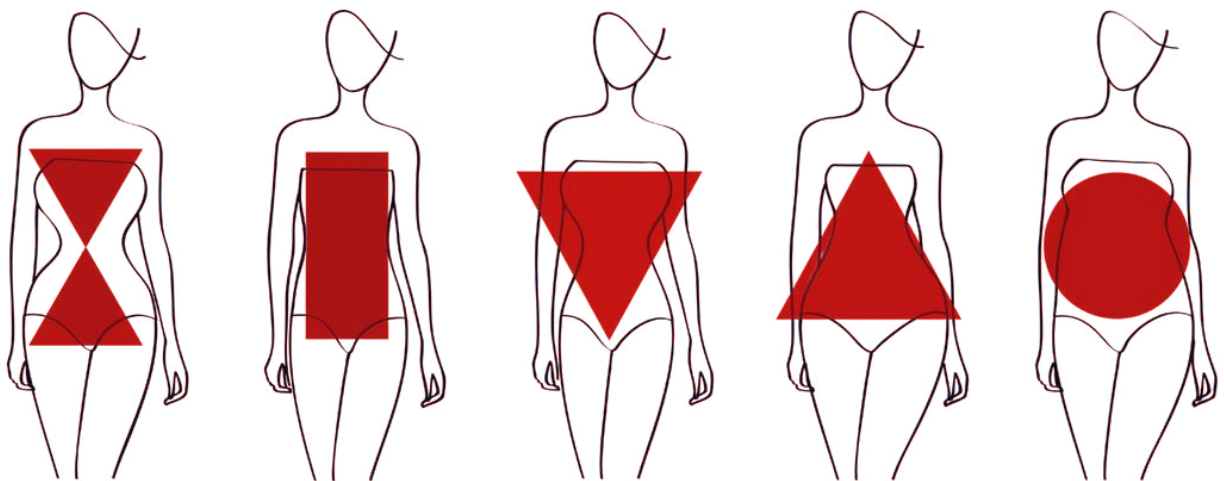


DRESSED *to* EMPOWER

A GUIDE TO DRESSING FOR YOUR BODY
TYPE AND CELEBRATING YOUR SHAPE



JULIANA RENZ

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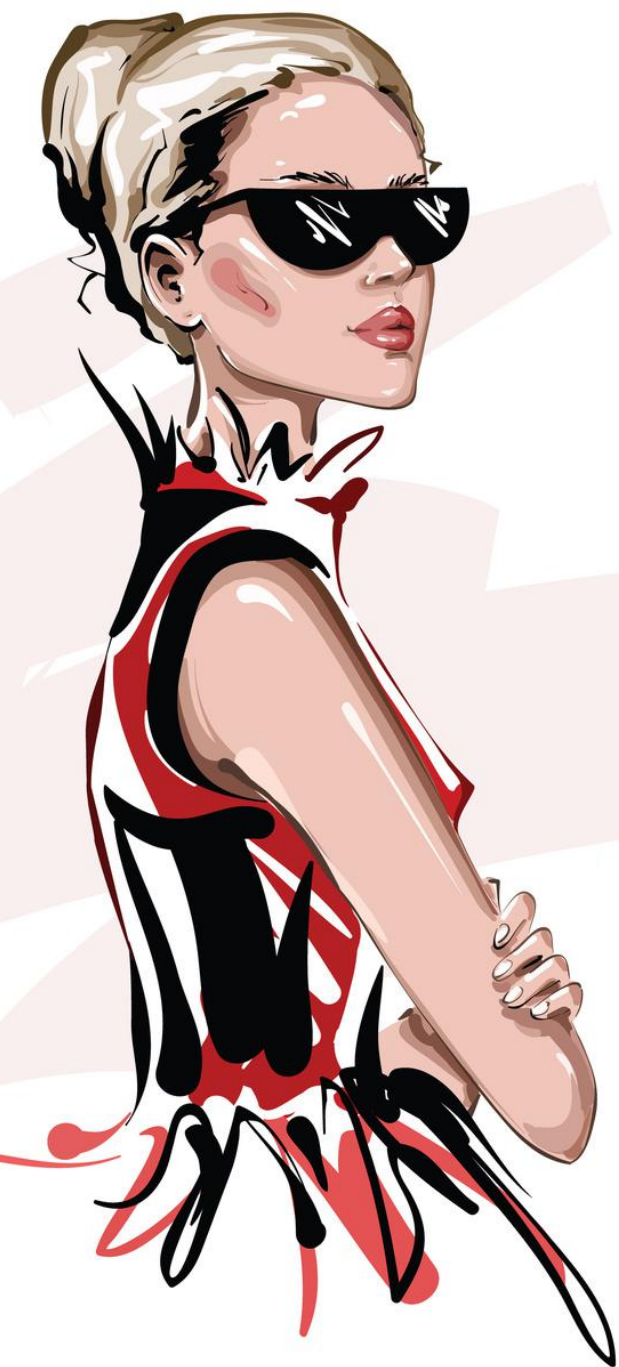
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Introduction:

Discovering Confidence in Your *Unique Shape*

Welcome to Dressing for Your Body Type, a guide designed to help you see yourself—and your wardrobe—in a new light. In a world saturated with fashion trends and “ideal” body standards, it’s easy to feel as though we must shape ourselves to fit a mold. But real style doesn’t come from following every trend or fitting a single standard. True style comes from understanding who you are and feeling empowered in your own skin.

