

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-
Lincoln Extension

Extension

12-1955

EC55-406 Distinction through Accessories

Helen Rocke

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist>

Rocke, Helen, "EC55-406 Distinction through Accessories" (1955). *Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension*. 3287.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist/3287>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Extension at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

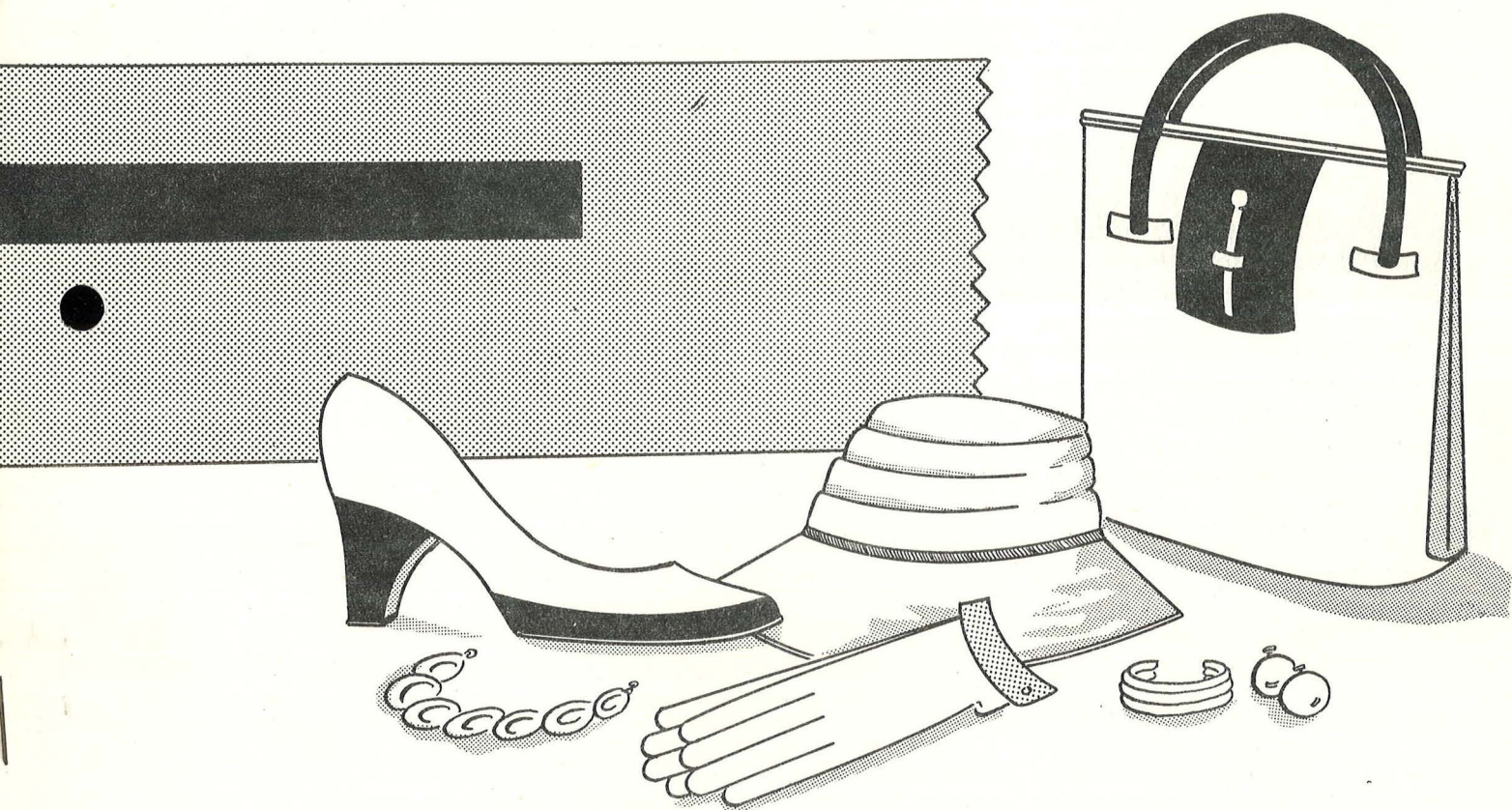
December 1955

E.C. 55-406

S
85
E7

● 55-406
c.1

Distinction Through Accessories



EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COOPERATING
W. V. LAMBERT, DIRECTOR

Distinction Through Accessories

Helen Rocke

A well-dressed woman is one who has learned the art of assembling her costume so that she presents a pleasing and satisfying picture. There is harmony in all parts of her costume-material, colors and styling. Her dress or suit has good structural lines which are completed and individualized through well chosen accessories.

The ability to so assemble a costume may be natural to some people. Most of us need to develop it through study and practice. One needs some knowledge of the basic art principles - harmony, proportion, balance, rhythm and emphasis, and of how to apply them in assembling a costume. These principles are briefly outlined here.

Harmony - the impression of unity through line, shape, size, texture and color.

Proportion - good proportion is pleasing space relationship. An area that is divided into two or three equal parts is not as pleasing as an area in which the divisions are less obvious. The same principle of proportion also applies to the amount of color used.

