

The Ultimate Capsule Wardrobe Guide





Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
CONSIDERATIONS	4
THE BENEFITS OF A CAPSULE WARDROBE	5
REMOVE DECISION FATIGUE AND OVERWHELM	5
LESS IS MORE	5
LESS GUESSWORK	5
FINE TUNE YOUR UNIQUE STYLE	5
SAVE TIME AND MONEY	6
AFFORD NICER ITEMS	6
SUSTAINABLE	6
GAIN CONFIDENCE	6
SIMPLICITY	7
LESS CLUTTER	7
BASIC ITEMS	8
T-SHIRTS	9
KNITWEAR	9
JEANS OR JEANS ALTERNATIVE	10
BLACK TROUSERS	11
TRENCH COAT	11
BLACK BLAZER	12
LEATHER JACKET	12
DRESSES	13
SHOES	14
ACCESSORIES	15
EVERYDAY HANDBAG	15
SUNGLASSES	15
EARRINGS	15
CLASSIC WATCH	16
LEATHER BELT	16
WHERE TO START	17
DETERMINE YOUR SKIN TONE	17
FOCUS ON YOUR LIFESTYLE	17
START WITH THE BASICS	18
CHOOSE ONE OR TWO BASE COLOURS THAT SUIT YOUR SKIN TONE	18
CHOOSE NEUTRALS TO PAIR WITH YOUR BASE COLOUR	19
CHOOSE THREE TO FIVE ACCENT COLOURS TO COMPLIMENT YOUR BASE COLOUR AND NEUTRALS	20



PURGE YOUR WARDROBE	22
IDENTIFY GAPS	22
CREATE A WISH LIST	22
HIT THE SHOPS!	23
FABRICS	23
TIPS	24
WHAT A CAPSULE WARDROBE IS NOT	24
RETAILERS	25
CLOTHING	25
SHOES	25
APPENDIX	26
APPENDIX 1	26
HOW TO DETERMINE YOUR SKIN TONE	26
APPENDIX 2	32
CAPSULE WARDROBE: SHOP LIKE A PRO	32
APPENDIX 3	34
RESOURCES	34
APPENDIX 4	35
SOCIALS	35



Introduction

The concept of a capsule wardrobe has been around since 1970, when Susie Faux, a boutique owner from London first coined the phrase to describe staple wardrobe items that don't go out of fashion. Donna Karan then launched her own seven-piece capsule wardrobe in 1985, further cementing the popularity of this approach to dressing.

The idea of a capsule wardrobe is no different today, although opinions differ on the number of items it should contain. This number is up to you.

Building a capsule wardrobe takes time and patience. It won't be achieved in one season, or even two.

Purchase items that last. Items that fulfill a purpose, are not stand-alone, but rather, form part of a whole. Pieces that can be mixed and matched together to create a masterful and stylish collection.

A Capsule Wardrobe is suitable for everyone. Even you. If you want it to be.

Follow the simple recipe laid out in this guide, and style success will be yours.

Considerations

Essentially, a capsule wardrobe should,

- Focus on one or two base colours
- Contain a well-considered colour palette that enhance the base colours you've chosen
- Complement your figure and body type
- Suit your lifestyle
- Complement your skin tone
- Include classic stylish staples and basics that won't date
- Contain only elements you love
- Incorporate as many of your existing pieces as possible

“

Buy less. Choose well. Make it last.

Vivienne Westwood



The Benefits of a Capsule Wardrobe

When you look good, you feel good. Once you embrace a Capsule Wardrobe, it won't take long to see the benefits. You will shop with purpose, save money and buy only what you need (and love).

Remove decision fatigue and overwhelm

We've all been there. We get up in the morning, open our closet and despair because we have nothing to wear. Instead of taking just a few minutes to put a gorgeous and stylish outfit together, we struggle finding anything that matches, let alone anything we love.

Building a Capsule Wardrobe takes away this pain and frustration. Purchase carefully and with thought, and you will bound into each new day with a confident spring in your step.

Less is more

Many of us know the struggle of too many clothes, but nothing to wear. We buy clothes on a whim because they're on sale, we've seen it on Instagram, on our best friend, or just because it seemed like a good idea at the time.

No more accidental or impulse purchases. Curating a carefully constructed Capsule Wardrobe allows you to do more with less.

Less guesswork

Take the guesswork out of getting dressed by embracing a Capsule Wardrobe. Less items means less to choose from, but interestingly, more choice.

