
Dress Your Body Type: Large

Carrying some extra weight around? That's no excuse to give up on your image. Help starts here.

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After adopting a healthy diet and getting plenty of exercise, knowing your [body type](#) is one of the most important factors in making the most of your appearance. That's because learning to work with what you have enables you to capitalize on your strong points and minimize flaws. This week, we're running you through the basics of dressing a large body type -- everything from how your clothes should fit to the grooming habits you should adopt. Be sure to check back in the upcoming weeks, as we explore dressing other body types.

We've also created a checklist that you can bring on your next shopping trip so that our advice will

never be forgotten.

A large body type defined

Large body types vary widely. You may be tall with a massive frame or [short](#) and heavyset. Whether you're extremely fit and muscular or you haven't hit the gym in years, a large body type means that you're of above average weight or size. If you fall into the latter category, you'll also be quite wide around your torso.

Pros and cons of dressing a large body

Nearly every body type has its style challenges. If yours is large, one con is that dressing your body to its best advantage means you'll be quite limited in terms of the colours and patterns you can get away with wearing. You also won't be able to be as experimental with [fashion trends](#) as leaner men, and simply finding trendy clothes to suit your body type can be difficult.

On the plus side, retailers and e-tailers are increasingly stocking stylish clothes in larger sizes, so it is becoming easier than ever before to find nice clothing at any size. What's more, classic, timeless pieces (the foundation of any man's wardrobe) always look good on you, lending a distinguished appearance.

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Fit

One of the most important principles to follow when dressing any body type is to buy clothes that fit properly. This rule is particularly important if you are on the larger side. To show your body in its best light, select clothing that skims over your frame, as it will smooth out your physique. Your blazers should be a little longer in order to provide more coverage of your posterior. To further flatter your body and balance out your proportions, choose tops, blazers and outerwear with slightly structured shoulders, as these will give you an authoritative air and will direct attention to your face.

For bottom pieces, it's best to opt for [jeans](#) and trousers with a forgiving, relaxed fit rather than straight (borderline skinny) alternatives. Pay attention to your hemlines, as well, and ask your [tailor](#) to let your pants fall close to the end of your heel to give the illusion of longer, leaner legs.

We have more tips for dressing your body type next...

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The most common mistake men with large body types make is thinking that [baggy clothes](#) will disguise excess pounds. Don't fall into this trap. Over-size clothing has the opposite effect, actually adding weight to a heavy frame. Another common mistake large men make is to don tight clothing in the hope that it will pull flesh in, when in fact, it will show every bulge. To figure out if a garment is too tight on you, take notice if the fabric pulls anywhere when you put it on. If it does, you'll know you need to size up.

Colors and patterns

The [color palette and pattern](#) scheme of the garments in your wardrobe deserves special attention if your body type is large. Generally, you'll want to stick to a lot of dark colors, like dark grays, browns, navy, and black, as these shades visually reduce a larger body frame.

[Color coordination](#) in your ensembles is also important. Dark-colored clothing should be worn over the areas of your body that protrude the most, such as your midsection or rear, for example. The hues and shades in your outfits should all come from the same color family (monochromatic), as too many contrasting shades will seem to cut you in half, emphasizing a large middle and making your legs seem shorter. In regard to patterns, contrary to popular wisdom, new research suggests that horizontal stripes might actually be more slimming than vertical stripes.

Purge your closet

To purge your wardrobe of anything that doesn't make you look like a million bucks, begin by tossing anything with a loud, large pattern, as these pieces only emphasize your heavyset frame. The same goes for attention-grabbing, brightly-colored clothing. Light-colored bottoms are also a big no-no for large men, so get rid of those as well (but keep your light tops if they can be worn underneath a darkly hued sweater or blazer).

dress your best

Apart from the fit of your clothes and their color and pattern, there are a few other tips to bear in mind when dressing a large body type. First, it's a smart idea to spend a bit of time online seeking out e-tailers that carry high-quality clothing in XL+ sizes or specialize in dressing larger men.

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Second, remember that anything that makes you [look taller](#) will also help you seem thinner. Standing up straight, for example, can instantly make you look as though you've dropped a few pounds. You'll also come across as being more confident, which is a trait that's attractive in any man, no matter what his size. And if you can couple proper posture with a shoe that has a half-inch to one-inch heel, you'll seem even slimmer.

Good grooming habits are another thing that will improve your appearance, regardless of your size. Find a barber who is able to work with your [face shape](#) and give you a haircut that makes your jawline appear more pronounced and puts the focus on your eyes. At home, try parting your hair off-center to help slenderize your face. When it comes to facial hair, opt for a clean-shaven look or keep your beard cropped close to your face.

Read on for a checklist to help you dress your body type...

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There are also a few garments large men should avoid altogether. Anything bulky should go, along with pleated pants, bulky wool sweaters and puffer vests as they add unnecessary padding to your

frame. Stick to single-breasted blazers in thinner fabrics, using them to disguise love handles and conceal a belly. Just make sure your blazers have either a single vent or no vent, as double-vented blazers call more attention to the size of your backside.

Eschew single or two-button blazers, filling your dressy wardrobe instead with [three-button blazers](#), which are a style that actually looks best on larger men. Tops with V-necks are also keepers, as they'll draw the eye up, making your neck seem longer. By contrast, turtlenecks will make your neck disappear, so refrain from wearing them.

Finally, use [accessories](#) and cologne to give your ensembles a personal twist or to make a style statement. Invest in a great watch because size has absolutely nothing to do with style in the accessories department. A [cologne](#) that mixes well with your body chemistry is also another must-have, as women are very receptive to smell.

checklist: your wardrobe staples

- Single-breasted blazers
- Three-button suit/blazer
- Blazers with a single vent or no vent
- Flat-front pants
- Great cologne
- V-neck T-shirts and sweaters
- Dark colors
- A posh-looking watch
- Dressy knee-length coat
- Sweaters in thin fabrics
- Dress shoes with a slight heel
- Horizontally-striped shirts
- Dark-rinse relaxed-fit jeans