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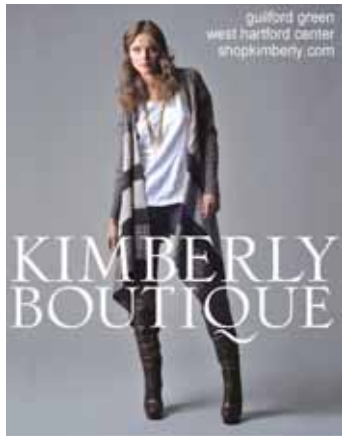


Fashion THROUGH THE DECADES

By Shannon Cushing

We took a look back in time to see how fashion has defined decades, political landscapes, and even generations, and found that fashion has come full circle.

THE 1950s

With World War II in the past, American attitudes of the 1950s lent themselves to expression, liberation, and pleasure. And what better way to demonstrate this new outlook than with casual, relaxed versions of once conservative couture? Simple necklines, fitted blouses, full knee-length skirts, and casual dresses accentuated by plain collars emerged.

Tove Vigen of Tova's Vintage Shop in Old Saybrook says that women in the 1950s wanted fun clothes in beautiful florals, as they struggled to move past the depression of the 1940s. Vigen notes the decade was also "all about the tiny waist." Dresses were made to display a woman's figure and the Christian Dior style of a cinched waistline above a full skirt defined this time period.

THE 1960s

Bring on the polyester and wild prints!

The mini-skirt, go-go boot, psychedelic pattern, bellbottom, and bikini all surfaced in the extraordinary decade known as the 1960s.

Vigen says that the major style icons of the 1960s were Jackie O. and Audrey Hepburn. Both women were so chic and graphically simple yet elegant. Today, we still see some of their influence in television shows like *Mad Men*.

"Every woman should own an Audrey Hepburn dress," Vigen says. "When you put [certain dresses] on, it changes your posture and view of yourself."

Perhaps the biggest change in fashion from the 1950s to the 1960s was the movement from the tiny waist to the waistless dress when model Twiggy emerged on the scene.

Late 1960s fashion mirrored politics and ushered in the era of "peace, love, and freedom." There was a shift to ponchos, moccasins, love beads, peace sign designs, polka dots, and bubble sleeves.

THE 1970s

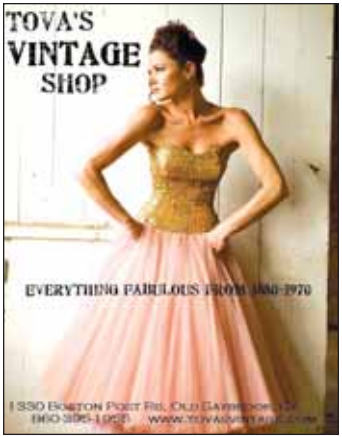
Pop culture had a huge influence on the styles of 1970. As the new decade began, fashion shifted away from the more androgynous look of the 1960s into the disco-era—thanks in part to John Travolta and the infamous film *Saturday Night Fever*. The disco look included three-piece suits for men and wrap-around dresses for women. Platform shoes were popular for both sexes.

Also hot in the 1970s for women? Flared trousers or denims paired with halter tops and/or sequined bra tops. The dancer's leotard also became in vogue in 1974.

Vigen says the 1970s were all about free spirit. One can find halter dresses in polyester prints along with organic, handmade embroidered articles from this decade.

THE 1980s

The 1980s were a decade of excess. We saw trends like jelly shoes, shoulder pads, stirrups, friendship



bracelets, high top sneakers, leggings, leg warmers, off-the-shoulder tops, neon clothing, scrunchies, and stonewashed jeans—and what hairstyle would have been complete without AquaNet?

Eighties fashion was greatly influenced by television, particularly MTV, *Miami Vice*, *Dallas*, *Dynasty*, and the movie *Flashdance*.

According to Vigen, the 1980s were all about extreme proportions—such as big tops over tight bottoms. In fact, the "dresses of the 1980s were similar in construction to those of the 1950s—tiny waists, great draping, and big bows." In the 1980s, however, flashier prints and irregular fabrics were far more common.

Rap stars and athletes introduced the phenomenon of athletic sneakers to everyday fashion. Air Jordans made their debut in 1984 and the Run D.M.C. song "My Adidas" popularized the sneaker of the same name.

