

Modesty Checklist

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“... Women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, but with what is proper for women who profess godliness – with good works.”
I Timothy 2:9-10

First, it's time for a heart check...

“How does a woman discern the sometimes fine line between proper dress and dressing to be the center of attention? The answer starts in the intent of the heart. A woman should examine her motives and goals for the way she dresses. Is her intent to show the grace and beauty of womanhood? Is it to reveal a humble heart devoted to worshipping God? Or is it to call attention to herself and flaunt her beauty? Or worse, to attempt to lure men sexually? A woman who focuses on worshipping God will consider carefully how she is dressed, because her heart will dictate her wardrobe and appearance.” -- John MacArthur

- ∴ What statement do my clothes make about my heart?
- ∴ In choosing what clothes to wear today, whose attention do I desire and whose approval do I crave? Am I seeking to please God or impress others?
- ∴ Is what I wear consistent with biblical values of modesty, self-control and respectable apparel, or does my dress reveal an inordinate identification and fascination with sinful cultural values?
- ∴ Who am I trying to identify with through my dress? Is the Word of God my standard or is it the latest fashion?
- ∴ Have I solicited the evaluation of other godly individuals regarding my wardrobe?
- ∴ Does my clothing reveal an allegiance to the gospel or is there any contradiction between my profession of faith and my practice of godliness?

So, I'm ready to leave the house, but I still have to do a modesty check. What are some things I should look for as I stand in front of my mirror?

Starting at the top...

- ∴ When I am wearing a loose-fitting blouse or scoop neck, can I see anything when I lean over? If so, I need to remember to place my hand against my neckline when I bend down.
- ∴ A word on purse straps: How could a purse possibly be a modesty concern? When you're wearing the strap across your chest. Regardless of the shirt you've got on, this accentuates your chest and creates a temptation for men.
- ∴ If I am wearing a button-down top, I need to turn sideways and move around to see if there are any gaping holes that expose my chest. If there are, I've got to grab the sewing box and pin between the buttons.
- ∴ Am I wearing a spaghetti-strap, halter-top, or see-through blouse? Not even pins will fix this problem! Most guys find these very unhelpful. It's time to go back to the closet.
- ∴ Can I see the lace or seam of my bra through my shirt? In this case, seamless bras are a better option.
- ∴ One final shirt check: Does it reveal any part of my cleavage? Does my midriff show when I raise my hands above my head? Is my shirt just plain too tight? If the answer is “yes” to any one of these questions, then I need to change my outfit.
- ∴ Are my arms or any part of my body exposed by see-thru or sheer covering?

Moving on down...

- ∴ Does my midriff (or underwear) show when I bend over or lift my hands? If so, is it because my skirt is too low? Either my skirt needs to be longer or I need to find a skirt that sits higher.
- ∴ I also have to turn around to see if what I'm wearing is too tight around my derriere, or if the outline of my underwear shows. If so, I know what I have to do!
- ∴ The “sit-down” check applies to my skirt or dress as well. And I must remember to keep my skirt pulled down and my knees together when I'm seated.
- ∴ And speaking of skirts, watch out for those slits! Does it reveal too much when I walk? Pins are also helpful here.
- ∴ Before I leave, I need to give my skirt a “sunlight check.” Is it see through? If so, I need a slip.
- ∴ Finally, I must remember to do this modesty check with my shoes on. High heels make my dress or skirt appear shorter.
- ∴ And don't forget – this all applies to formal wear as well.