or violet tones are more attractive with silver or copper than with gold. If these color schemes are interchanged, the warm blending of metal and fabric disappears and a harsh combination of colors results. Some dyes (black, navy-blue, purple, and blue-reds) are complimented equally with gold, silver, or copper.

Your personal coloring will also accept some metals in much more glowing terms than others. If you have more pink than yellow tones in your skin, copper or silver jewelry is much more flattering on you than gold. On the other hand, if you have definite yellow tones, then gold and dark copper are most pleasing. Individuals with "peach" skin tones (combination of pink and yellow tones) can wear all metal jewelry equally well.

## Handbags

The importance of function in handbags cannot be overemphasized. One which is not easily opened and closed, or from which it is difficult to remove things is a nuisance and not worthy of your consideration.

The functional as well as the decorative quality of leather and simulated leather has made them especially desirable for handbags. If you choose a simply designed bag, which is in scale with your size, you will find it appropriate and serviceable for year-round wear. Smooth-textured leathers are apt to show wear more quickly than rough-textured ones, but they are more versatile in their use in that they look well with many types of costumes—from the casual to the dressy. Although patent leather is becoming an all season leather, its lightweight appear-



ance makes it more harmonious with lighter weight spring and summer clothing than with the textured fabrics and designs of winter coats and suits.

Broadcloth and felt handbags can be used with suede shoes for fall and winter wear. Depending on their style, they can be carried with either tailored or dressy costumes. Faille bags combine well with special occasion costumes or light-weight spring and summer dresses.

Straw bags, strictly spring and summer accessories, blend well with summer shoes (straw, leather, or fabric) and fabrics and clothing designed for mild and hot temperatures.

In terms of design, choose a style which compliments your figure. If you are tall and slim, avoid tall, slim bags, and also the opposite design—short, broad bags. The former emphasizes height through repetition of design, and the latter through direct contrast. If you are short and of sturdy build, avoid barrel or box shapes. They would be awkward for you to handle and would call attention to your size. Shoulder bags were at one time sophisticated and were worn with town clothes; today they are only appropriately worn with casual clothes.

Since your handbag becomes a part of your total costume, look at yourself in a full-length mirror with the handbag over your arm before you buy it. Hold it as you will carry it. Note its proportion, shape, color, and texture. If it adds a smart touch to your appearance and is functional, it is a good buy.

## Gloves

Custom and etiquette call for gloves to be worn for most social and business occasions. For street or travel, gloves made of leather or those woven or knit of fine yarn are suitable. If you wish them to contribute a note of smartness to your appearance, gloves should be well-fitted and comfortable, simple in design, and pleasing in color. Limp, wrinkled, ill-fitted, or off-color gloves can ruin the trimmest costume. The beauty of white gloves is their fresh, spotless look. If you wear white gloves, carry an extra pair in your purse to wear to that special function when you arrive at your destination.







Try gloves on before you buy them to insure a comfortable and smart fit through the fingers and across the palm of your hand, and to give you the opportunity to judge the design and color on your hands. Kid gloves should fit very snugly since they are apt to stretch to size when you wear them.

Gloves vary in length from the shorty-type glove to the long elbow-length glove. Length is determined by the number of inches from the base of the thumb to the top of the glove. If the distance is 4 or 6 inches the gloves are referred to as four- or six-button style. Thus the labels which describe gloves as " -button gloves" actually reflect the number of inches found above the base of the thumb. The length you choose depends on the size of your hands and wrists, as well as the style of the sleeves in your costume. The shorty glove should be avoided if your hands are large and chubby. For a three-quarter or short-sleeved costume, the longer glove which stretches up or crushes down is the most flattering. Long gloves, above the elbow, are considered formal and are most appropriate with sleeveless afternoon or evening gowns.

Gloves should never be conspicuous. Gloves that contrast sharply with the costume, especially white ones, tend to call attention to your hands and increase their apparent size. They will also accent the hipline and give the illusion of extra breadth. To subdue the harsh contrast, and draw attention away from the hands, simply repeat the color of the gloves in another accessory item like earrings or lapel pin. For best results, plan to have gloves harmonize in color with the color of your costume. If gloves are the same color as a coat or dress, a subtle interest in the hands may be achieved. Contrasting the textures of gloves and costumes is effective. For this reason kid or leather gloves look smart with woolen garments.





## Shoes

Since we live in our shoes at least two-thirds of each day, and walk an average of 8 miles per day, it is essential that the shoes we buy not only fit the fashion occasion, but also the physical structure of our feet. Therefore, it is helpful to become acquainted with well-trained, experienced shoe clerks. They can help you to get shoes that are right for you in size and construction.