Have confidence knowing that you have created a beautiful closet full of clothes you love. Every piece has a purpose, and every piece can be mixed and matched with multiple other items.

Fine tune your unique style

No more impulse buys. No more unplanned splurges. No more mistakes.

Just a wardrobe you love. A wardrobe you have taken the time to carefully plan, edit and shop.

A wardrobe that is uniquely you!



Save time and money

Armed with a shopping list and budget, when you do finally hit the shops, you'll have a purpose. You will have done your research online beforehand and can head directly to the shops on your list.

Don't hurry. Take all the time you need and consider each purchase carefully. If something feels "off," put it back and move onto the next item. You may find an alternative item, or you may need to wait another season. Both are okay. You now have the confidence to make sensible decisions.

Perhaps you've even purchased some clothes online if you're familiar with the brand and know their sizing. Buying clothes online has become the norm. Choose brands that have fast shipping and an excellent return policy.

Trying on clothes in the comfort and privacy of your own home is often more comfortable for many of us.

Afford nicer items

Without the impulse buys that often drain our wallets and become mistakes, you'll be free to look for specific items, often of a much higher quality.

Yes, it's true you might pay more, but rather one good pair of black trousers than three poorly made pairs. Remember, less is more!

Sustainable

When you purchase items of a higher quality, they are also more likely to be sustainable. Higher profit margins allow companies to be more conscious of how they design, manufacture and distribute their products.

H&M for example, accept old clothes to make into new fabrics. So, when you're purging your existing wardrobe, instead of throwing away clothes, either donate them to a charity shop, or consider recycling.

Gain confidence

Imagine waking up every morning knowing everything in your closet suits you and fits you.

Leave the house feeling confident in your appearance and how you present yourself to the world.

Back straight. Chin up. Smile.



Simplicity

Simplicity does not mean a lack of pattern, colour or texture. Simplicity is not boring.

Simplicity means knowing every item in your closet will mix and match with multiple other items. It is having beautiful, elegant basics that are easy to style and put together.

Less clutter

Letting go of clothes that don't suit your lifestyle, don't fit, or you simply don't love anymore can make a huge difference to not only your physical wardrobe space, but also the space in your mind.

Getting rid of clutter has numerous mental health benefits. It helps us feel calmer, more in control, happier, and will most certainly help with the decision-making process when getting dressed.

With less clothes to choose from, as well as knowing all your clothes can be mixed and matched, think of how energised you'll be putting your best foot forward every day.

“

*You can have anything you want in life if you
dress for it.*

Edith Head



Basic Items

While there are no hard and fast rules for what your Capsule Wardrobe should contain, there does seem to be consensus on a number of items. Individual pieces are of course up to you, but the list below will get you started.

- T-Shirts (black, white, grey, neutral, colour)
- Black Trousers (can be part of a suit)
- Neutral Trousers
- Jeans (or jeans alternative such as chinos, trousers, shorts or a skirt)
- Knitwear
- White Shirt
- Leather Jacket
- Black Blazer (can be part of a suit)
- Trench Coat
- Dresses
- White Trainers / Sneakers
- Black Ballet Flats
- Nude Ballet Flats
- Black Heels
- Nude Heels
- Everyday Handbag
- Accessories (sun hat, sunglasses, scarves, belts, jewellery)

Everybody is different. We lead individual lives, have different interests and hobbies, work in distinct careers and locations, and spend our leisure time doing the things we love. As a result, not all of the items listed above will suit everyone.

Choose pieces that match your lifestyle, your passions and your budget.

T-Shirts



Knitwear



Jeans or Jeans Alternative



Black Trousers



Trench Coat



Black Blazer



Leather Jacket



Dresses



“

People will stare. Make it worth their while.

Harry Winston

Shoes



Accessories

Everyday Handbag



Sunglasses



Earrings



Classic Watch



Leather Belt



“

If in doubt, anything looks good with a white t-shirt

Victoria Beckham



Where To Start

This is where the fun starts. And the work. But I promise you, the results will be worth the effort.

Determine Your Skin Tone

To know your best colours, you must first determine your underlying skin tone. The good news is, there are only two options: Ivory and Beige (Cool and Warm).

Refer Appendix 1: How to Determine Your Skin Tone.

Once you know your underlying skin tone, you will understand how to choose clothes, accessories and makeup to enhance your complexion, and will recognise why some colours make you look alive and glowing, while others just don't work at all.

