

# What's Your Style Story?



FASHION PSYCHOLOGY

Quiz

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# WHEN YOU APPROACH YOUR CLOSET TO GET DRESSED IN THE MORNING YOU FEEL...

# 1

# A

Like you need to go shopping immediately. How is it possible that you have so many clothes but absolutely nothing to wear?!

# B

Pumped to put together a cute outfit. You envision walking into an event or meeting, all eyes on you.

# C

Worried about how the people you'll be seeing will perceive you. Ugh, you're never going to get it right. Why bother trying?

# D

Rushed and annoyed, wishing you didn't have to bother with this BS. Obsessing over your looks is shallow, not to mention a total waste of time and money. So you just pull on the same jeans and sweater you always wear. Done and done.

2

THE IDEA OF GOING SHOPPING FOR A NEW OUTFIT MAKES YOU FEEL....



A

Stressed AF. You'll probably love it in the store but hate it once you get home. Just like the last ten thousand times.

B

Like it's Christmas morning. Joy. To. The. World.

C

Bummed out. Like you'd rather do literally anything else, including your taxes.

D

Frustrated. Why would anyone walk into an actual store when you can just shop online for stuff you already know you'll like?

# 3

YOU ARE GOING THROUGH YOUR JEWELRY BOX AND COME ACROSS A NECKLACE YOUR GRANDMOTHER GAVE YOU WHEN YOU WERE YOUNGER. YOU ...

## A

Lock it away in a secure location. In fact, maybe you should rent a safe-deposit box ...If you lost it, you'd be heartbroken and never forgive yourself.

## B

Build an outfit around it! It would look super-cute with that LBD you saw on Insta.

## C

Put it back. It doesn't go with anything you have. No shade intended, Nana!

## D

Decide to wear it 24/7, 365. It's like wearing a hug from your Grams all day long.



IF I ASKED YOU  
WHAT'S YOUR  
SIGNATURE  
STYLE? YOU  
WOULD SAY...

4

A

I have no clue. Why do you think I'm doing this quiz?

B

On-trend, fashion forward, All the likes.

C

Next question.

D

Sensible. Jeans and t-shirts all the way, every day.



**5**

YOU JUST WON  
\$500 AND  
YOU'RE  
ENCOURAGED  
TO SPEND IT ON  
CLOTHES.  
WHERE WILL  
YOU SHOP?

**A**

Net-a-Porter, Shopbop,  
Moda Operandi

**B**

Fashion Nova, Target,  
Century 21, H&M

**D**

Amazon, Ann Taylor, the  
Gap, Banana Republic

**C**

Nowhere. It's going into  
my 401k.



WHEN YOU GET  
FEEDBACK FROM  
FRIENDS, FAMILY,  
AND COLLEAGUES  
ON YOUR LOOK, IT  
TENDS TO MAKE  
YOU FEEL....

6

A

Confused and a little embarrassed. Their comments are totally at odds with how you see yourself. What just happened?

B

Noticed. In fact, when no one comments on your look, you feel kind of deflated. You are dressing to impress, after all.

C

Like you have failed to please them yet again. Is nothing you do ever good enough for these people?

D

Neutral. You are dressing to not be naked. If they judge you for what you're wearing, it's their superficial problem. You keep it moving.



# If you get mostly A's

You may have fashion anxiety. Somehow the vision you have for yourself never quite matches up with the way others perceive you, no matter how much money you spend on designer clothes. While you love fashion as a fan, you fear you're never getting it quite right IRL. If only you had the easy-breezy attitude of those cool girl models or street style stars on Instagram. They always seem to know exactly what to wear. Their risks pay off. Yours inevitably fail. You get all excited about an outfit you bought for a wedding or a party, but then once you arrive, you get hit on by the wrong people or get strange reactions from friends and relatives. (You were going for "pretty," they're calling you "hot tamale.") No wonder getting dressed is stressing you out! Fashion Incongruence is the name of your game. (And don't worry, we've all played it.)



# Style RX



You may benefit from simplifying your approach. Consider creating a Capsule Wardrobe – a collection of outfit elements that can be remixed and repeated. (Yes, there is an upside to [Repetitious Wardrobe Complex](#)) Spend a week wearing only the items that make you feel 100! and notice what they all have in common. Are the shirts all soft to the touch? Are the pants all a certain cut? Do you love joggers but loathe jeans? Assess color: Do you feel most confident in chic neutrals, pretty pastels, or striking primary hues? Put the animal print and embellishments on ice and try spending a week in whatever makes you feel fail-safe. Sites like Cuyana and Everlane take the guesswork out of cool minimalism. See if starting with simple, soothing basics and toning things down gives your confidence a lift.

