

WHAT'S IN YOUR CLOSET?

TIPS FROM THE EXPERTS ON KEEPING YOUR WARDROBE UP-TO-DATE AND BEING EVER-STYLISH

BY ROHIT NAIR



From the Fashion Week ramps of London, New York and Milan to the veritably endless stores of Dubai, men's fashion is abuzz with activity and now's a good time as any to suit up, buckle down and dress smart, stylish and functional. Gone are the days when men's closets were narrow bureaus of bare necessities – a few casual Ts, a couple of button-down shirts, one or two pairs of pants, jeans and a pair or two of worn-in shoes. Today, there are as many brands that cater to men's tastes as there are for women, from top brands to little known ones – if you ever want an education in brands, all you need to do is meander through the malls of Dubai – all vying for your dirhams and a spot in your closet. Whether you're looking to update your wardrobe or simply glean some tips on what the 21st century male should have in his arsenal of attire, we've got you covered with some

USHI'S TIPS ON ACCESSORISING:

- ▶ Jackets, especially well-cut jackets. This will carry you through many occasions.
- ▶ Wristwatches. Go for quality and remember that you only need two at best – one leather watch for formal occasions, and a metal water resistant watch or active watch for casual daily wear.
- ▶ Shades or sunglasses. Classic style black will never be out of style, especially for men. It's safe and sexy.
- ▶ Perfume. Pick a nice soothing and relaxing masculine scent that's just enough. Nothing too overpowering and make sure you don't go crazy with it.

essentials curated from some of Dubai's style gurus. Rhaoni Silva, aka 'Mywaydrobe' as his Instagram followers know him by, says that the essentials for a modern man begins with three very important steps. "Fit, versatility and weight is my mantra," says Rhaoni. "Fit is super key because you need to figure out what your correct size is. A majority of men wear clothes two sizes too big!" If you've seen *Crazy Stupid Love*, you'll remember that that's exactly what Ryan Gosling's character tells the hapless Cal Weaver (Steve Carell) about his suits. "Versatility is about having a few 'key pieces' of clothes that you can mix and match for various occasions," continues Rhaoni, "and the weight of the fabric is particularly important here, especially since we're constantly going from hot to cold." "Men are often guilty of being 'difficult to shop for' or having 'a limited

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RHAONI'S CLOSET ESSENTIALS:



DOUBLE-BREASTED JACKETS ARE VERY STYLISH

- ▶ **TOPS**
- Well-fitted lightweight navy blazer sportscoat (linen/ cotton)
 - Well-fitted black blazer (for a casual chic dinner/ night out)
 - Oxford shirt in baby blue/ grey
 - Plain white/ black/ navy polos
 - Round or V neck tight plain t-shirt to be worn with blazers on a night out
 - Madras or check shirts to be worn with chinos
 - Black leather biker jacket for travel or for a funky look

▶ **BOTTOMS**

- 4 pairs of well-fitted jeans to your liking (straight/ slim/ skinny) in the basic colours: blue, dark blue, white and black.
- 3 pairs of chino pants: beige, white, navy
- A pair of cargo shorts for the most adventurous
- Denim shorts



A FEDORA IS A GREAT ACCESSORY TO SPICE UP AN OUTFIT

▶ **FOOTWEAR**

- Nice leather sandals (make sure your pedicure is perfect for that)
- Loafers (not drivers, not boat shoes – wood based leather or suede loafers)
- Low top sneaker, such as white Converse
- High top sneaker such as Nike/Adidas to the more sporty/ young
- Running/fitness comfy shoes
- Lace up in black and brown
- Monkstrap in leather or suede



ALL YOU NEED IS A COUPLE OF BELTS TO MATCH YOUR STYLE

▶ **SUITS**

- 1 black suit
- 1 navy suit
- 1 grey suit
- Perhaps 1 tuxedo blazer on the same finish as the black suit, for versatility in case of a more refined cocktail event.

▶ **ACCESSORIES**

- Many ties / pocket square variations
- Belts (formal matching the shoes and casual in either fabric or rope)
- Leather laptop bag
- A male clutch for the more up-to-date
- A good and well branded travel wallet (passport, cards, money from different countries)
- An expensive-looking card holder for nights out (it will impress those around you.)



A PAIR OF MIRRORED SUNGLASSES COMPLETES A LOOK



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Pocket squares have made a come-back in a big way, and wearing them in different ways can lend personality to your suit everyday

— Mahir Ali



repertoire' of tastes," explains Mahir Ali, artistic director and head of operations at Ascots & Chapels. "We are often better off investing in classics that are timeless, and accessorising to make our look up-to-date or current." Mahir suggests having some staples in the closet as a great canvas on which a man can have a splash of flamboyance in the form of accessories. "Investing in a sensible artillery would mean that these comprise almost 60 per cent of the wardrobe's volume, but less than 20 per cent of the cost," adds Mahir. "Two pairs of classic denims — light and dark blue — a sports jacket, a well-fitted pair of chinos or khakis, a handful of polo Ts and a few pairs of casual shorts are a must."

Shoes are another important part of the wardrobe and can complement and lift an ensemble to a different level. "I usually recommend three different kinds

of shoes — sleek black shoes for formal events, rubber shoes for laidback comfy times and brown leather/moccasin/suede to go in between gatherings (formal to semi-formal to casual)," adds Ushi Sato, author of TheShadesandScarf blog, who also does a fair bit of personal shopping for the more undiscerning. "One can't exaggerate the benefit of a nice pair of leather sandals," says Rhaoni, provided you have the pedicured feet for it! He also recommends having a pair of sneakers handy, especially if you can get some Nikes or Converse. Fashionable trainers are in! Mahir suggests a 'top five' — a good oxford black, a classic tan wing-tip brogue, a moccasin, a pair of trainers and a pair of trusty sandals. "Of course, some interesting socks to complement them all!"