THE 1990s

Contrary to the flashiness of the 1980s, 1990s fashion was muted and somewhat boring. Vigen recalls the decade as "polished, plain, and refined." Lots of black became trendy.

The television show Beverly Hills 90210 is the perfect example of 1990s fashion.

Jeans had a slightly higher waistline, plaid was the print of choice, and baby doll dresses and "school girl" looks became popular with teenagers. Also popular with young people were the tear-away track suit pants which were worn with t-shirts and tank tops.

On the flip side, we saw punk bands influence the grunge style, which included jeans worn low, flannel shirts, and graphic tees.

But the most popular outfit in the 1990s for all ages was jeans and a white t-shirt. Dressing was so informal in the 1990s that the concept of business casual came into effect in the middle of the decade.

THE 'AUGHTS' TO PRESENT

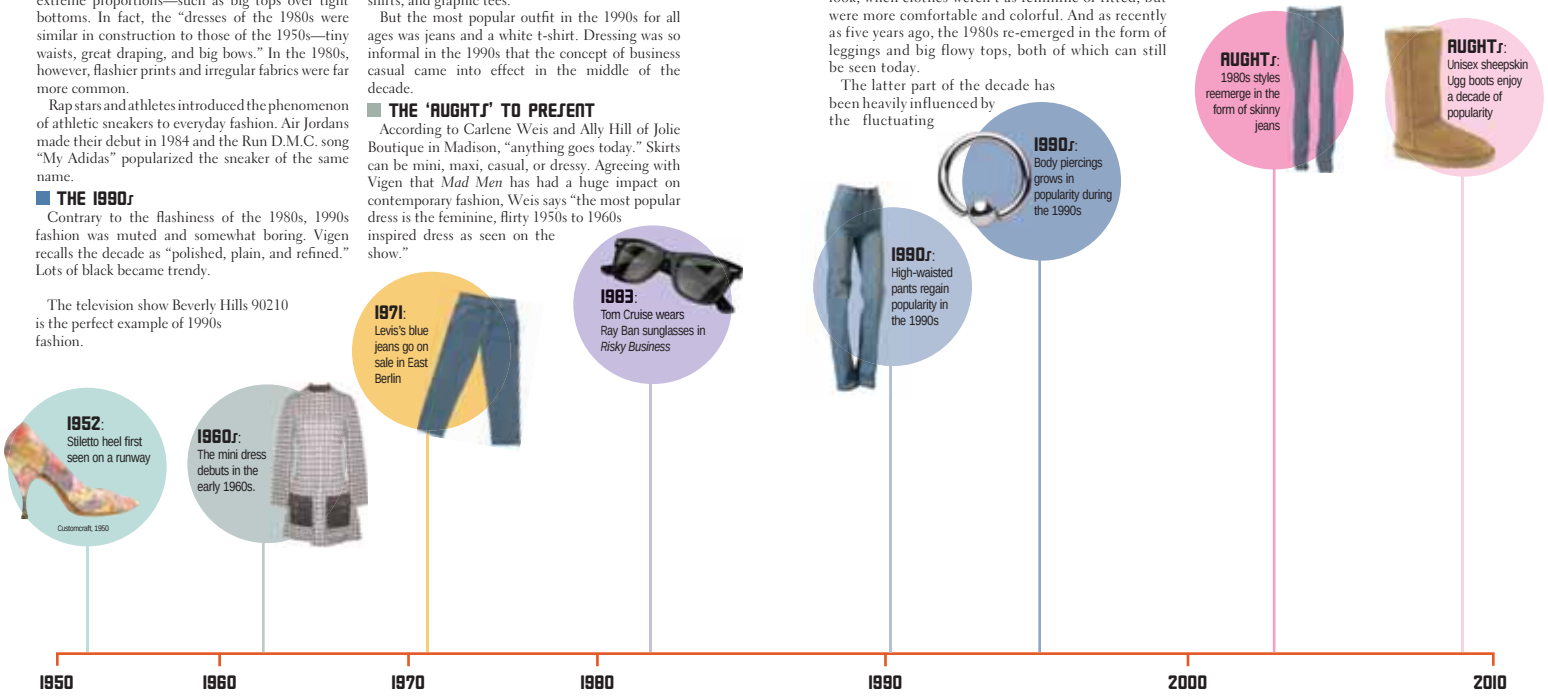
According to Carlene Weis and Ally Hill of Jolie Boutique in Madison, "anything goes today." Skirts can be mini, maxi, casual, or dressy. Agreeing with Vigen that *Mad Men* has had a huge impact on contemporary fashion, Weis says "the most popular dress is the feminine, flirty 1950s to 1960s inspired dress as seen on the show."