This book is about finding confidence and joy in dressing the body you have, right now. To get started, head over to [our body shape calculator](#) to identify your unique shape. Understanding your proportions is the first step toward discovering styling techniques that highlight your best features and make you feel at ease in your clothes. Instead of focusing on what should be “fixed,” we’ll emphasize what should be celebrated. Because when you wear clothes that align with your body type, you invite balance, elegance, and authenticity into your style.

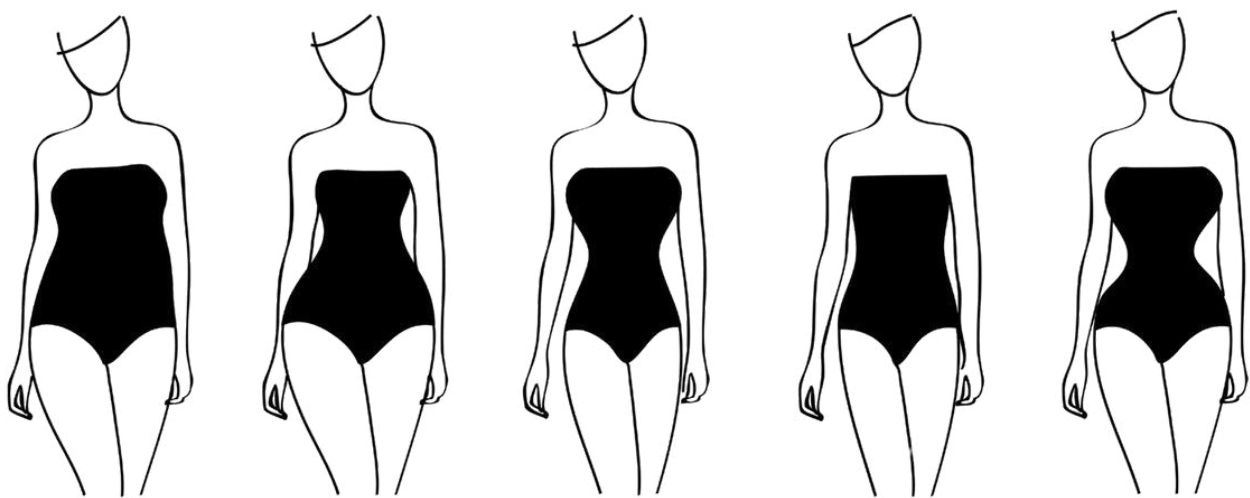
Whether you’re building a wardrobe from scratch or refining your current one, let this book be a guide to help you highlight your unique beauty. Dressing with confidence is less about achieving perfection and more about knowing yourself—and embracing your shape as part of what makes you, *you*.



CHAPTER 1:

Understanding

Body Types



Body shape or body type refers to the bone structure along with the distribution of fat and muscle throughout the body. Your body type is simply your natural proportions—there’s no “perfect” shape, only one that is perfectly you. To make the most of your unique form, let’s discover the five primary body types:

1. The Hourglass:

Shoulders and hips are balanced with a well-defined waist.

2. The Triangle (Pear):

Hips are broader than shoulders, often with a narrower waist.

3. The Inverted Triangle:

Shoulders are broader than the hips, with minimal waist definition.

4. The Rectangle:

Shoulders and hips align, with little definition at the waist.

5. The Oval (Apple):

Fuller midsection, with slimmer arms and legs.

The Idea of The Hourglass as the "Ideal" Body Type



The emphasis on a narrow waist with fuller hips and bust has become widespread in film, fashion, and advertising, solidifying the hourglass shape as an aspirational standard. The idea of the hourglass body as the "ideal" body type has a long history rooted in cultural, social, and artistic influences. This concept can be traced to several sources:

1. Waist-to-Hip Ratio and the Golden Ratio

The golden ratio is a mathematical proportion believed to be the most aesthetically pleasing to the human eye, and it has been used throughout history to define beauty in nature, art, and architecture. Some researchers believe that certain body proportions that approximate the golden ratio are perceived as especially attractive. The waist-to-hip ratio in women that closely approximates the golden ratio is around 0.7, where the waist measurement is about 70% of the hip measurement. Studies have shown that this waist-to-hip ratio (associated with the hourglass figure) is often perceived as attractive across different cultures and time periods.

