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Fall fashion gets structured. No more slouch; fitted is in.

By Brett Marlow • Special to Pioneer Press

This fall, forget about slouchy silhouettes. It's all about structure, sophistication and the return of staple items such as the skinny jean and sleek, detailed boots.

Looks this winter will be versatile; they will allow you to reissue some of your summer clothes by layering and dressing them up with belts and leggings. Wear them into the colder months and even into spring. Many trends will be returning, such as the high-waisted and wide-leg pant but in a more loose fit. Warmer hues will be debuting such as colored denim in bold shades of green.

Black and brown neutrals will take a back seat to tweeds, plaids and warmer tones such as eggplant, burnt oranges and blues. The attitude this fall is sophistication with a hint of edge and funk, inspired by current trends on TV shows such as "Gossip Girl" and the styles of musicians such as Rhianna who mixes class with quirk.

Amy Salinger, a fashion consultant in Chicago and New York City who has worked on TV shows such as "What Not To Wear," said this fall is also about mismatching patterns and genres.

"It's not that you have to get rid of that summer dress," Salinger says. "It's that you need to add a structured piece to it."

One thing to add to those summer clothes is one of Salinger's favorites: menswear garments for women.

"One big trend that is coming in is that blazers are going back to being a little bit longer — not broader — toward the menswear look," Salinger says.

Celebrities such as Gwyneth Paltrow have been sporting the blazer look but have added a touch of femininity with a matching skirt.

You do not have to be a musician or a celebrity to achieve the latest looks for fall. Stores such as Macy's, Bloomingdales, Neiman Marcus and Lord & Taylor are offering some of the latest trends for fall that anyone can achieve.

Although you may not want to trade in those flowy dresses for layers or long pants, the looks for fall will keep you looking sexy even bundled up.

#### Keeping it warm

Kirstie Lytwynec, vice president and general manager of Neiman Marcus in Northbrook, says to look for jackets that are less voluminous with menswear-inspired tailoring.

"This jacket would be paired with a blouse or feminine skirt for the perfect balance," Lytwynec says.

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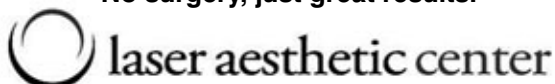
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When fall turns into winter, Macy's trend expert Jennifer Wilkins suggests to try a new style and invest in a coat you might not already have in your closet.

Look for hooded, colored and patterned coats as well as those adorned with detailed buttons or belts.

"They're not only dramatic but also functional as well to keep us warm in those sub-zero temps," Wilkins says.

Also try going scarf-less with a funnel collar coat, which is made from a thicker material, such as wool, that allows you to turn the collar up to shield your face from the Chicago wind or tuck it inside. It's one of Salinger's favorites.

When it comes to color, mix it up a little; neutrals aren't limited to black or brown. Try a deep eggplant. To add a twist, try using a tie around the waist instead of a belt, Salinger says.

**Lasting layers**

Layering will remain a staple in anyone's wardrobe this fall underneath a blazer or a nice, fitted fall coat. Here's a good thing about layering: you can incorporate garments from your summer wardrobe as well.

"[Layering] is great for Chicagoans as we transition from season to season," Wilkins says. "It allows us to blend our summer and fall essentials."

Rework a medium-weight summer dress into a sharp fall look by cinching it with a skinny belt at the waistline.

Belts are a great way to create a great shape on any woman. The wide belt was in last year but Salinger says skinny belts are taking over.

"Keep around something a little more structured like a T-shirt-like dress, something that's button-down or has a cinched waist," Salinger says.

Dressing up those layers isn't hard either; just add a nice pair of boots to your outfit.

Although colored leggings and tights will keep their presence in fall fashion, Salinger recommends not dressing up your flowy, lighter dresses with leggings in the fall. They won't keep you warm. Layer with a blazer.

You can add leggings to dresses that fit close to the body and pieces with longer hemlines that touch at or below the knee.

Lytwyne recommends pairing a deep purple, violet or amethyst dress with booties or pumps to finish off the look.

**Romantic blouses**

Voluminous sleeves were big last year and aren't going anywhere.

"It's the perfect balance to the man-tailored jackets and suiting that is being seen for fall," Lytwyne says.

LaVelle Olexa, senior vice president of public relations at Lord & Taylor, says detailed sleeves are key for fall.

"The statement blouse is major: romantics with ruffles, bows, relaxed ties in whites and wovens and lace for day or evening," Olexa says. "They [can] be paired with everything from high-waisted to wide-leg pants, on their own or layered under jackets."

