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LOOK YOUR BEST

WHILE LOSING WEIGHT

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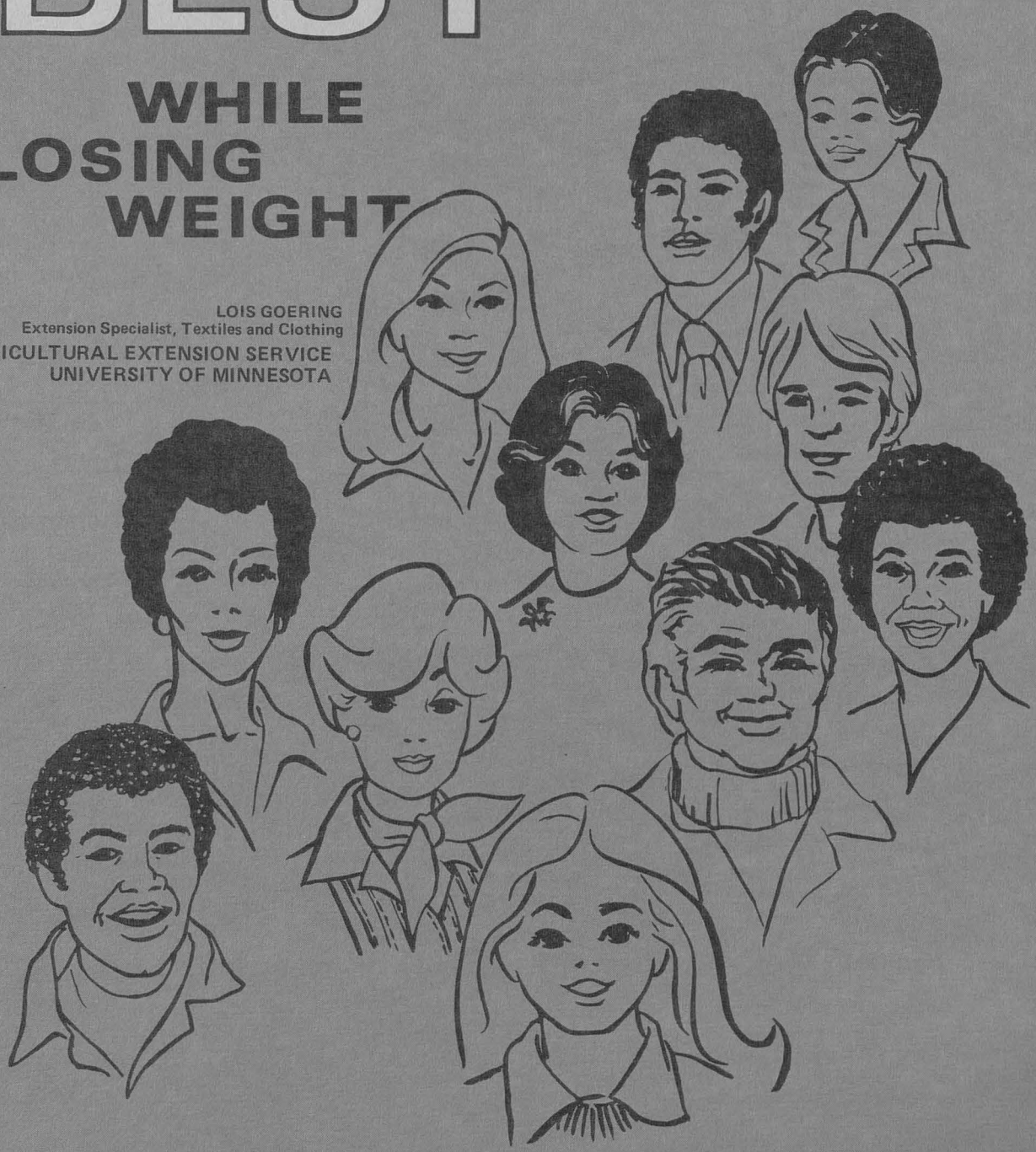


Congratulations! You are in the process of successfully losing weight. Whether you're trying to lose 10 pounds or 75 (or more), you are looking forward to discovering the new you, to improving your appearance, and to feeling different about yourself.

