



# Look Fab

Looking Like A Million  
Without Breaking  
the Bank

By Toi Troutman

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First Edition

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Without Breaking  
the Bank

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- Practical tips
- Shopping Secrets
- What to Wear
- Red Carpet Anywhere
- Trends to Avoid
- The Right Accessories
- And More!

Look Fab – Looking Like a Million Without Breaking the Bank

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## Look Fab - An Introduction

### **A practical guide to looking like a million without breaking the bank**

If you're like most of America, you've experienced a bit of a crunch in your finances lately; and you just can't go shopping like you used to. Unfortunately, that doesn't change our desire to look fabulous—it just changes the methods by which we can obtain these fabulous items. In this guide, you will learn smart ways to stretch your dollar and *still* look amazing and be the envy of all your gal pals.

We'll discuss:

- Trends to Pick Up for Less
- Trends to Avoid Completely
- The Best Accessories...and
- Where to Buy Them
- What to Wear Where
- Choosing the Right Shoe
- Online Shopping Tricks
- List of Resources
- Hot Fashions
- Great New Designers to Watch
- Off-The-Rack Specials
- Vintage/Thrift Shopping
- Classic Pieces
- The Best Color Choices

And more! Grab your notebook so that you can jot down the pages you need to remember for quick and easy reference. I hope you enjoy these tips as much as I enjoyed shopping around to bring them to you. Thank you for buying my eBook!

Toi Troutman  
Fashionista on a Budget

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## What to Wear and When

For every festive function, we were always taught that the "little black dress" is a wardrobe staple that keeps you from going wrong. The complete look goes much further than the dress and once you've slipped on your black sheath, you may find yourself standing in the mirror saying, "Now What???" There are countless articles about how to choose the right black dress for your body type, but this article is to focus on how to accent and accessorize to raise the value of your look overall.

## Beyond the Black Dress

First, what is considered the perfect black dress? The looks for 2009 are dictating that hems can range anywhere from just above the knee to mid calf, leaving a lot of room for your personal style and also for some women, many questions about what to do after they've found the perfect dress—even if it was already in the back of your closet.



**Figure I-Me attending an afternoon celebrity luncheon. Saved 80% on a designer dress from last season!!**

## Define Your Personal Style

If your event is in the day, there is a tendency to dress down your look versus dress it up; however, you should always consider the purpose of the event and how the invitation is worded to make your final decisions. A quick look at the invitation, like some of the examples shown here, will directly determine what else you will need to complete your look. For daytime looks, try a simple pair of studs with an understated hairdo.

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Avoid the "up-do", as it tends to dress up a dress by showing off the neck and shoulder area. In addition to studs, add a few coordinated or metal (gold or silver) bangles, but not more than three; as more than that tends to overstate the look—which is not what we're going for here. This is a general guideline of course; so if you are into larger, chunkier jewelry, and it does not overpower your dress or your frame, then by all means, go for it! You can obtain nice looking jewelry at various economy-priced mall retailers such as Rave, Forever 21, Wet Seal etc. where you can get great fashionable pieces on the sale rack for as low as three for \$1.00.

“What takes your look from just a black dress to chick and fabulous? The answer is simple--accessories. Besides accessories, there's the perfect hairdo and makeup to complete the look and that's what separates a real fashionista from a lady in a black dress. “

For evening events when you want to look sexy, like a dinner date, or dancing, there are a couple of easy ways to accomplish this feat for under \$50. Let's start with the simplest look—Jeans, a blazer, a camisole, and a pair of heels. If you are not going to a five-star restaurant, this look can be very versatile. Remember, we are talking about an entire outfit for \$50. Sound impossible? It's not at all. Visit the [online shopping section](#) to put together an entire outfit for \$50 or less—and yes I found all the items.

If your date is dressier, you can go for a basic wrap dress that virtually never goes out of style. The wrap look works on a lot of figure types, and is the most versatile piece you can own. Originally designed by Diane Von Furstenberg (DVF) in 1972, the wrap dress has become a classic staple that can go from day to night with a few simple basic concepts and rules. Given its flexibility and versatility, it can work in the office with a classic pump, or for a more fun look, try it with a pair of leggings. Once again, you almost cannot go wrong with this look—almost.

First, be cognizant of your shape. As we've discussed, the wrap dress is flattering to many figure types as it has a way of accentuating curves for the curvy woman, who has an advantage over the very thin when it comes to this style.

The wrap dress, by design, has a way of lifting the bust line, creating a more desirable silhouette. This is also true for wrap sweaters and tops which are also good choices with slacks and/or jeans. The wrap dress can be cruel to the small-breasted ladies with no curves, so be honest about your figure flaws and dress accordingly. Since there are so many styles of this dress, I recommend staying away from busy patterns and checks; since they simply don't work on all body types and they can actually date the dress—which is otherwise an excellent staple choice for dressing rich and fabulous. If you must go with a pattern, remember vertical and diagonal lines are more slimming and avoid small prints if you have a large frame.

Second, since the dress can be clingy, be sure to wear the right underwear. By now, most of us have heard of and/or used/worn [Spanx®](#). What you may not know is that there is a lower-end copy cat brand available at [Target](#) for a fraction of the cost and get this: it's by the SAME manufacturer! The copy cat is called ASSETS® by Sara Blakely; the same woman who invented Spanx®, which technically doesn't make it a copy at all. It is simply a lower-priced version of the same product. Make your choice based on your financial ability. I've tried both, and there is virtually no difference in the benefits of this underwear under your clothing. If you live in the East or Mid West, then you probably wear pantyhose more than those of us on the West Coast. Either way, Spanx or Assets

is an excellent way to hide the bumps and lumps; even beyond control top hose since there are so many versions and areas of coverage. Under a wrap dress, this is a must and can go from the office to the red carpet!



Figure II: Boden USA wrap dress

Next, remember to insert your personal style. Try it with a large belt instead of a sash. Add a chunky heel, a pair of over-sized sunglasses and a large bag, and you've got a stylish Hollywood look for daytime that dazzles. If you are dressing it up, go for a stylish clutch and a pair of chic stilettos. You can even experiment and modernize the look by adding a tee shirt, cami or tank with a very low cut dress. The options are endless. It's all about versatility! You can pair it with a pair of great boots, and long beads, or a round-toe pump and slouchy bag. I could go on and on about what to wear with this look, but the point is you must own at least one.



As far as the price, this is one of those pieces that you can pay \$20 or \$700. It simply depends on your finances as in the end; it doesn't really change the look. What you have to remember here is our discussion on fabrics. Try to avoid the really cheap fabrics that simply don't hang well on your frame. It's all about your personal style—and yes, we all have one. Own the dress. Don't let it own you.

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## Trends

### Trends to Avoid

In the 2009 Fashion Week, several designers unveiled the "Depression Chic" look. Designers worked both sides of the crash of 1929, turning out glittery flapper frocks (Alberta

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