Keep it bold. Salinger says you can pull off mixing bold colors with neutrals and get away with it, but keep it structured.

**Making their debut**

"Skinny jeans are a staple," Olexa says. "They translate to all ages, are perfect for layering under big belted sweaters and cashmere vests and tucked into knee-high boots."

For a bolder look, colored denim is in; try them in shades of green, purple and orange.

Colored denim will also be something you can keep wearing on into spring. They will go great with crisp white blouses, Olexa says.

Wilkins said acid wash and dark rinse jeans with hardware are also making a comeback this fall.

Pants this season are reflecting more of a menswear pattern and theme. Add in a nice tweed or plaid wide-leg or high-waisted pant as well

**Accessorizing**

To add more polish to any of these fall looks, adding a medium-sized bag or an oversized clutch to any outfit will be add a sophisticated look for the evening, Salinger says.

Big chunky jewelry will add to any outfit, even if it's just paired with a stylish fitted tee. It's all about drawing attention to your neck and adding to your outfit. It's about making a bold simple statement with a large piece of jewelry.

"We're getting away from simple strand layered necklaces and into bold, chunky cuffs and rings often seen all worn together," Lytwyne said.

To add a bolder touch, try something more daring such as organic materials such as wood and horn.

"The more unusual, the better," Wilkins says.

Flats are a great way to dress up an outfit too, but they can just be that: flat. Try a metallic or a patent leather to have a more updated, modern look. Booties and shootes add to any outfit as well, especially with a nice colored legging. Boots, though, are versatile and will work with anything from skinny jeans, to dresses, to a nice shorter-length cuffed wide-leg pant to keep your legs covered, Salinger says.

"Stick with mary-janes and booties along with tall, slouchy boots," Wilkins said. "These are much more weather-appropriate and should be on your list for fall must-haves. Everything from stacked heels and wedges to a great flat-bottom boot, which will be perfect with a rubber sole for icy weather."

**Menswear**

We didn't forget about you, guys. Vests remain a staple in your fall wardrobe.

"Vests are terrific because they're versatile and work well with T-shirts and denim," Wilkins says.

To add a more sophisticated, dressy element, Salinger recommends wearing a stencil-printed button-down shirt and a flat-fronted dress pant. As for shoes, stick to distressed motorcycle-like boots and sneaker loafers, which are comfortable but still appear dressy.

**Going for it**

No matter the look you go for this fall, if you don't feel comfortable in it, don't get it.

"Keep in mind that not every trend works for every person," Wilkins says. "Have fun, and decide for yourself what works best for your silhouette."

**Sweet feet**

By Ellen Presman  
Pioneer Press

FIND THIS AT NEIMAN MARCUS



The fall season is just around the corner. Soon it will be time to put away those tank tops and flip flops in exchange for long sleeves and warm boots. During New York's Mercedes Benz Fashion Week this past February, the world's hottest designers showcased this fall's hottest trends in fashion and accessories. This season's simple-yet-stylish shoes are a great way to spice up any wardrobe this fall. According to the fashion experts at InStyle, watch and consider nine major trends when shopping for fabulous fall shoes.

**Banded Flats**



This carry-over trend from the last fall season is back and stronger than ever. Banded flats can be paired with everything from skinny jeans to miniskirts to trousers. Look for the shoe to have elastic bands for optimal comfort and try a metallic or pointed toe version for a dressed-up look.

*Satin banded flats, Marc by Marc Jacobs*

**Cap-Toe Heels**

This fun, flirty style pairs well with structured skirts, wool pants and cashmere sweaters. The retro-style sling backs, mary-janes and pumps come in various colors and fabrics, and they are great for both work and play.

*Wool and patent sling backs by Justsweet*



**Ankle Boots**



Another trend that's coming back with a vengeance, this style of boot is meant to be shown off with micro-minis, leggings and long tunics. This season's special details include faux fur, wide cuffs and fun fabrics.

*Patent leather ankle boots by Studio Pollini*

**Black & Gold**

A great convertible trend that can easily go from day to night, this style can spice up any little black dress and much more.

*Suede heels by Nine West*



**Tall Cuffed Boots**



A more casual look seen mainly in leather and suede, these boots look great paired with short dresses and skirts. The cuff can get bulky, so avoid wearing them under jeans or pants.

*Leather cuffed boots by Steve Madden*

**Satin**

Made in a variety of styles and a rainbow of jewel tones, these shoes are perfect with a black-tie gown; however, don't match the shoes to the dress or your style will look dated. The trick is to mix and match.

*Satin strappy heels by Moschino*



*continued on page 8*



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