Focus on your Lifestyle

Capsule Wardrobes are not a one-style-fits-all.

You will most likely have items already in your wardrobe that meet some of your lifestyle needs. Shop your own closet before spending any money.

If you are stuck, ask yourself the following questions,

- How do I spend my time?
- How do I want to spend my time?
- What are my values?
- What do I need (or want) to change about my lifestyle?
- Do my clothes represent the person I want to be?

It is your life. You – and only you – are responsible for being happy. Choose the life you want and build the wardrobe to match.

Start with the Basics

A Capsule Wardrobe is all about the basics. Basic staple clothing pieces and basic (or base) colours.

Choose a colour palette and stick to it.

Choose one or two base colours that suit your skin tone

Ivory Skin Tone (Cool)

- Black
- Navy
- Grey
- Burgundy
- Chocolate Brown
- Camel (blue-based)



Beige Skin Tone (Warm)

- Navy
- Camel (yellow-based)
- Chocolate Brown



Choose neutrals to pair with your base colour

Ivory Skin Tone (Cool)

- White
- Black
- Taupe / Stone
- Camel (blue-based)
- Silver or Grey



Beige Skin Tone (Warm)

- Cream
- Beige
- Camel (yellow-based)



“

*Style is something each of us already has. All
we need to do is find it.*

Diane von Furstenberg

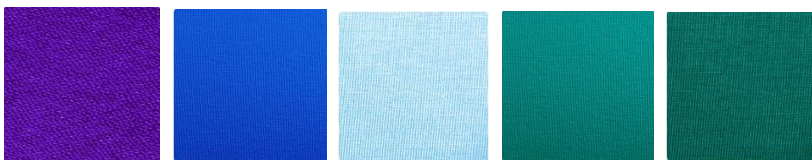
Choose three to five accent colours to compliment your base colour and neutrals

Ivory Skin Tone (Cool)

Summer (Cool and Light)



Winter (Cool and Dark)



Beige Skin Tone

Spring (Warm and Light)



Autumn (Warm and Dark)





Purge Your Wardrobe

Remove any items from your wardrobe that,

- You don't love
- Don't fit anymore and can't be tailored to fit
- Don't suit your lifestyle
- Are stained or torn and can't be repaired
- Don't compliment your skin tone
- Don't suit your body type
- Aren't one of the colours or neutrals you've chosen above

You may choose to donate or sell your unwanted items. The choice is yours.

Identify gaps

Now that your wardrobe has been stripped bare, or almost bare, it's time to conduct a wardrobe inventory and identify any gaps that might exist.

- Do you need more work-appropriate attire?
- Do you have enough casual wear?
- Do your existing clothes match your lifestyle?

Create a wish List

Based on the gaps identified in the step above, create your wish list.

It is also crucial to create a budget and stick to it. It is not worth getting into debt purchasing clothes; spend only what you can afford.

For more great tips on getting the most from your shopping trip, please read my article titled "Capsule Wardrobe: Shop Like a Pro."



Hit the shops!

Armed with your list *and* budget, it's time to hit the shops. Shop the basics first and add seasonal items last.

On the day of your shopping trip, dress comfortably but neatly. Wear a blouse that buttons down the front or a top that can be easily pulled over your head. Wear trousers or a skirt that is easy to take off and put back on again.

Wear shoes that slip on and off with little effort.

I also advise to brush and style your hair and wear makeup (if you usually would). When you try on clothes and look in the mirror, you want the best version of yourself looking back at you.

Fabrics

It's best to choose natural fibres such as,

- Bamboo
- Cotton
- Silk
- Wool
- Cashmere
- Denim
- Linen (I do say this with trepidation because I don't like clothes that wrinkle)

Avoid synthetic fibres where possible. Synthetic clothing, while perhaps cheaper to purchase in the short term, has long term impacts to our planet. Companies that produce cheap (or fast fashion) pursue a strategy called "planned obsolescence." Garments are designed to quickly become unfashionable, wear out, lose shape or fall apart. All these "design features" force consumers to keep buying new clothes.

Natural fibres feel good, and they last. They are durable, healthy, sustainable, kinder to the environment and require less processing to create a useable fabric.

They also feel great against your skin!



