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The Perfect Party Dress

ask an expert: party dresses by body type
Canada (Nov.20.09)



Images: Danielle Meder (see all of her paper dolls at www.finalfashion.ca)

It's time for holiday parties, but I don't even know where to begin in the dress section. Can someone please HELP?

Morgan L. emailed us at expert@sweetspot.ca, and our expert stylist, Kelly Millar, answered;

Hard to believe, but yes, the holidays are just around the corner. Follow these guidelines to help you choose a flattering, stylish party dress that highlights all of your assets.

If you are pear-shaped:

- Highlight your slim waist, show off your bust line and drape generously around the hips.
- You want to opt for an A-line skirt style, nothing that clings to your hips and definitely no puffy skirt styles!
- Look for a piece that highlights your neckline and décolletage.

If you're an hourglass:

- Many women envy the curvaceous feminine hourglass body type, but it can be challenging to find cocktail dresses that balance out all the curves.
- The main focus should be fit
- Make sure you are not choosing a dress that is too tight.
- Choose styles and cuts that skim the bust and waistline without clinging.
- Generally speaking, flowing fabrics are more flattering on a voluptuous frame.

If you have a full bust:

- Choose a cocktail dress that has a supportive top (usually meaning fuller straps).
- Opt for an elegant cut that highlights your neck, décolletage or legs for a sexy, feminine touch.
- Choose a heavier fabric with a bit of stretch.

If you're more straight:

- More boyish figures can wear more clingy styles but make sure to choose a cut that draws attention to one of your feminine assets. (choose one and make it the highlight)

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- Think: an interesting cut on your bust line, a tapered waist, or a shorter, sexy hemline to show off your legs!

If you're trying to camouflage a tummy:

- The best cut is an empire-waist style.
- Choose a dress that will highlight your shoulders and bust line but that will drape generously around the middle and hips.
- Longer styles with flowing fabrics are your best option.

Don't forget: Get the size correct:

- Many women aren't, so while choosing the right style for the body type is critical, getting the right size is just as important!
- When in doubt, choose another style, chances are that particular style is just not fitting your body type properly.
- It shouldn't just look perfect, but should feel perfect too.

Choose colour:

- Don't be afraid to go beyond black.
- There are so many vibrant jewel tones right now
- Or, if jewel tones are too overpowering for your colour palette, go for a rich navy, caramel or cranberry as a fun and festive alternative to black.



Kelly Millar is a fashion stylist and owner of Kelly Millar Image Consulting in Toronto. She may be reached at www.km-ic.com; info@km-ic.com; 647-283-3712.

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kellymillar:

Hello Ladies, I am so happy to see that so many of you enjoyed the article! Thank you for all of your comments. With regards to very specific body types, it's really best that I see you in order to do a proper assessment. These are just general tips for most body types, however there are many women which are a combination of body types. Please feel free to contact me directly with any specific questions of if you need wardrobe assistance for the holidays. Happy shopping! Best, Kelly Millar

Agree 0 Disagree 0 Report 0

hunnybear:

this is awesome...love it

Agree 0 Disagree 0 Report 0

Oh Discordia:

It is just sad that most of the dresses that fits for a full bust... well those look like things my grand mother should be wearing, not me! Make younger styles please!

Agree 0 Disagree 0 Report 0

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