Balance - restful effect obtained by grouping shapes and colors around a center in such a way that there will be equal attraction on each side of that center.

Rhythm - an easy connected path along which the eye may travel. This path may be any arrangement of lines, colors, objects, or lights and darks.

Emphasis - dominance - the eye is carried first to the most important point and from there to other details in order of their importance.

 * Popular taste may accept an abundance of ornaments in the *
 * form of costume jewelry, decorative buttons or buckles, sequins *
 * and other glittering trim. One sees these on belts, hats, purses *
 * and other articles of apparel. The well-dressed woman does *
 * not wear all of the parts of the costume ornamented at the same *
 * time. Nor does she wear much ornament with patterned mate- *
 * rial. The rule is "Never add ornamentation to anything unless *
 * there are plenty of plain spaces to receive it". *

PLANNING YOUR COSTUME

Careful planning is the keynote of a well-dressed, correctly accessorized appearance.

Planning can be done around a basic suit or a basic dress. By a variety of well chosen accessories the basic dress or suit may be "dressed up" or "dressed down" for almost any occasion.

Basic Suit

Soft, such as dressmaker type but not severely tailored or the dressy or sport type.

Fabric of a weight suitable for both summer and winter, solid color, wrinkle resistant.

Self covered buttons

No contrasting fabric or trim

Little detail at the neckline

Color - black, navy, dark brown, gray, or neutral colors with which many other colors will harmonize.

Basic Dress

Interesting but simple structural lines - skirt straight or slight flare.

Easy fit

Fabric - solid color, texture smooth or semi-smooth, dull finish, wrinkle resistant. Weight suitable for year around with exception of mid-summer.

Long or three quarter sleeves

Neck line, simple and untrimmed

Buttons and belt of same fabric as the dress.

Another method of planning is to key the colors in the wardrobe by using a basic color with which many other colors will harmonize. A set of accessories basic in color and design which can be used with several outfits is chosen.

Accessories are the supplementary parts of a costume - those articles worn to complete one's outfit. Some, as shoes that protect the feet, fill a functional need. Others, as a necklace or flower, are used for decorative purposes only. Sometimes a decorative accessory may be used to give emphasis to a certain part of the costume and center attention so as to emphasize a pleasing feature or to detract from a less desirable one.

ACCESSORIES FOR BASIC GARMENTS

Accessories for basic garments will include:

Shoes, hat and bag, simple and smart in design, closely harmonizing in color and related in texture; adaptable to many uses and occasion.

Gloves, both light and dark in color.

Blouses, both tailored and dressy.

Sweaters, both light and dark in color, and suited for both sports and dressy occasions.

Scarfs, collars - to brighten the costume and bring out color in the face.

Jewelry - a few choice pieces for different occasions.

Flowers or boutonnières.

Other possibilities are a stole, bolero, weskit, peplums, belts, overskirts.

"Dressing Down"

"Dressing Up"

Hat	Felt or straw Tailored Simple in design Self-trim, gros grain, or no trim	Felt or straw with trim Less tailored Fabrics as velvet, satin, faille Veils, flowers, feathers or jeweled ornament for trim
Shoes	Suede, polished calf Closed toes and heels	Dark suede pumps, linen, faille or other fabrics
Gloves	Cotton or nylon fabric, string leathers (pigskin, capeskin)	Softer leather, suede, kid, silk or nylon May be longer
Jewelry	No glistening stones or showy sparkle. Pearls, ceramic, jet, plain gold, copper, silver and enamel	Dainty gold or silver jewelry, rhinestones, pearls, colored stones, jeweled earrings or lapel pins
Handbag	Made of leather and without ornament Sizable, functional, sturdy	Faille, corde, crepe, broadcloth, velvet, suede Smaller in size and softer in effect.

CHOICE OF ACCESSORIES

The choice of accessories is governed by:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| a. suitability for a given occasion. | c. suitability to the color of
the whole costume |
| b. textural qualities | d. size relationships to each
other and to the individual |

These are the factors to consider in the selection of any accessory. Certain styles in accessories (gloves and hats) are suitable for most every outfit. It is the fabric of which the accessory is made which determines its suitability for costume or occasion.

Scale your accessories to your size. Tall, large or full-busted women should wear large accessories. Small women would wear accessories that are in proportion to their size.

A general rule is to never repeat a contrasting color, texture or pattern more than three times in the accessories worn with the same costume. Often repetition in only two is smarter. Some authorities believe bags, shoes, and gloves are best kept in basic colors. Too many isolated spots of color detract from a unified appearance.

Shoes If one pair of shoes is to be used with several costumes, black or brown pumps are a good choice, depending upon your color plan. Made of suede in a conservative design they may be worn any time of day or night. Shoes should appear to belong, in color, line and material to the costume with which they are worn. Leather, as polished calf, is suitable for street or business wear. Reptile, lizard, alligator and similar skins are for casual wear only, and should never be considered for basic accessories.

Handbags or purses should suit their purpose, the occasion, and also the individual. The size must be in proportion with the size of the person who will carry the purse. For utility wear and business use the purse should be large and sturdy. Tall, large women may use a shoulder strap bag. This type is large, so it is out of proportion for the smaller woman.