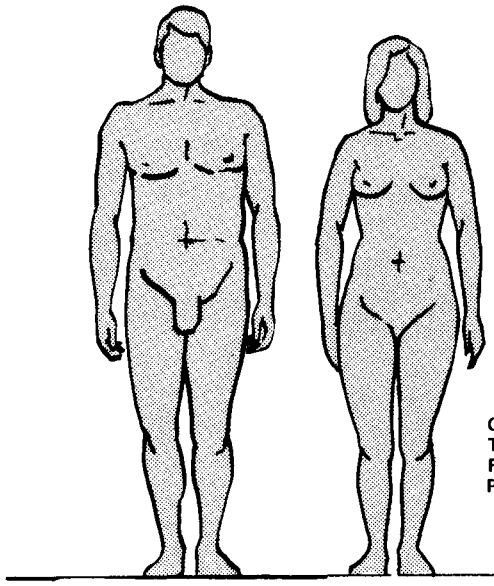
BODY CHANGES DURING WEIGHT LOSS

What are your reasons for wanting to lose weight? Did the doctor indicate that weight loss was necessary for your health? Did you decide you want to change your appearance and have more self confidence? Did you get discouraged on your last clothing shopping trip and decide that you could find more attractive clothing that fits you well if you only were 10, 15, or 20 pounds lighter?

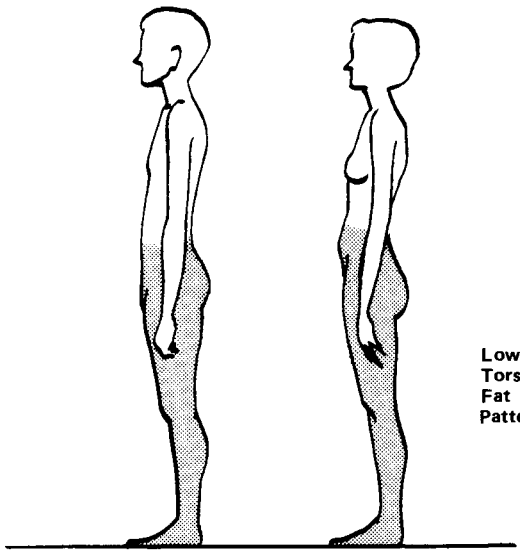
All of those might be good reasons for losing weight. Maybe you had other reasons. Most people expect that when they lose weight it will be much easier to find attractive, well fitting clothing. Before you become disillusioned, here are some factors to keep in mind.

Your body changes during weight loss will depend on where your body stores the most fat. Probably you have noticed that your general body shape is much like that of your father, mother, grandmother, Aunt Tillie or Uncle Ken. Whether you gain or lose weight, you will continue to have the same general shape unless you gain or lose extreme amounts of weight. You can change size, but don't depend on changing your proportions drastically when you diet. Fat patterns are genetically programmed, and your body will always tend to collect and lose fat in the same locations.

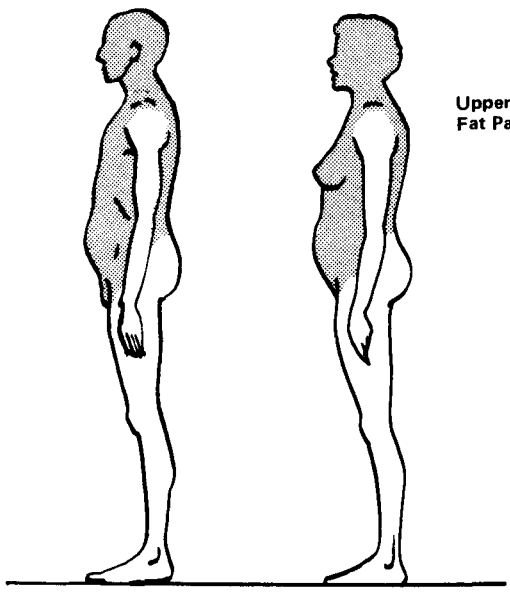
There are three basic fat patterns. They are the general torso, the lower torso fat pattern, and the upper torso fat pattern. Determining which fat pattern group you belong to will help you to predict how your body will change during weight loss. You will tend to lose fat most quickly from the areas where you tend to deposit it. Regardless of fat pattern type, all women have a tendency to gain and lose in the middle torso (abdomen-hip) area because of weight patterns related to child bearing.