Tips

- Do not go into debt for clothes.
- Shop your closet first. Do you have similar items that can be interpreted or substituted until you have the budget?
- Ask for vouchers for birthday and Christmas. Spend other people's money. Refer Appendix 2: Shop Like a Pro.
- Shop the sales, but only buy an item that you would pay full price for.
- Pinterest is a terrific resource for inspiration but add your own personality and style twist.
- Add seasonal pieces to spice up your wardrobe and keep it modern and current.
- Leave the pockets sewn up!
- Be yourself.

What a Capsule Wardrobe IS NOT

A capsule wardrobe does not mean boring. It does not imply a lack of colour or pattern or always wearing the same colour.

It is not wearing the same outfit day in, day out, and it most certainly should not inhibit your natural personality or flair.

It is not wearing the same items of clothing as everyone else. Your capsule wardrobe should be uniquely you.



Retailers

Clothing

- [Review](#)
- [David Lawrence](#)
- [Veronika Maine](#)
- [Country Road](#)
- [Perri Cutten](#)
- [Target](#)
- [David Jones](#)
- [Sportscraft](#)
- [Boden](#)
- [Cue](#)
- [Bamboo Body](#)
- [Kettlewell](#)

Shoes

- [Jo Mercer](#)
- [Nine West](#)
- [ASOS](#)
- [Peter Sheppard](#)

“

*Whoever said that money can't buy happiness
simply didn't know where to go shopping.*

Bo Derek



Appendix

Appendix 1

How to Determine Your Skin Tone

“How do I know what colours suit me best?”

This is a question I’m asked a lot as a makeup artist, for the simple reason, I guess, is that so much relies on the answer.

Once you know this, the sartorial world will be your oyster. You will understand how to choose clothes, accessories and makeup to enhance your complexion, and will recognise why some colours make you look alive and glowing, while others just don’t work at all.

To know your best colours, you must first determine your underlying skin tone. The good news is, there are really only two options: Ivory and Beige.

So how do you determine your skin tone?

Ivory

How do I check?

People with an Ivory skin tone make up about 20% of the population and are typically Celtic, English (the English Rose), African, Indian (in some cases) and northern Italian.

The underlying tone of your skin will be pink or blue. If you are dark skinned, you will be able to see a blue or purple tinge to your skin. If you are fair, look for pink cheeks or complexions that blush easily.

A relatively simple way to check is to look at the veins on the inside of your wrist. If you have an Ivory complexion, these veins will appear blue.

What colours suit me best?

Your best colours are blue or pink *based*. Notice the *italics*!

I’m not suggesting you go out and buy all blue and pink items of clothing! Not at all.

What I am suggesting, is you learn to see the underlying colour of all the clothes and makeup you purchase.

Colours that look great on you might include jewel tones (Ruby Red, Emerald Green, Safire Blue, Amethyst), burgundy, teal, and yes, in some cases pink and blue.

Build your wardrobe around capsule colours such as black, white, navy, chocolate brown and grey. A blue-based camel will also look great on you!



Accessories

Choose silver and platinum accessories over gold.

Colours to Avoid (close to your face)

Avoid yellow and yellow-based colours. I do say this with some hesitation though.

If you really love yellow (it's such a happy colour after all) and yellow based colours, try a yellow handbag, belt, or shoes. Or, purchase a skirt with bright yellow flowers that will look great with a neutral blouse.

I'm not suggesting avoiding these colours altogether, but I do encourage you to keep yellow tones away from your face as they may make you look sallow and washed out.

Celebrity Inspiration

Celebrities to watch for include,

- Oprah Winfrey
- Emma Stone
- Courtney Cox
- Adele
- Lupita Nyong'o
- Julianne Moore
- Sandra Bullock
- Dita von Teese
- Reese Witherspoon
- Alek Wek

“

I want people to see the dress but focus on the

woman.

Vera Wang

Outfits to Inspire

For outfit and colour inspiration, visit my Pinterest board, Fashion – Ivory Skin Tones.





Beige

How do I check?

People with a Beige skin tone make up about 80% of the population and are typically Asian, southern Italian, Greek, and Indian (again, in some cases).

The underlying tone of your skin is yellow and the veins on the inside of your wrist will be green.

It is interesting to note that people from some Asian countries – particularly Malaysia, Philippines and Japan – can have Ivory skin.

The rise in popularity of skin whitening products also means that countries such as South Korea and China are now seeing an increase in people with Ivory skin tones.

What colours suit me best?

Yellow based (also known as “warm”) colours suit you best and accessories should be gold, rather than silver or platinum.

