

# DESIGNER BUMP

**Studio Bambini's Holly Henderson** offers invaluable tips on embracing your new curves and turning your wardrobe into a pregnancy-friendly zone.

**T**he baby bump has never been so chic, but ask your mum and she'll no doubt tell you that it was once considered something to be concealed rather than revealed; bagged in dungarees and swathed in pendulous smocks for what could be months of sartorial struggle.

Fast-forward to 2012. Pop culture's ongoing obsession with Hollywood bumps means we are bombarded with images of our favourite fashion icons – Sienna Miller, Nicole Richie, Gwen Stefani and Kate Hudson – embracing their pregnancies as a clever opportunity to develop their personal style.

It seems the bump is now a bona fide fashion star in its own right and maternity wear has undergone a savvy revolution to keep up with today's stylish mum-to-be.

Major fashion houses such as Helmut Lang have launched diffusion lines perfectly suited to pregnancy. In fact, the HELMUT diffusion line can be found regularly sold out in the maternity section at ShopStyle.com. Celebrity-branded maternity lines are equally popular. Lavish by Heidi Klum is a collaboration with American maternity wear giant A Pea in the Pod and has been an undisputable global hit.

With so many fabulous and innovative maternity wear options on the market, there's no reason why mums-to-be should have to sacrifice style for comfort or why you can't look and feel fabulous throughout the whole nine months.

From top:  
**HATCH** Jumper, hatchcollection.com;  
**Trimester** 'Millennium Miracle' tank, \$54.95, from **Queen Bee**;  
**Koochu** 'Capri' changing bag, \$299;  
**Queen Mum** tankini, \$104.95, from **Queen Bee**





## WORK

Maintain your professional edge by combining a comfortable maternity tee in a neutral hue with crisp white tailored pants and a subtle heel. Up your style stakes with high-end accessories that mean business.

- 1 Jimmy Choo 'Justine' bag, \$POA
- 2 Christian Dior 'Mitzah' clip earrings, \$500
- 3 Oksa ruched tee in sand, \$79.95
- 4 Oksa tailored maternity pants, \$109.95
- 5 Dior Timepieces 'Dior Christal' 33mm watch, \$POA
- 6 Jimmy Choo 'Lennox' kitten heel, \$625

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- Ariane Goldman, HATCH

## INVESTMENT PIECES

The idea of shelling out hundreds of dollars for unflattering pieces to be worn for a short period of time can be off-putting, particularly when they leave you feeling more frumpy than fab. As with any core everyday wardrobe, the secret to fabulous maternity wear lies in defining timeless key pieces.

This very concern was the driving force behind Ariane Goldman's inspiration for launching HATCH in 2011. The entire collection is designed to wear before, during and after pregnancy, and it's this versatility that has spearheaded the label's massive appeal.

"Maternity pieces should not be disposable," Goldman says, "Yes, a few cheap pieces here and there to get you through the 10 months are easy additions, but it's okay to invest in pieces that will remain in your closet and that you will love to wear after the baby has arrived."

Kirsten Barraclough, founder and designer of Oksa Breastfeeding and Maternity Wear agrees. She was pregnant with her first child when she recognised the need for fashion-forward clothes that could take women through pregnancy, breastfeeding and beyond. Drawing inspiration from the things that she already loved to wear, Barraclough taught

herself the design and manufacturing process, and in 2011 launched her first collection.

"Pregnancy should be a time when you are [feeling] at your most feminine, so embrace it by wearing beautiful garments that flatter your new beautiful figure," she says. "Make good maternity investments and they will last you for years."

## THE BASICS

So where do you start? Most women tend to wear their normal wardrobes into pregnancy for as long as possible and, while it may take a few months before it →



## DAY

On-trend patterns and bold colour mean you'll go from brunch to boutique with your best fashion foot forward. Quirky accessories and gold hardware offset your individuality, and a stylish carry-all blends function with form.

- 1 Louis Vuitton 'Float Your Boat' pendant, \$615
- 2 Oksa 'Ripple' maxi in red/ink, \$119.95
- 3 Louis Vuitton 'Leopard' silk snood, \$300
- 4 Dior Fine Jewellery 'My Dior' cuff, \$POA
- 5 Nest 'Dexter' diaper bag, \$174.95, from Queen Bee
- 6 Christian Dior flat sandal in patent calfskin, \$POA



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- Sharon Chim, Queen Bee

starts feeling too snug, replacing the everyday staples already in regular rotation should be a priority for any expectant mum.