General Torso Fat Pattern



Lower Torso Fat Pattern



Upper Torso Fat Pattern

General Torso Fat Pattern

People who deposit fat in the general torso area will tend to gain or lose in size fairly uniformly all over the body with weight changes.

Lower Torso Fat Pattern

The lower torso fat pattern group will tend to deposit most fat through the abdomen, hips, buttocks, and thighs or any combination of these areas. People in this group carry little fat in the shoulder, upper back, chest and midriff areas. This group is sometimes described as being pear shaped.

Upper Torso Fat Pattern

People in the upper torso fat pattern tend to deposit fat in the shoulder, upper arm, upper back, bust, chest and midriff/ abdomen areas or some combination of these areas. They are often quite slender through the hip and thigh area.

Think about how your figure changed as you gained weight. Where did you add the most weight? That is the location where you are most likely to lose weight.

Increased physical activity during weight loss is important to improve your physical well being and muscle tone. Along with muscle tone you will increase your proportion of muscle tissue in comparison to fat tissue. Your scales may not show as much weight loss when you add exercising to your dieting because, although you are losing fat tissue, you may be adding muscle tissue which is heavier than fat tissue. Some of your weight plateaus may be muscle development as you continue to lose fat. You may make some changes in your proportions through the exercises you do if you select the exercises carefully.

Most ready-to-wear clothing is sized for the general torso group. If your bone structure is wide through the pelvic area or shoulder area and you tend to deposit fat in the same location, you will be able to change clothing sizes through weight loss, but you may still have the same proportion problems with clothes that you have at your current weight. You may be able to find more attractive clothing in your new size, but you may still need to make some alterations in patterns and in ready-to-wear garments.

Your clothing choices allow you to manipulate your appearance. You can disguise your figure to look more like the ideal if you are careful in the selection of clothes during the time you are losing weight and after you have reached your goal weight.

PLAN CLOTHING CAREFULLY

Planning clothing for the time you are on a reducing diet is important if you want to avoid spending money on clothing that might fit you for only a relatively short time. As you lose weight, you will feel good about your progress and will want your appearance to reflect that feeling. But dieting can be expensive. It is very easy to spend a lot of money on clothing and still feel as if you have nothing to wear.

What Do You Have To Wear?

Before buying any new clothes, take a careful inventory of the clothing you have to wear. Spend some time going through all of your clothes. Try on everything in your dresser drawers, closet, and out of season storage that you might possibly be able to wear. Give away those things that are now too big and those too small clothes that are no longer fashionable. You are not going to wear them again! Sell them at a garage sale or a second hand clothing outlet. Get rid of them! Then you won't be so frustrated when you look in the closet and see lots of clothes, but nothing to wear. Instead you will see a few clothes that fit.

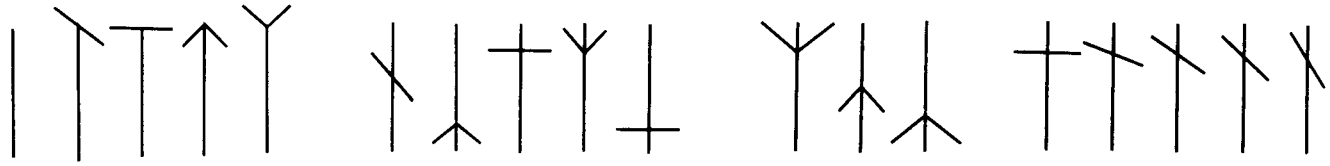
Make a list of the clothes for each season that you can wear. Organize the list so you can quickly see what you really need to add to your wardrobe. You might find the chart below helpful. Add extra columns for other kinds of garments. Maybe it will help you to have separate columns for pants, shirts, blouses, panties, slips, stockings, etc. Tape several pieces of paper together so you have columns big enough to write in.