With sneakers in mind, the other casual thing you need in your closet is a pair of jeans, or three, as Ushi recommends, or four as per Rhaoni's suggestion. "Get four pairs of well-fitted jeans in blue, dark blue, black and white. They go a long way and can easily be swapped for a smart casual look," says Rhaoni. "A black, blue and washed or stone-washed jeans is all you need, and will save you from a 'what to wear' moment like no other!" adds Ushi. "Also, never underestimate the power of a plain white T-shirt. It's very sexy and can easily be paired with a jacket for a great look."

Now that you've got those down, it's time to take stock of your accessories.

"Stop hoarding watches!" advises Ushi. "You really only need two watches — one that is more casual and can be worn daily (preferably water resistant), and one with a nice leather strap for more formal functions. Good quality watches are key."

When it comes to belts, make sure they

MAHIR'S STYLE STAPLES:

- ▶ A navy blue, charcoal grey and tan brown suit
- ▶ A white, light or Oxford blue, pink and lavender shirt — four must-have shirt colours for any man
- ▶ Two pairs of classic denims — light and dark blue
- ▶ A coloured denim — tan or brown for first-timers or vibrant shades like a petrol blue or salmon, if you'd dare to wear colour
- ▶ A sports jacket
- ▶ A well-fitted pair of chinos or khakis
- ▶ Two or three different styles of checked shirts
- ▶ A handful of polo T-shirts
- ▶ Two or three pairs of casual shorts to pair with either the checks or T-shirts

match your shoes or at least complement them — "Leather ones for formal and rope or fabric ones for more casual occasions," says Rhaoni. "It also helps to have an expensive card holder, to impress those you meet on a night out," he adds. "Cufflinks have always been amongst the most acceptable pieces of jewellery that men can invest in. From subtle sterling silver and mother-of-pearl options to statement gemstone pieces to offset candy-toned shirts — you can never go too loud with these," adds Mahir. "Subtlety is key!" he says, to achieve an understated classy look. "Pocket squares have made a comeback in a big way, and wearing them in different ways can lend personality to your suit everyday. Some colourful silk pocket squares balanced by more subtle whites are a great investment," he adds.

Some of the trending accessories from the runways seem to be classy document holders, wide-brimmed hats and mirrored sunglasses. The document holders are a chic alternative to the classic briefcase or urban messenger bag. Fedoras, wide brim Panamas and even bowler hats are making a big splash courtesy of fans of the Pharrell Williams look. And whether you're in a tailored suit or a casual pair of shorts, mirrored sunglasses are bound to get you noticed. Plus they come in a bunch of trippy colours!

So there you have it men, all the help you need to shop and get your closets in order. Check out Zapped by Apps for handy tools on your phones and remember, stay classy! **W**

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Separate Style

Pair a Herringbone Wool blend tan -coloured jacket like this with jeans or chinos. Separates are in!

TIPS ON GETTING THAT PERFECT SUIT:

A good suit can go a long way, which is why it is a closet essential.

- ▶ Get your suits from the masters — brands like Ralph Lauren, Brioni, Gucci, Dior Homme, Corneliani, Salvatore Ferragamo etc, that give you bespoke options ensuring a perfect fit.
- ▶ Make sure you pick the right fabrics, with good textures and weight, particularly for the local weather.
- ▶ If on a budget, there are a variety of tailors in Dubai, like in Satwa, that offer a good selection of fabrics. Take a photo of your favourite type of suit so the tailors can reproduce the look.
- ▶ Don't forget that you can mix and match — the separates are all the rage — if you have a nice jacket that can double up as formal and casual night out wear.



ZAPPED BY APPS

COMPILED BY ROHIT NAIR

STAY CLASSY, GENTLEMEN

There's power in your smartphones, gentlemen! And with great power comes great responsibility — at least to dress well, look good and feel great. Check out some of our picks to get the best style tips, from planning your looks to buying that next pair of shoes.

MR PORTER

Luxury retailer Mr Porter has an awesome site with a regularly updated catalogue that makes menswear shopping a breeze. There are over 200 high-end brands to choose from, including the likes of Burberry, Balmain, Paul Smith and Richard James, with high-def pictures to boot. For regular customers, the app automatically syncs your shopping basket and wish lists to your Mr Porter account, and lets you add items to your wish list while offline.



VALET MAG

Valet is an independently published lifestyle website that produces content on style, grooming and culture for the 21st-century gentleman — basically, everything you need to stay on top of trends. The dedicated app's iPad version looks great and offers some superb content on men's fashion. Key features include up-to-the-minute fashion news, video style guides, how-to advice and trend reports, all updated daily.



HOW TO TIE A TIE

Tying a tie is a rite of passage of sorts. Every man needs to know how to tie one, and not just those lazy single knot messes you manage everyday. The How to Tie a Tie app is an augmented reality app that lets you see your-self tie your tie following the rather detailed instructions. You can quickly master all sorts of knots, from the classic Windsor and four-in-hand knot to a self-tie bow tie.



STYLEBOOK MEN

Stylebook Men might be pricey for an app, but it delivers on its promise of being the ultimate organisational fashion app. It lets you upload photos of your clothes and you can then combine them on the app to create sets of go-to looks. It's also well integrated into the iOS calendar, so it helps you keep track of what you've worn and what you plan to wear. The app's Style Stats section keeps tabs on what you wear the most and what you wear the least. **W**