This season, Weis and Hill are finding women love anything French-inspired—including, but not limited to ruffles, floral trims, and feminine patterns. They are accessorizing with long necklaces in multiple lengths and layers, big chunky bracelets, and rings that take a day outfit to night.

Weis recalls fashion in the early 2000s leaned more towards the 1960s- and 1970s-influenced baby doll look, when clothes weren't as feminine or fitted, but were more comfortable and colorful. And as recently as five years ago, the 1980s re-emerged in the form of leggings and big flowy tops, both of which can still be seen today.

The latter part of the decade has been heavily influenced by the fluctuating economy. Women have learned how to dress on a budget and have found they can still look great for less.

Overall, today's fashion according to Weis seems to be a "convergence of fashion, affordability, and comfort."



MAKING OVER MAURA

By Nicole Ball
Photographs by Jess Smith

Even when Branford resident Maura Page entered Shore Publishing's Makeover Contest she wasn't just thinking about herself. In her entry letter she wrote, "Most women I know deserve a makeover…"

Page, 51, is the proud mother of three children, Bridget, 15, Brendan, 21, and Connor, 23. Choosing to enter the makeover contest was as much for her as it was for her children, specifically Bridget, says Page.

On the Web www.zip06.com

No one can tell Maura Page's story better than she. Read her online journals by heading over to www.zip06.com—select your town on the map and click the Makeover Contest button.

If you like what you see, there are more images on the website. Click the Make Over button to see full galleries detailing Maura Page's makeover journey and meet some of the people who helped her achieve her goals.

Want even more action? See a video of Maura Page's experience from dressing room to reveal night online now at www.zip06.com.

"The best thing you can do," she says "if you love other people, is to take care of yourself so you can be a role model and be at your best so you can tend to other people."

After 30 years of living in what Page calls her dream house in Stony Creek, she separated from her husband and relocated across town with her youngest son, daughter, and black Lab.

During this life change, Page says she realized how much she needed to be strong inside and out for Bridget. "I also need to show her that taking care of myself is just as important as handling all the other things life tosses this way."

Doing what she calls, "putting myself on the back burner," wasn't acceptable anymore, she said.

"Women who find themselves in the role of caregivers, whether they are teachers, mothers, daughters, or wives, have to remember to give themselves some care."

Page worked for almost two months getting her body in shape through a variety of fitness classes. She tried different clothing styles outside her comfort zone, and underwent a number of beauty treatments. In the end, Bridget's reaction to her mother's hard work proved that the makeover process was a success.

From a corner table at Nellie Green's Restaurant the night of the makeover reveal, Bridget observed her mother, her eyes welling a bit with tears, and said, "It's good to see her so happy again."

Page's Fitness Goal
"Take the dog for a walk & run up the stairs easier."

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FITNESS

Susan Trischitti is the studio director of PURE, which has two locations in Branford. Trischitti, who has worked in women's fitness for nearly 30 years, offered a twice-weekly personal training session for Page and an array of different classes for her to try. Page was most drawn to yoga—though it was something she steered clear of before the Makeover Contest.

"I was sort of intimidated by the yogis," says Page, "so PURE was great because there are so many different types of yoga."

Working with several instructors, including Jennifer Beisecker, Page trained in Body and Soul (combination class of pilates, yoga, and tai chi), pilates, and several types of yoga.

Trischitti says Page could barely do three push-ups when she first came to PURE and three weeks later she was pumping out three sets of 15.

"I am so much stronger," says Page, "It was really about feeling stronger."

With her fitness routine taken care of, Page moved on to enhancing her outer appearance as well.

At Branford Dental, Dr. Ryan Finnegan and Dr. Robert Hacker whitened and bonded Page's teeth—something she says changed her look dramatically.

Next, it was over to Water's Edge Spa for a caviar facial. For a woman who had, prior to the makeover, barely made time to put on makeup, a caviar facial was a stretch. But Page, however, enjoyed the treatment so much, she said she never wanted to stop getting made over.

