

DRESS YOUR BEST – NO MATTER WHAT YOUR SHAPE

Both Sally and Siti Zubaidah have grown weary of their wardrobe. Sally, who's a digital operations manager, has a flexible smart-casual dress code at work, but she says her choice of colours like "black, grey and dark blue are very blah". As for homemaker Siti Zubaidah, who's going back to work soon, it's her love affair with black that she wants to put an end to.

So in stepped makeover maven Audrey Quok of Audrey Quok Image Consultancy, who gave the women a colour analysis. Audrey, an ex-Miss Singapore World, also helped them see which styles and cuts of clothes best flatter their body shape.



Siti Zubaidah finds out low-waist jeans aren't always the best choice.



Audrey shows Sally which hues flatter her skin tone.

"I dare to try on new looks now"

I was actually quite surprised to find out that I'm a Cool; it explains why the pastel purple cardigan I wore brightens up my face. I have a lean column-type shape but Audrey highlighted to me that my low-rise and poorly-fitted jeans only made my legs look shorter! The workshop was certainly an eye opener. I'm more open to new styles and colours, and dare to try on things I never dared to before... I just bought a hot pink shirt!

"I should show off my curves"

I thought I had a rectangular-shaped body but discovered that I'm actually a full hourglass. So instead of wearing shapeless T-shirts, I should go for more fluid fabrics that skim over my curves. Adding earrings or a necklace will also help draw the eye up, and at the same time make me look more elegant. I'm now adding some matte gold accessories too. It's new territory for me, but I am taking baby steps towards a more stylish and confident me!



Ugly Betty's America Ferrera is a perfect example of knowing how to play to your strengths. Heels lend height, while designs that are cinched at the waist give her shapely curves.

STEP UP YOUR STYLE

The clothes you wear can dramatically affect the way you look and also the way you feel about yourself, says Audrey, who started her image consultancy business in 2004. "Feeling good about what you wear and being happy with the way you look increases both your self-confidence and your perception of how people see you." Not quite sure how to shop for clothes that flatter you? Use these clever tips from Audrey:

PLAY WITH COLOUR: If you're afraid to start with strong and bold colours such as red, yellow or cyan, opt for a darker shade of colour. Try royal purple, burgundy, rust red or plum as an accent against your neutrals. A good way to start is by accessorising your neutrals with a coloured ring, brooch or bag.

DRESS FOR YOUR BODY TYPE: Once you know your body shape and understand which parts you should accentuate and minimise, you'll be able to dress in the way that flatters you most. Whether you are petite or full-figured, there are varied choices of clothes to complement your proportions. Most importantly, the aim is to dress to achieve the illusion of having a balanced body regardless of body shape (see left on how Ugly Betty's America Ferrera does it).

BEWARE THE LOW-RISE: Unless you have long legs, low-rise trousers and jeans tend to make a woman's legs shorter! You really need high stilettos to look good with these. And if you've got a heavy bottom, avoid high-rise tapered pants which add unwanted width to the bum.

INVEST IN A HANDBAG: Handbags are like the icing on a cake... you don't really need it but once it is held in your hand, it can be a tool for fashion and glamour – yet provides security and companionship to the besier. Find one that matches your size, personality and budget!

Audrey offers one-on-one image consultancy. Visit www.audreyquok.com or email erquok@audreyquok.com for more information.