If you are looking to build a capsule wardrobe, avoid black, white and grey, and instead choose navy, chocolate brown, cream or a yellow-based camel (all of which can be paired beautifully with yellow or gold-based colours). Camel comes in both yellow and blue based, so do be careful.

Build on your navy, camel and brown wardrobe by purchasing tops and accessories in yellow-based greens, oranges and red.

If you do love blue or pink based colours, I encourage you to keep them away from your face and instead rock a hot pink shoe, handbag or belt!

Accessories

Chose Gold accessories.



Colours to Avoid (close to your face)

- Black
- Grey
- Light blues
- Pink

Celebrity Inspiration

- Jennifer Aniston
- Kate Hudson
- Nicole Richie
- Beyonce
- Giselle Bundchen
- Charlize Theron

“

*Style is a way to say who you are without having
to speak.*

Rachel Zoe

Outfits to Inspire

Check out my Pinterest Board called Fashion – Beige Skin Tones for ideas and inspiration.





Appendix 2

Capsule Wardrobe: Shop Like a Pro

Who doesn't love a good shopping trip?! I know I certainly do, but I also know, given my budget and lifestyle choice (to own less), I don't want, or need, to shop every weekend.

Let me explain...

The majority of my shopping is done at the start of the year, in the New Year sales.

My birthday is in late November, and I always ask for vouchers (Westfield) or cash. I get three birthday presents totalling \$300.

Then, come Christmas, I do the same and I receive a further \$150 (vouchers or cash). So, by the time the January sales come around, I have \$450 to spend.

In the meantime, I've done my homework and decided what I'd like to spend my money on. I have visited websites or gone into each store to determine where my money will be spent.

I love the New Year sales; it's a win / win situation. I get more for my money because of the sales, AND it's not actually costing me a cent because I'm using the vouchers and cash I got as presents. If I want to top up my shopping allowance, I can. But it's often not required.

Given it's sale time and shopping centres are full, the items I'm looking for might have already sold out. If this is the case, I move to the next item on my list or save the money for another day.

The Barefoot Investor is one of my favourite books. If you've also read this book, you'll know the author, Scott Pape, recommends putting your money into "buckets". One of these buckets is called Splurge. Each pay cycle, I transfer a little money into Splurge, and it is this money I use to buy my clothes throughout the year. It means I don't need to touch my savings, or Mojo as it's called.

The Barefoot Investor is one of my favourite books. If you've also read this book, you'll know the author, Scott Pape, recommends putting your money into "buckets". One of these buckets is called Splurge. Each pay cycle, I transfer a little money into Splurge, and it is this money I use to buy my clothes throughout the year. It means I don't need to touch my savings, or Mojo as it's called.



A Capsule Wardrobe

Each new piece of clothing is carefully planned, with a few impulse exceptions – I’m not perfect! But even my impulse buys need to meet certain criteria. My clothes must,

- compliment at least one of my three basic wardrobe colours (black, grey and navy)
- represent value for money. I’m okay spending money on an item if I’ll wear it.
- fit well, or be able to be tailored to fit
- be good quality (not necessarily expensive). I have trousers from Target that I consider good quality but cost less than \$30.

Legislation was recently passed in Australia that (most) gift cards and vouchers are sold with a minimum expiry period of three years. So even if your birthday isn’t conveniently located near a traditional sale period (New Year or End of Financial Year), you can still use this (birthday / Christmas) method to update your wardrobe using other people’s money.

Having a Splurge account is also a great way to ensure you have money throughout the year to make purchases in different seasons.

“

Fashion fades. Style is eternal.

Yves Saint Laurent



Appendix 3

Resources

Colorpalettes

[Colorpalettes](#) is one of my favourite websites. It is a fabulous resource to help you mix and match colours.

Many of the images are taken straight from nature, and you can't have a better teacher than that. The photos are stunning and colour combinations are really helpful and inspirational.

The site is separated into sections, so finding a colour palette to match your skin tone is simple:

- [Warm Palettes](#)
- [Cool Palettes](#)
- [Pastel Palettes](#)
- [Contrasting Palettes](#)

Enjoy!

Kettlewell

[Kettlewell](#) is an online retailer based in the UK, with international shipping.

They have a fabulous range of clothing available by colour. Shop your seasonal palette and you'll never put a sartorial foot wrong.



Appendix 4

Socials

Follow The Lifestyle Cooperative on social media.