As you make your inventory, be sure to note the colors of clothes. This will help you to be sure that the new garments you buy or make will go with what you have. At the bottom of your inventory, write in the things you need to add to your wardrobe for the season. If you are only going to wear these clothes for a season before you are ready for the next size smaller, you won't want to buy many of those extra things that would be nice to have. Save that for clothing you purchase when you have reached your goal weight.

MY CLOTHING INVENTORY

Season_____ Date_____

Coats	Dressy Clothes	Sporty Clothes	Around Home Clothes	Nightwear	Undergarments	Shoes



First Group Second Group Third Group Fourth Group

What Do You Need?

Although you can do with fewer clothes than usual while you are in the process of losing weight, you do need to have some things. For instance, it is very important for women to purchase a brassiere that fits well during size changes. But just get one or two in each size. It is difficult to alter a brassiere very much. As shoes get too long and/or wide, (as they will in extreme weight changes) you need to purchase shoes that fit well.

Each person loses weight differently. You may find that as you lose weight your proportions change temporarily. For a while, you may seem to lose all of the weight on top or on the bottom. This may make it very difficult to buy dresses or pant suits. During this stage you will be ahead to wear separates. It is easier to buy skirts or pants and tops separately and have them fit. If you sew, you will be able to alter ready-made clothes to fit, or you can alter patterns as you sew.

Coordinate your separates. Selecting a complete outfit of separates which includes both pants and a skirt, a vest, and a couple of tops can help you to feel that you are not wearing the same outfit all the time. Then as the skirt gets too big, look for another skirt that can be worn with the blouse or vest. You will find that you can stretch your money and gradually work from one outfit into another.

Some types of clothes will fit for a longer time than others. A wrap skirt, jumper or coat can be worn longer than other clothes. A loose fitting vest will look like it fits for a longer time than one which is fitted. And the loose fitting vest can be worn over blouses that have gotten big and still look good on you. You will find that most clothes can be taken in successfully only about one size. Then it is time to give them away or completely recut and sew them.

You need one really smart looking outfit to wear in each size as you lose weight. Don't let it be expensive, but be sure the color looks good on you and the design lines are good for your figure. Don't be afraid to try new colors, fabrics, or types of garments. You will find they give you a boost and help you feel more self-confident.

Use your clothes. When you know your day is going to be especially important, wear that smart looking outfit. You will find that you feel more confident in approaching your employer for a raise, in returning an item to the store, or in presiding at a meeting if you know you look your best.

If perspiration has been a problem to you, it may continue to be a problem as you are losing weight. The clothing you wear can help to alleviate this problem. Some fibers are absorbant and others are not. Absorbant fibers such as cotton, rayon, and wool will absorb perspiration and help it to move away from the body. Fibers such as polyester and nylon do not absorb moisture next to your body. This can be uncomfortable, especially on hot summer days. So watch for cotton, rayon, and wool or blends with a high proportion of these fibers for comfortable clothing.

CREATING AN ILLUSION WITH CLOTHING

The way you use clothing can help you appear to others the way you prefer. The silhouette of a garment, its structural lines, and the color and texture of the fabric work together to create an overall effect of size. Although each is discussed separately here, it is important to look at the total effect to be sure you are not hiding a minor problem, and at the same time, accenting a major one.