FASHION

Like most shoppers, Page says, she found it hard to choose items outside her comfort zone.

Of her old habits she said, "You go into a store and you look at the same colors you always look at and if you take it home you probably have six that are pretty similar to what you are picking."

At Jolie Boutique in Madison, Page met her match with store co-owners Carlene Weis and Ally Hill. Taking note of Page's aversion to styles that were too daring, but looked great on her body, Weis and Hill suggested items that were practical, multi-purpose, and of course fashionable.

"Our two goals," say Weis and Hill, "Is to have [shoppers] be comfortable and to have something that compliments their body."

Page's Style Goal

"I knew a lot of what I should do, but I didn't practice it. I don't think I really trusted myself to try those things that I wouldn't normally wear."

Weis, staying true to her store motto, "The Frugal Fashionista," whipped out "billowy, black palazzo pants and a patterned, fitted, yet flowing top," which cost under $100.

"She came out of the dressing room," recalled Weis of Page, "saying, 'I feel like I can conquer the world in this outfit'."

After her makeover, Page said, "When you have that outfit you feel really good in, it gives you the confidence to try on other things."

From Jolie Boutique, Page headed to Tamar in Old Saybrook where she played Cinderella for the day. Deciding on a pair of strappy, black sandals with beads—or what she called "bling"—Page had completed her outfit to wear the night of her reveal.

To complete her new look, which Page describes as a style she can sport both in the classroom as a school teacher and after work when she's out with friends, she headed to Echo Salon in Guilford for a hairstyle overhaul.

Shop owner Stephanie Huffman-Carter, who has been styling hair for 20 years, helped Page choose a red hair color that made her baby blue eyes sparkle. Corinne Gingras gave Page a cut that a lot of flexibility.

For school, Page says, she'll wear her hair back and in the evening it's all about pushing her auburn locks forward with hair product.

LOOKING GOOD

Today, Page says she doesn't leave the house without putting on a little bit of makeup, even if it's for her second job at the Garden Center in Home Depot. Page said the mineral make up line from Merle Norman helps her look as good outside as she feels inside. Sally Ann Attianese, owner of Merle Norman did Page's makeup for her reveal, but also gave her one special beauty tip that will last forever. Page says learning how to dress her eyes was one of the best beauty secrets she's ever gotten.

Before heading off to her big unveiling, Page received a spray tan from Skinsations and a manicure and pedicure from Water's Edge Spa.

On a late summer evening, Page's friends, makeover sponsors, and family—all her children in attendance—waited at Nellie Green's for her arrival. Sporting her new shoreline-chic style, Page took to the spotlight like she'd been doing it forever. Coming out of her shell as a caregiver, Page learned that letting others give to you is sometimes your gift to them. Looking forward, Page says, "It's kind of like a different coming of age."

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From DAY to NIGHT

By Jen Matteis

Ever had to run out the door from a hard day of work to a night on the town? Your professional work outfit—although perfect in its place—might have a tough time making the transition. Luckily, there are a few simple tips you can keep in mind to change business attire into an outfit you wouldn't mind wearing for a night out.

According to Amy Lyons Kemler of Fresh Start Wardrobe Consulting, the addition of a few simple accessories, "great heels," or jewelry can make a big difference—as can simple tricks like replacing a belt with a scarf.

"If the outfit itself is pretty neutral it's what we add to it that can really make a difference in how we look," Kemler says. "If you're wearing a basic skirt or dress or summer thing, add a cool, funky belt. If you're wearing a suit, put a camisole underneath. If you have a basic sleeveless dress that you're wearing, have a great looking cardigan that you can wear at night so you don't look so conservative."

Office-to-evening dressing tips

- Add a pair of heels.
- Accessorize with jewelry, a hair clip, a wide belt, or a clutch purse.
- Add a belt to shorten a dress.
- Show a flirty camisole under a jacket.
- Show off shoulders or neckline.
- Change a jacket to a cardigan or lacy top.
- Switch to open-toed shoes.
- Hide a little black dress under a jacket, then lose the blazer at 5.

Another tip from Kemler is to change the length of a piece to make it appropriate for a different situation. For example, a long dress that goes down to your calves can be pulled up to create a new look.

"Pull [a long dress] up above your knees and it changes the whole look," Kemler says.

