

How to Float

Self-Styling Tips for a Refined Wardrobe

By Ethan Bailie

Value

What is Fashion Value?

The worth of an item in your wardrobe.

This is something that is highly subjective, but I break it down into a simple system that I call **Wear per Dollar**, or **WPD** for short.

WPD is how many times you will wear a piece compared to the price you pay for it. Something like a basic tee will have a very high **WPD**, most likely being worn more times than dollars paid for it. A statement piece on the other hand, may not have such a high **WPD** as these pieces are generally more expensive and are more difficult to style.

WPD is how I decide if something is worth purchasing because it sets a limit for the value I would get out of a piece. Everyone's **WPD** threshold for purchasing will be different, and it may even be different for different types of clothing, but the important thing is that it's something you keep in mind before you purchase something impulsively.

Cohesion

What is Wardrobe Cohesion?

How well the pieces in your closet work together with one another (especially shoes!)

The more cohesive your wardrobe, the easier it will be to style yourself on a given day, which saves time and makes it easier to be consistently well-dressed. Beyond that, there is more **WPD** in clothing that fits well with your existing collection, as you can wear it on more opportunities.

It seems simple, but it gets more complicated the more pieces you have.

In an ideal world, your wardrobe would be able to work any way you style it, no matter which pieces are in use. In practicality, this is essentially impossible unless you have an incredibly limited or an incredibly bland wardrobe.

For example, if you only own white t-shirts, jeans, and a pair of white Blazer Lows you can do any combination and it would work. The problem here is that this wardrobe has no variety. You'd basically be wearing the same outfit every day.

Balancing Cohesivity with Creativity

The big question that everyone asks themselves is “How do I make a wardrobe that fits well together, but isn't boring?”

My answer for this was inspired by a [YouTube video](#) by Tim Dessaint. The basics of the video revolve around this idea of a **Capsule Wardrobe**, that being a **staple wardrobe that has high cohesion within itself**. Now the video speaks about how Tim has these staple pieces that form a capsule for a baseline within his wardrobe, but I think that it could be expanded a bit further.

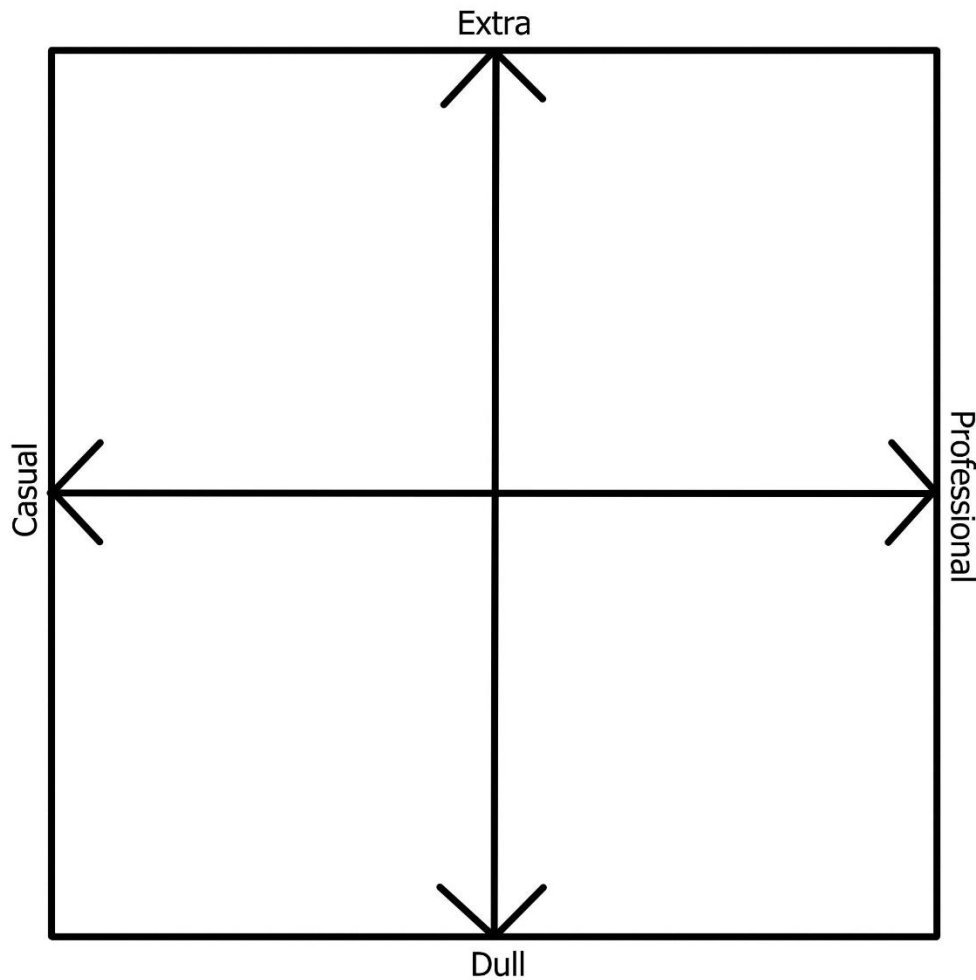
Capsules

By utilizing the idea of Capsule Wardrobes, we can start to create a more thoughtful and put together ensemble. The idea here is that we use one **Base Capsule** which will be the staples and hold items that are very general for your own style. Then there will be **Sub-Capsules** which will be capsules that explore a niche of your personal style. Aim to have as few capsules as possible, while also making sure that each capsule is a cohesive unit. This will help ensure that although not every piece will work together, such as pieces from different **Sub-Capsules**, they will still fit your own style and limit regretful purchases while allowing you to explore your own fashion sense and push boundaries.

Personal Style

The Style Compass

I personally like to think of style as a compass where left and right are casual to professional, and up and down are dull to extra.



This represents how you can envision your own style and try and have a way of placing items that you are looking to add to your collection, as well as organizing your capsules. Maybe your style is a bit more playful and you don't need to dress for a professional office, then your wardrobe may be in the upper left quadrant for the most part, and your capsules will be varying focuses within that quadrant. This is to help guide what fits with your style and your personality, as well as identify if that one really cool piece you want actually fits with anything in your wardrobe (it isn't always bad if it doesn't, but realize it would mean starting a new capsule to fit that niche).

Statement Pieces

Statement pieces are a great way to add a bit of flair to an otherwise uninspired outfit, but remember that they are a statement for a reason. It's kind of like *The Incredibles*. If everything is a statement, nothing is. It is important to identify what you want to pop in an outfit and how to make sure that everything else fits well to accentuate that. For example, if you have a really vibrant jacket, you may want to have a more muted outfit to go with it to really make the jacket pop out.

Accessories

Accessorizing is a great way to add depth to your wardrobe through small details. Even just having a chain and some rings can change the vibe of an outfit to give it more flavour. Shoes are a great example of a make-or-break accessory for an outfit. If you have a great outfit, but the shoes don't work with it, it's going to draw a lot of attention away from the outfit itself. Chains or rings are a simple way to add a bit of edge to an otherwise basic or boring outfit. Whatever you choose, the accessories should accentuate your own style and elevate your outfits.

Closing Remarks

Your style is your own and the most important thing is that you feel good about it. It's called **personal** style for a reason. It should be **you** through and through. Everyone has outfits that don't quite hit the mark, or pieces in their collection that they regret purchasing, but the important thing is that your style keeps evolving and becomes more refined from these mistakes.

Confidence is key and can make even middling outfits a lot more appealing. Wear the clothes, don't let them wear you.