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Last Updated: 3:24 pm | Sunday, February 21, 2010

Working hard to look effortless

BY JILL HANEY • FEBRUARY 21, 2010

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I love men's fashion, and I love to see a man at any age who takes pride in his image and who invests in looking his professional best, even when casual. My go-to source for men's fashion is Esquire magazine because it provides a plethora of options for every style, from classic to Euro chic.

Nick Sullivan, Esquire's fashion director, has compiled a list of The 10 Essential Truths of Men's Style, and the three that really strike me are:

Most people, most of the time, judge you by what you're wearing, and if you care what people think, you should care about what you wear. Life doesn't get much simpler than that.

The best way to look effortless is to work hard at it.

Every occasion has minimum standards. Try to meet them.

While it's hard to imagine with plenty of snow on the ground, spring is right around the corner. With that hopeful thought, I offer some suggestions to you men who are interested in appearing effortless in your style as spring approaches.

Suits worn without ties and with open shirt collars continue to be a trend. This is a fabulous and effortless look. If you normally wear khakis to work, break out that navy suit of yours and go sans tie. Sit back and watch the heads turn.

Flat-front pants are still more stylish and more flattering than pants with pleats.

If you are mad about plaid then you will love spring fashion. From ties to shorts to shirts, plaid is fresh, classic and appropriate for all ages. Wear your plaid shirts with khakis or denim and add a navy blazer to complete the stylish look.

Big watches. The savvy dresser understands the importance of accessories, and watches are a man's most powerful accessory. Big-faced watches are a trend for all and not just for the military pilot. Go ahead, splurge. You deserve it.

Slim-fit shirts. Yes, even a barrel-chested man can wear a slimmer fit shirt. If your current dress shirts bunch and balloon at the sides and back, it is time for a cleaner, slim-lined look. Take your shirts to a tailor and ask to have the sides taken in, then just see how much taller and thinner you look.

Polished shoes. Even though there is slush and muck on the streets, a well-dressed man always has shoes that are spit-shined and well-heeled. If yours aren't in good condition, don't wear them in

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jill Haney is a certified image consultant with the Association of Image Consultants International. Reach her at 513-505-2732, jill@jhimage.net, or www.jhimage.net.

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public.

How do you know if your image is powerful enough? If heads turn when you walk in the room. Take the time to invest in yourself so that you can appear effortless and confident in any situation.

Cincinnati-based JH Image Consulting conducts individual and corporate consulting on appearance, behavior, communication and etiquette.

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