Of course, the type of job that you have will affect how you transition between work day and night out, as will your destination once you leave the workplace. Carlene Weis from Jolie Boutique offers a few specific tips for leaving an office and heading out, starting from a basic black pant or skirt.

"Accessories take you from day to night," she says. "Throw on some big, chunky beads or a big, drippy earring. Shed the closed toe pump for a fabulous heel."

Those who work in an office environment can wear blazers to cover their nightlife attire.

"If they're in a stuffy office then we're going to want to put a blazer over a fun and frilly, feminine top, and then take the jacket off at the end of the workday," Weis says. "You could go from a blazer to a black, lacy jacket."

Kemler reminds us that you shouldn't need to spend a lot to make the transition. Whether you're thinking of picking up heels, a handbag, jewelry, or a cardigan, take a look in your own closet first.

"We really don't need to go out and buy as much as we have," Kemler says. "Nine times out of 10 we already have it hanging in our closet."

Also, how you wear your outfit is as important as the outfit itself.

"Presentation is 99 percent of what it's all about," Kemler adds.

Finally, whatever look you choose, remember that it should match your body type and personality.

"What works for one [person] may not work for another," Kemler says. "Have an individual look. Have something that works for you and wear your style well and play up whatever your assets are. If you have great legs, wear skirts or dresses. If you don't, wear pants, something with a more fitted top to show off your shoulders or neckline."

And remember, if your work attire just isn't ready to meet the nightlife (after all, some people work in a uniform), you can always pack a change of clothing.

Office-to-evening makeup tips

- Dab under eyes with a cotton ball or wipe.
- Apply concealer under eyes.
- Line the upper eyelid … Or sweep a little black shadow in the crease.
- Add shimmer to cheeks or eyelids.
- Avoid applying more mascara, as it will clump.
- Dab moisturizer to refresh face.
- Apply blush.
- Apply lipstick in a dark red shade.

TIPS FOR TALL GALS

A long, lean frame can be both a blessing and a nuisance – while statuesque women may look better in the clothes they wear, *choosing* those clothes may present greater difficulty than it would for more petite women.

But a few simple tips can certainly make those choices easier.

"My idea for the taller woman would be to jazz up her outfit at night by taking advantage of her height and the length of her legs," says Amy Lyons Kemler of Fresh Start Wardrobe Consulting.

"Women with long, lean legs look wonderful in [skinny jeans or leggings] with a great pair of heals," she says, adding that tall women can play up their height at any time of day – whether dressing for day or evening.

Kemler suggests pairing leggings with a simple floaty top.

When choosing tops, taller girls may also want to avoid tops with necklines that hide the neck. Instead, choose button-down fronts or tops with V-necks, scoop necks, or ruffles. This visually breaks up the length of the torso and directs the eye toward accessories or jewelry. If you wear turtlenecks, use a scarf or an eye-catching necklace for accent.

WHAT TO WEAR

- Wear horizontal patterns and textured fabrics
- Indulge in wide belts
- Tuck shirts into pants and skirts to show off your waistline
- Wear longer or flared skirts
- Wear short skirts paired with knee-high boots
- Pick up a sleek pair of skinny blue jeans
- Shop online for extra-long inseams
- Show off your legs with short shorts
- Avoid clothing that is too tight
- Wear what feels comfortable

For additional resources on the web, see www.tallgirlshop.com, www.longlegs.ca, or www.wikihow.com/Dress-Well-As-a-Tall-Girl

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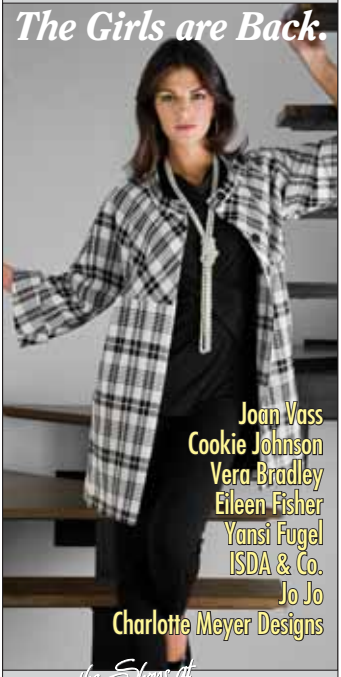

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