Use Line Effectively

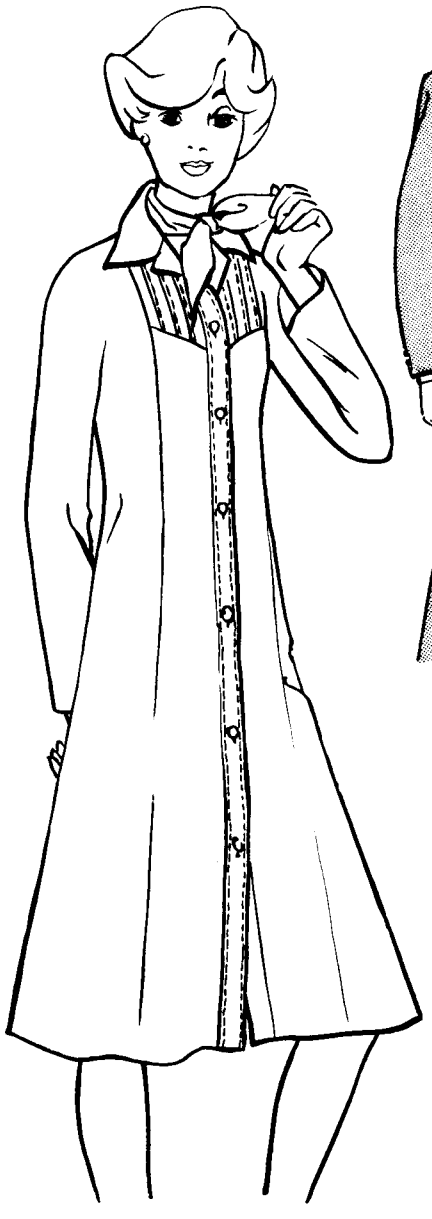
Optical illusions can be created by using lines in a variety of ways. As you look at these lines, notice that although the vertical lines are all the same length, they appear to be different lengths because of the effect of the other lines at the top.

When we use similar lines within the figure, we get other effects. Usually, the lines extending from the vertical will make the figure appear wider wherever the widest part appears. For example, in the third group of figures, the first one might make the shoulders look broader, the second one will widen the hips and narrow the waistline, and the last one will make the shoulders appear narrower.

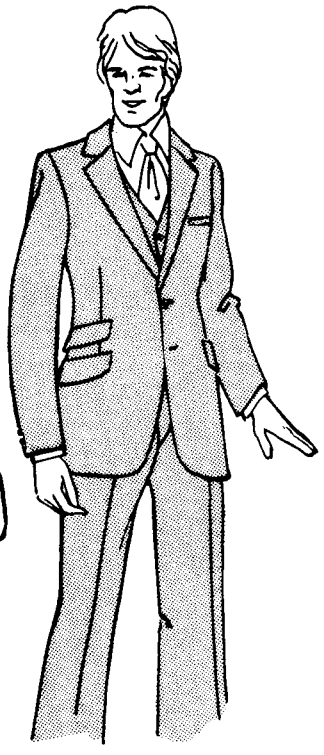
The direction of the line is also something to consider. The more nearly vertical the line is, the more slimming it is apt to be.

Design lines appear in clothing in the seams, edges of collars, pockets, yokes, pleats, and panels. Just as they create illusions in the line examples, they create illusions in our clothing. Notice how the lines are used in these garments.

Broaden the shoulders
narrow the hips



Broaden the shoulders
narrow the waistline and hips



Broaden the hips

Narrow the waistline
conceal fleshy hips

Lines can help you flatter the figure and make you seem to have more pleasing proportions. If you are wide through the hipline and narrow through the shoulders, do you look for clothes that have horizontal detail through the chest and shoulder area and little detail in the lower part of the body? If your arms are heavy in proportion to the rest of your body, do you look for sleeves on garments that are plain and do not call attention to your arms such as a wide cuff in the upper arm area. If you have a very full bustline and narrow hips, do you use horizontal lines in the hipline area and leave the bustline fairly plain?

Two or more vertical lines can sometimes make your figure appear larger. When vertical lines are closely spaced, they act like a single vertical line and give the illusion of length. If they are far apart as the buttons are in double breasted suit or dress, the eye travels back and forth and the effect is one of added width.