# If you got mostly **B's**

You may be fashion fixated. Chasing trends can be exhausting and financially draining. Doing so may be taking up too much of your precious time and energy. Worse yet, your shopping habit— online, in store— may be stealing your focus from other, more productive aspects of your life, like your work, health, or relationships. Are you slavishly hyper-trendy? Do the latest fast fashions seem to jump magically from Instagram straight into your closet, regardless of whether they're flattering or affordable? Real talk: How do you react when you read this sentence? Insta likes > IRL compliments. If you feel like looking good takes up an inordinate amount of space in your mind, bank statement, or calendar, think honestly about what emotions you may be trying to evoke or escape when you shop. Maybe you feel you need lots of outfits because you are performing **Fashion Situational Code Switching** (corporate job, baller nightlife), but the key word is performing. You might benefit from balance and a firmer grip on your authentic identity. **Mood Illustration Dressing** can help. This is when you meditate (briefly) in the morning before approaching your closet. Ask yourself how you are feeling today, and how you want to feel after you are dressed. Then, rather than conjuring the image of someone you are not (a celebrity, a social media star), your goal is to dress like the best version of you. Was there an event or occasion recently when you felt awesome, like everything was just flowing? What were you wearing?

# Style RX



This week, try replacing some of the time you spend scrolling and shopping with mindfulness and healthy productivity. Instead of walking around the outlet mall, take a walk in the park. Nurture your relationships instead of filling up your feed. Meet up with a friend for a movie or coffee (not to go shopping). Turn off alerts from your Instagram influencers for a designated few hours each day. Volunteer to help someone less fortunate, whether at an animal shelter or a political action campaign. Visit a relative. When you feel the urge to shop online, touch the clothes you own, or reach out and touch someone. (Call your mom or your sister.) Virtually window-shop. I know plenty of women who fill up online shopping carts but rarely actually complete their purchases. Surprisingly, doing this can scratch the itch and satisfy your craving for novelty. Little by little, try to tip the scales away from retail therapy and toward self-care.

If you got mostly C's

You may be fashion avoidant.

You may recognize yourself as someone with **Repetitious Wardrobe Complex** or **Fashion Incongruence** and likely feel intense **Decision Fatigue** when shopping. You might benefit from the soothing powers of a **Focal Accessory** and could feel significant uplift from **Mood Enhancement Dress**.

# Style RX



To select a Focal Accessory, start small and simple. Perhaps you have a family heirloom like a single bangle bracelet, a cocktail ring, a delicate necklace, or even the chain of a necklace without the pendant, from your mother or grandmother, sitting in your jewelry box. Try slipping it on and wearing it with your everyday clothes. If it makes you self-conscious, road test it on a weekend rather than wearing it to work. Notice if it makes you feel connected to your family. Imagine it has the power to envelop you in a cocoon of love and protection. Wear it in that spirit. If you wish to try some **Mood Enhancement Dress**, shoes are a low-risk, high-reward place to start. They offer a foolproof way to add a pop of color and a hit of fun to your look. Speaking of shoes, now is a great time to note that they alter not only your physical stance but also your emotional state. Naomi Braithwaite, a UK marketing and branding expert, writes, “Shoes, by the very intimate relationship they hold with the body, are . . . key to constructing identity and meaning for the wearer.”<sup>1</sup> They also speak loudest to others. A study published in the *Journal of Research in Personality* called “Shoes as a Source of First Impressions” showed that participants accurately judged the age, gender, income, and political persuasion of shoe owners solely on the basis of pictures of their footwear.<sup>2</sup> Shoes = minimal effort, maximum impact. Carrie Bradshaw was right! Change your shoes, change your life. You could shop for a new pair of statement sandals or simply wear shoes you already own in a new way (e.g., heels with your favorite sweats or joggers; tough boots with a feminine dress). I recently wore sandals with multicolored pom-pom toe straps. I paired them with a simple outfit (a denim shirtdress and solid black leggings), and they dramatically improved my mood and my look.

# If you got mostly **D**'s

You may be a repeat offender. You have committed to your uniform, but are you steady— or stuck? Do you avoid anything sexy like the plague? Are your clothes always baggy? Are you trying to deflect attention? Seeking to bury memories of body shaming or bullying? Some of us disconnect from our bodies or hide ourselves in clothes as a way to cope with trauma. Are you somebody who refuses to dress up or down, no matter the occasion? Some of us buy the same item over and over and over without realizing it. Maybe you've been wearing the same look for years— happily, you might insist! But let me ask you this: Is there any chance you adopted your signature style during the years you considered to be your prime? How do you feel about change? How would you say you have evolved in the past decade? Does your look reflect that evolution? Where do these inquiries lead you? Just questions. No judgments. If you suffer from **Repetitious Wardrobe Complex**, then you might benefit from **Mood Enhancement Dressing**. This could mean injecting something new or barely worn into your wardrobe. Start by taking a tiny style risk. If you aren't sure where to begin, I suggest icon identification. Hear me out: There's a reason why fashion designers, art directors, and stylists create mood boards to execute their visions for collections or campaigns.

# Style RX



Identify a famous person— the bigger the celebrity, the more photo options available— and screen-grab a shot of her every time she looks amazing. If you can't get enough of Kate Middleton in her timeless classics or Zoë Kravitz in her edgy downtown essentials, pop those shots up on your Pinterest board. Sites like RIXO, Mango, and Nasty Gal specialize in celeb copycat couture. Shopping with #goals and a guideline in mind will keep you on the right path and help you avoid Decision Fatigue. You don't need to reinvent the wheel; it's great you are already comfortable with your foundational uniform. But I promise you can branch out just a little and still look refined, not ridiculous.