

WOMAN

31 JULY 2011

SUMMER ON A SHOESTRING
Your complete holiday wardrobe for under £150

ANNOYING BOYS, EMBARRASSING DADS
Inbetweeners star Emily Head berates the men in her life

'I NEVER KNEW HE WAS A SERIAL ADULTERER'
A widow's heartbreaking discovery

EXCLUSIVE

UP CLOSE

AND

PERSONAL AT

DOWN TON

BEHIND THE SCENES ON SERIES TWO

THINGS YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT...

WHAT COLOURS TO WEAR



Right on hue: designer Prabal Gurung

Wearing the right shades can be as rejuvenating as a face-lift, says style consultant Jules Standish. And because your 'true colours' are determined by skin tone and eye shade, they're with you for life

Black is not a 'safe' option

Only a few women in the West have the colouring to look great in black at any age – most of us will look tired and haggard, because black highlights lines, is reflected in the skin, and accentuates heavy jawlines and large noses.

And it's not always slimming

It's often better to wear a lighter colour that 'harmonises' or blends with the tone of your face, so that you create a flattering vertical line instead of cutting yourself off at the neck with a dramatic contrast.

Choosing colours should be about skin tone, not fashion

Try the 'colour drape' test to check whether a fabric flatters you. Drape it across your chest, high enough under your chin to reflect against your face. If black gives you wrinkles, grey skin, sunken eyes (and perhaps a little moustache), then avoid wearing it next to your face. Be careful with white, too – if your skin tone is warm, white can make it look blotchy.

You could be a spring, summer, autumn or winter 'type'

Skin tone, personality and eye colour all dictate the palette you should choose from. Spring colours are bright and invigorating – blues, greens, corals, turquoises. Summer is paler and sun-bleached – pale pink, silver grey, soft lavender. Autumn is warm and earthy – olive, gold and aubergine. Winter dramatically combines black with primary reds, blues and yellows.

We think our skin is pink – but it's more likely to be yellow

It all depends on your levels of the natural pigments carotene, haemoglobin and melanin. English skin is usually yellow-based, so needs bright spring colours. Bronze Mediterranean skin looks fabulous in autumn shades. Pale Scandinavians can wear clear summer pastels. The Chinese combination of yellow skin with black hair can take black – but not near the face, which needs spring colours – whereas cool dark Japanese colouring is perfect for a winter palette. Black skin glows in both spring and autumn tones.

Skin colour may fade with age but doesn't change in tone

So don't change your colours as you get older, just use lighter shades. Ditto when your skin is darkened with a suntan – just wear deeper shades of the tones that suit you.

If a colour doesn't suit your face, keep it under cover...

If you feel drawn to a colour but it doesn't suit your complexion, choose it for underwear – if it's a feel-good colour, you'll still get the benefit.

Celebs get it wrong too


Victoria Beckham (autumn) and Peaches Geldof (spring) should avoid black – even young skins look damaged if black is wrong for them. The fabulous Debbie Harry (spring/summer) acquires shadows and lines when photographed in a high-neck black top, while Joanna Lumley looks ancient in a black scarf – but amazing in a bright orange that suits her spring colour. How Not to Wear Black by Jules Standish is published by O Books, price £7.99*

What's the best way to sell your home in a tough market?

A) Rely on the subliminal selling power of yellow?

B) Use PrimeLocation.com with over 4 million visits every month?

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