Styles in purses change but usually there is some version of the envelope type, the bag with handles, and the clutch type. Bags with handles are carried with handles over the wrist.

Bags for dressy occasions may be smaller, softer in design, as pouch type, and made of material more elegant in texture. Suede and other soft leather, corde, velvet, broadcloth and crepe are examples.

Tooled leather is decorative and has pattern, limiting its use. A purse of this type should not be carried with fabrics having a design - (plaids and figured).

Hats should be chosen with care since they frame the face, which should be the center of interest. Some authorities suggest that the hat be the first accessory selected as it tells the purpose of the costume. Shape and size vary with fashion but should be becoming. The material from which a hat is made, the color, texture, and the trim, determine its suitability for a certain costume or occasion.

The simply tailored hat, of felt or straw, is chosen for street wear with the basic suit or dress. For more dressy occasions the hat may be similar in shape but of different fabric such as velvet or satin. Flowers, feather, bows, a jeweled ornament or pin may give an added dressy touch.

Hats for "any hour after five" are usually brimless and small enough not to be removed at the theater. They may be made of fabric with glitter or have trim as sequins or a sparkling ornament.

Gloves are an important accessory. Custom and etiquette require that some type of glove be worn for most social and business occasions. For all costumes, except formal ones, either leather or woven fabric gloves are suitable. For most women fabric gloves are more practical since they can be laundered and can be worn the year around.

Glove length is determined by the number of inches from the base of the thumb to the top of the glove - as a four- or six-button glove. Four button slip-on-gloves are conventionally correct for daytime wear with long sleeved suit or coat. Longer gloves which can stretch up or crush down may be chosen for three-quarter or shorter length sleeved dresses.

Grace Beardsley, one of Hollywood's outstanding costume authorities says: Gloves should not match the hat. The effect of matching is obvious and stilted and rhythm is destroyed. When colored hats match gloves, the eye appears to be held within the boundary lines of the matching colors. Rhythm means ease of eye movement. So let the eye "move" out and away from a cool colored hat (gray blue) by wearing timid gray gloves or from a warm colored hat (red) by wearing timid beige gloves.

Belts and cummerbunds may be an interesting accessory for the woman with a slender, trim figure. They do draw attention to the waist. If in contrasting color they cut the height of the figure.

Jewelry - A cardinal rule of good taste in dress is restraint in the use of ornament. This may be applied particularly in the use of jewelry, either real or the costume variety.

Women of good taste select a few choice pieces. They need not be expensive. Costume jewelry of good design, fine texture and color is available. Often one choice piece of jewelry will serve to accent a smartly simple costume. When more than one piece of jewelry is worn the pieces should be related in texture and type - if gold and pearls are used in earrings then gold and pearls should appear in necklace or bracelet. Gold and silver may be combined in the same design but seem inharmonious in separate pieces.

A flower or boutonniere may be used to add a dressy touch when the hat is plain and there are enough areas of plainness in the costume to display it. Don't wear flowers on flower prints or patterned fabrics.

Too Many Accessories

Often times distinction is lost by the use of too many accessories even though they harmonize. The idea is to know what to choose and when to stop. The designer Adrian, says - "The greatest fashion weakness of the American woman is to over accessorize". Remember the over-dressed person is never the well-dressed person.

The Rule of Fourteen is suggested as a helpful guide in accessorizing a costume. In suggesting the use of this rule as a guide it is assumed that all accessories in question are harmonious and right for the costume. Otherwise merely keeping the number of points within limits of the rule does not assure a correctly accessorized costume.

This rule, as explained by Eleanor King in her book "Glorify Yourself", is based on the principle stated by a famous Parisian dressmaker - that no lady should wear a street costume which comprises more than fourteen eye arresting elements. In other words everything you wear, that is visible to others, should add up to a total of not more than fourteen points. Fewer points are better. The score of costumes of some nationally recognized best dressed women falls between nine and ten points.

SCORE YOUR COSTUME

The chart shows how points are counted and may be used in scoring:

<u>Articles of Dress</u>	<u>Point Value</u>	<u>Your Score</u>
Dress, Suit or Coat - solid color	1	
figured	1 additional	
decorative stitching	1 additional	
contrasting belt or buckle	1 additional	
contrasting buttons	1 additional	
contrasting collar and/or cuffs	1 additional	
other trim	1 additional	
Blouse - plain (if showing)	1	
Shoes - plain	1	
heels or toes out	1 additional	
buckle, bow, strap	1 additional	
Hose - plain	1	
clocks or decoration	1 additional	
dark heels or seams	1 additional	
Hat - plain color	1	
each additional color, veil, ribbon, flowers, feather	1 for each	
Gloves - plain	1	
decorative stitching	1 additional	
other trim	1 additional	
Purse - plain	1	
clasp, trim, different frame	1 additional	
Scarf	1	
Handkerchief (if showing)	1	
Necklace	1	
Earrings	1	
Bracelets (single or group of small ones)	1	
Clip or pins	1	
Rings (wedding and engagement as one)	1	
Glasses	1	
Flower	1	