"I'd say around the five- to six-month mark is when women start to realise those jeans just won't fit!" says Goldman.

Sharon Chim, creative director of uber-popular maternity wear boutique Queen Bee agrees that the most important purchase expectant mums can make is a quality pair of maternity jeans.

"Maternity wear is so fashionable and stylish these days, so we recommend to start buying from around three months when you start showing. Maternity jeans are a great buy and a simple investment

as you definitely do get the mileage out of them," she says.

Mavi – a Turkish street denim brand known for its quality and edgy style – has released a range of maternity jeans, available at Queen Bee. "They don't even look like maternity jeans," says Chim. "They are very fashionable and can be worn post pregnancy."

However, sizing can be tricky, especially if you're in the early stages. Amy Dowdy, the woman behind Australian online retailer Dacy Maternity says the general rule is to use your hip measurement to guide you.

"I was a size six to eight pre-pregnancy, and when pregnant, I was fitting into a size 10 to 12. Go with the measurements the designers give

you, and look at the hip measurement, as maternity jeans and pants are designed to grow with your tummy," she explains.

### WARDROBE STAPLES

A fabulous maxi dress, basic top and one pair of leggings also rank highly on the maternity wear must-have list. "I think a great maxi that can be dressed up or down is a key item, as is a great coat to throw over everything," explains Goldman. "Right now I'm living in my HATCH Jumper (jumpsuit) as it takes me from the office to dinner with my husband."

But with so many options and styles to choose from, it can be overwhelming.



## PLAY

Maternity jeans are a great investment and are super versatile. Pair them with a cute nautical tee, fabulous flats and timeless accessories for low-key chic on family outings, at BBQs and for school runs.

- 1 Queen Mum striped tunic, \$64.95, from Dacy Maternity
- 2 Christian Dior 'Dioress' earrings, \$420
- 3 Louis Vuitton 'Flore Oversized' sunglasses, \$555
- 4 Queen Mum denim Bermudas, \$108.95, from Queen Bee
- 5 Tribe 'Singapore Sling' bag in deep blue, \$492.22
- 6 Jimmy Choo 'Glenda' flat, \$625

**"BREAK UP YOUR OUTFIT WITH STRIPES INSTEAD OF WEARING BLOCK COLOURS, AS THIS WILL FLATTER YOUR FIGURE."**

- Kirsten Barraclough, Oksa

Keep in mind that you are investing in pieces to also wear beyond pregnancy, so choose flattering, classic trans-seasonal items that are not trend-based. "London designer Vanessa Knox makes a stylish swing top that is great for pregnant women," says Dowdy.

"I source clothing from across Europe, so Australian women can stylishly cover their bumps – not hide behind tees and trackies."

There are, however, some items chosen strictly for function over form. For instance, a maternity bra is a non-negotiable purchase; a good quality and properly fitting bra will make all the difference to your comfort.

"Pregnancy is hard enough without feeling tight and restricted," says Barraclough

"You won't believe the difference a good maternity bra makes to how you feel and look."

### TRICKS AND TIPS

While the bump is the star of the show, at some stage during a woman's pregnancy, she may feel uncomfortable with other aspects of her changing body. One tip is to refocus attention on the tummy, drawing it away from a perceived problem area.

"Break up your outfit with stripes instead of wearing block colours, as this will flatter your figure," says Barraclough. "If you have a large chest, wear lower-cut necklines as this will minimise the appearance of your breasts and show off your décolletage."

But a stylish pregnancy isn't all down to tweaking your wardrobe to suit your new shape. You can still keep wearing quirky accessories, toting your most fabulous bag, rocking a stylish headscarf or donning glamorous oversized sunglasses.

"Simple accessories can help to give your basic pieces different looks," advises Chim. "A belt worn under the bust defines your curves, or a colourful scarf can brighten up a basic outfit. And don't be afraid to tuck your top into your pants or a skirt to show off your new curves."

And the fabulous shouldn't end there. "I believe in wearing heels for as long as possible!" Goldman cheekily quips. 