According to many fashion experts, shoes are another index to your taste and personality. Shoe industries develop beautiful shoes; each manufacturer strives to make his brand the best. Therefore, you need not buy mistakes in either fit or design. Proper fit, good construction, design suited to activity, and simple smart lines in inconspicuous colors will give your wardrobe a beautiful stepping off point, and help you to have a happy outlook on life.

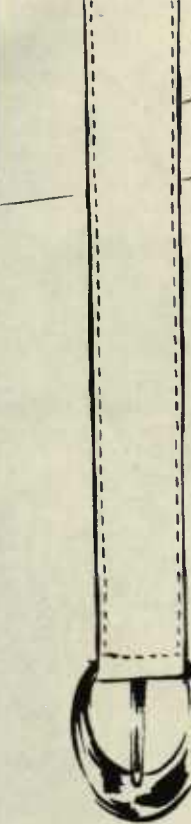
Shoes for street or travel should be tailored and of durable material. Medium-heeled pumps (with cuban, stack, or illusion heels), plain dress oxfords, or one-strap tailored shoes are suited to this purpose.

Shoes for church or afternoon wear may be more dressy. Opera pumps or strap-type shoes are appropriate for luncheons, afternoon parties, and teas. For informal parties and "after five" occasions, high-heeled pumps or sandals are desirable. For those who cannot wear high heels, designers have created the illusion heel (medium height—slender) which gives the illusion of a high heel but the comfort of a medium-height heel.

The most versatile of all shoe designs, suited to most costumes and activities, is the plain pump, suede or smooth leather, in the illusion or high heel. (Suede is dressier but harder to care for than smooth leather and not quite as serviceable for street or business wear.)

What you decide to pay for shoes depends on how often you plan to wear them. If you must economize, do so on those glamorous evening pumps or slippers which are worn only a few times a season. Whether you are a homemaker or a business woman, well constructed and good fitting daytime shoes are important to good physical and emotional health.






## Hosiery

Lovely hosiery will enhance both shoes and costumes. The essential factors to consider in buying are appearance, fit, comfort, and serviceability.

The sheer quality of hosiery provides only subtle suggestions of color—but these must be considered in blending the colors of costumes and shoes. Basic costume tints carry suggestions of gray or flesh-colored background. The more nearly the deeper shades of hosiery blend with costume colors, the more slenderizing the effect will be.

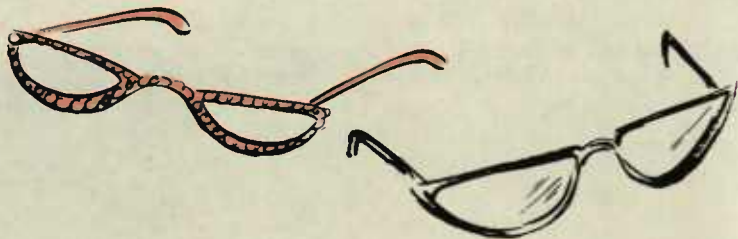
For best serviceability, your hose should be purchased according to the service you expect of them and the occasions to which you plan to wear them. Manufacturer's recommendations for selection according to use are given on most labels.

## Miscellaneous items



Some items of jewelry are often overlooked as accessories because they have become so much a part of the wearer's routine activities. *Wristwatches* and *eyeglasses* are truly functional items. However, if their cases or frames are studded with jewels or elaborately designed, they have taken on the character of accessories. Glasses with highly decorated frames limit the number of pieces and kinds of jewelry which can be attractively worn with them.

*Belts* have become the center of interest in many costumes and *buttons* and *buckles* are becoming increasingly more fashionable. With the rise in popularity of these functional accessories, others must be used in lesser degree, in order to maintain the simplicity which is basic to a well-dressed appearance. This problem is especially difficult for individuals who are slight of build.





In Oregon, as well as in other states with a high percentage of rainfall, the *umbrella* is a common accessory. Many handsome designs in fabrics and handles are available. Select one which will complement the coat with which you will carry it. A brightly colored umbrella is cheerful for cloudy and dark days, but its color should be selected with the same precaution used in choosing other accessory items. The principles of coordinating plain colors with prints, plaids, checks, or stripes also apply here.

## Are you well dressed?

The woman who chooses her accessories wisely has the satisfaction and self-assurance of being well dressed. She does not have to shop at the most exclusive places or wear labels from the best fashion houses. She knows herself, her needs, her coloring, her size, and her basic wardrobe. She plans her accessories accordingly in order to give her costumes and herself a lift.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY HELEN BERRY MOORE.

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