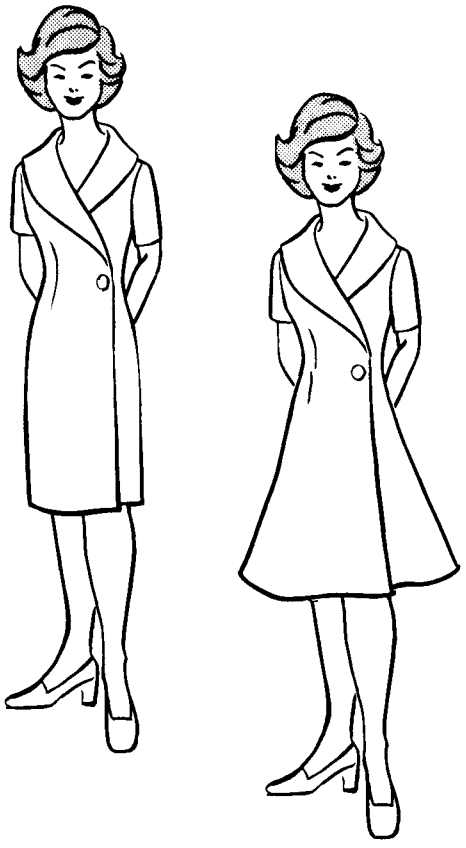
Part of the trick of using lines, shapes, and colors effectively is to use contrasts which draw attention away from the part of your figure which is out of proportion. You can do this with contrasting colors, textures, or shapes such as collars, yokes, scarves, and jewelry.

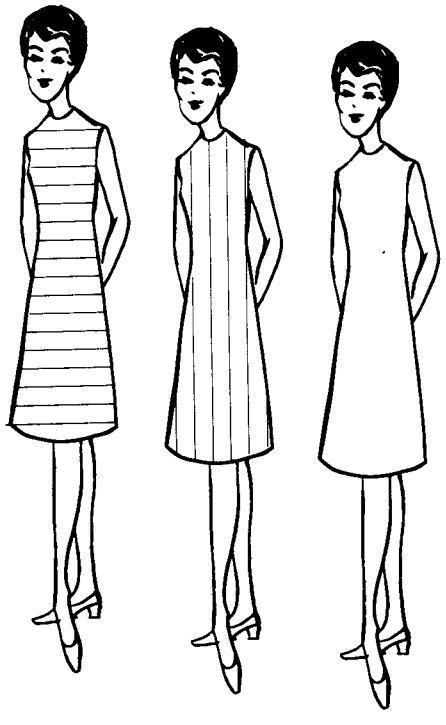
Another way to create illusions is to conceal the oversized part of your body. Soft fullness on the top may minimize a too-large bustline. Fullness in the skirt may hide hips that are too large for the rest of the figure.

To use line effectively, you have to take a look at your whole figure as well as analyzing the size and shape of each part. If you are short and heavy, slim skirts may make you seem taller and thinner. But, if your legs are heavy, the slim skirt will probably make you seem heavier than a moderately full skirt. You have to decide what total effect you are happier with.

Don't forget that the lines which create the outline shape (silhouette) of the garment also affect the shape of the figure. The body tends to take on the appearance of having the shape of the garment you're wearing. Sometimes attention can be called away from the silhouette by the color and spacing of lines. Color contrasts, especially distinct color or value contrasts, will attract attention to a certain part of the body. How often have you heard that vertical stripes will make you appear taller and more slender and horizontal stripes will make you appear shorter and wider? Is that true? Sometimes it is, and sometimes it isn't.

In these illustrations, the horizontal lines seem to make the slim figure appear taller and thinner than either the solid colored or vertically striped fabric. Do you agree that the vertical lines make the heavier figure seem to be shorter and wider? What has happened? Sometimes lines play tricks. The width of the stripes, their color, and the space between stripes affect whether they are widening or slimming. Sometimes you have to try a garment on to really know if it will be slimming or not.





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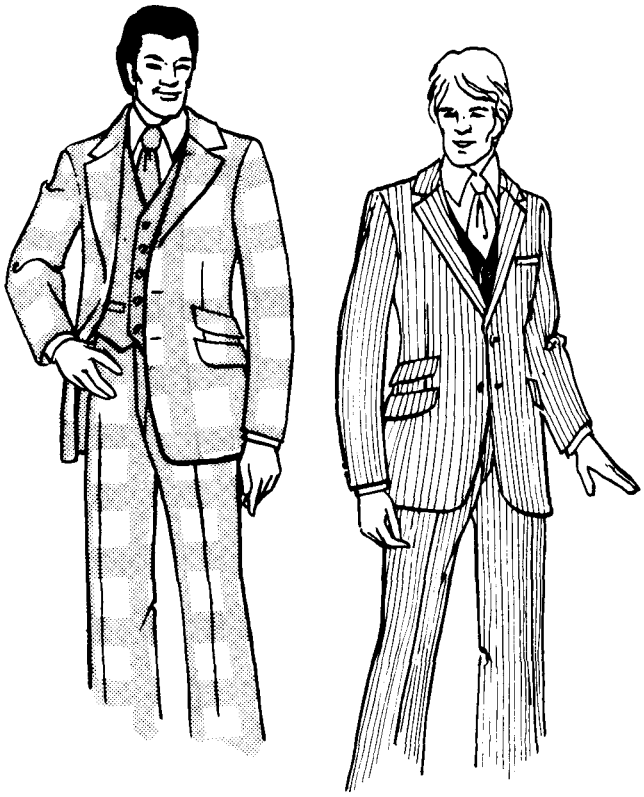

Use Color and Texture Effectively

The color and texture of the fabric used in your clothing are also important considerations as you plan to appear to others as you wish. They also create optical illusions to make you seem smaller or larger.

You can wear any color which perks up your personal coloring. You don't have to wear gray to appear slimmer. But pay attention to the tint or shade of the color. A dark or dull shade of a color makes the figure seem smaller than a light or bright version of the color. But don't carry that to extremes. The completely dark garment adds to the impression of solidarity and weight. If you are extremely overweight you will want to avoid this. A garment which is grayed in appearance will be more slimming than an all black outfit. Use color contrasts high on your figure or near your face to highlight your personal coloring.

Small prints and quiet narrow stripes, especially in muted tones, tend to make you appear smaller. Bold prints and light bright colors will have a tendency to make you seem larger. Some people are more satisfied when they use solid colors instead of prints, stripes, and plaids. Try on clothes and look critically at what they do to your appearance. You may have to wait to wear some of the light bright prints and colors until you have gotten closer to your goal weight.

The texture of a fabric also affects your apparent size. Bulky or heavy weight fabrics will make you seem larger, because they add bulk to your figure, as will very shiny or clingy fabrics. Fabrics which are shiny will reflect light and add bulk. The clingy fabrics tend to reveal all of your curves and in so doing, emphasize your size. Smooth or light-weight fabrics give a slimmer illusion, because they do not add bulk to the figure or emphasize your curves.

IMPORTANT APPEARANCE EXTRAS

Clothing is not the only thing that affects your appearance. When you are losing weight, your grooming is important, and so is your selection of accessories.

Spend extra time keeping your hair looking its best. Why not try a different hair cut or a new hair style. Above all, keep your hair clean. Bathe frequently, use deodorant, perfume or cologne, and do everything possible to make you feel good about yourself.

Do you use much make-up? Could your beauty operator or a make-up consultant in a department store or cosmetic shop give you some help in using make-up effectively. Magazines are also good places to pick up clues about make-up. This might be a good time to try using make-up differently than you have.

What accessories do you use? With the current popularity of scarves, consider the possibilities for changing the appearance of your outfits with them. Be careful how you tie them though. A scarf can form a vertical line or a horizontal line depending on its shape and the way you use it. Remember that the vertical line is more slimming than a horizontal line that leads your eye across the body. Also consider effective use of necklaces. A long necklace that forms a "V" at the neckline helps to add length to your appearance.

Do you wear glasses? Have you tried on different shaped frames lately? Some of the newer shapes may make your face seem slimmer or may add color to your appearance. If you don't wear glasses, but use sunglasses, shop around for an interesting look in sunglasses.

Look your best while you are losing weight. The compliments you receive will help to keep you encouraged and to feel that your progress is worthwhile. And for those weeks when you are at a standstill in your weight loss, pamper yourself a bit. Take a long, luxurious bubble bath and spend extra time with your hair and make-up. Feeling good about yourself is the key to keeping you on the track with your diet.

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