2. Psychological and Evolutionary Factors

Some evolutionary psychologists suggest that the preference for the hourglass shape is rooted in biology. During puberty, girls develop breasts and the hips widen due to elevated levels of estrogen. The estrogen also affects body fat distribution causing fat to be stored in the hips, breasts, thighs, and buttocks, but not around the waist. It's hypothesized that a low waist-to-hip ratio may signal health and fertility, which are subconsciously attractive traits making the hourglass the "ideal" body shape.

3. Art and Sculpture from Ancient Civilizations

The golden ratio is a mathematical proportion believed to be the most aesthetically pleasing to the human eye, and it has been used throughout history to define beauty in nature, art, and architecture. Some researchers believe that certain body proportions that approximate the golden ratio are perceived as especially attractive. The waist-to-hip ratio in women that closely approximates the golden ratio is around 0.7, where the waist measurement is about 70% of the hip measurement. Studies have shown that this waist-to-hip ratio (associated with the hourglass figure) is often perceived as attractive across different cultures and time periods.

4. Victorian Era and Corsets

During the Victorian era (1837–1901), the hourglass figure was further emphasized by fashion trends, particularly the widespread use of corsets. These garments cinched the waist tightly, creating an exaggerated hourglass shape with a small waist and emphasized bust and hips. The fashion was intended to reflect an idealized form of femininity and elegance, and women went to great lengths (and sometimes endured discomfort and broken ribs) to achieve this shape.

5. Hollywood Influence, Modern Media and Body Image Standards

- In the mid-20th century, Hollywood and advertising began to shape beauty standards significantly. Actresses like Marilyn Monroe, Elizabeth Taylor, and Sophia Loren became icons of the "perfect" figure, with their curvy hourglass shapes held as the epitome of beauty and sensuality. This idea was reinforced by pin-up culture in the 1950s, where illustrated women often had exaggerated hourglass shapes.
- Today, social media, fashion, and celebrity culture continue to influence body ideals, and the hourglass figure often remains prominent in these spaces. Figures like Kim Kardashian and Kylie Jenner have popularized this shape in the modern era, often further accentuated through clothing, shapewear, or cosmetic enhancements.

As mentioned previously, the emphasis on a narrow waist with fuller hips and bust has become widespread in the media, solidifying the hourglass shape as “the ideal” body shape. Understanding the shape of your body will help you create visual balance when getting dressed. It may be helpful to think about what creates visual balance between your hips and shoulders in relation to the waist because the hourglass is the silhouette you should try to emulate when selecting your outfits.

CHAPTER 2:

Dressing the

Hourglass Figure

The hourglass shape is marked by balance between the shoulders and hips with a defined waist. The goal when dressing this shape is to accentuate the waist and keep the proportions balanced.

Detailed Styling Tips:

Tops

Emphasize your waist with fitted tops, wraps, and V-necks that highlight your curves. Cropped or waist-tied shirts that sit at the narrowest part of your waist are excellent choices.

Bottoms

High-waisted, straight-leg, and slim-fit pants mirror your natural lines. Pencil skirts are a classic option that follow your curves and emphasize your waist.

Dresses

Fitted styles like sheath, wrap, and bodycon dresses work well to highlight your silhouette. Dresses with belted waists, ruching, or peplums add extra definition.



Outerwear:

Tailored blazers and trench coats with belt detailing are perfect for showcasing your waist without adding bulk. Jackets that finish at the waist or cropped jackets are also good options for you.

What to Avoid:

Loose, boxy and oversized clothing that hides your shape. Perfect for showcasing your waist without adding bulk. Jackets that finish at the waist or cropped jackets are also good options for you.

BONUS: Mini Capsule Wardrobe for The Hourglass

The silhouettes presented in this mini capsule wardrobe were selected especially for the shape of your body and should be used as a reference when shopping for new pieces. Wrap dresses, bodycon dresses, pencil skirts, fitted tops, tailored blazers, blouse, jeans and high-waisted trousers, belt.



A wrap dress with a V-neck is a great option as it accentuates your waistline



A high waisted pencil skirt works well because it accentuates your waistline



Form fitting tops that highlight your figure



A V-neck blouse that accentuates your waistline.



A form fitting dress



A blazer that accentuates your waistline. It should finish at the hip bone. Avoid long blazers that finish at the widest part of your hips.



The hourglass can wear a lot of different silhouettes, but the most flattering is a high-waisted pant with a straight or tapered leg

CHAPTER 3:

Dressing the

Triangle Shape

For those with a triangle shape, the goal is to balance your proportions by drawing the eye upward. Focus on details and volume on the upper body to harmonize with your curvier hips.

Detailed Styling Tips:

Tops

Choose tops with patterns, bright colors, or wide necklines like boat necks to broaden your shoulders. Ruffled or puff sleeves add volume, creating a balanced effect.

Bottoms

Darker colors for your bottoms help downplay the hips and thighs. Flared pants, wide leg pants as well as A-line skirts, skim over the hips and create a smooth silhouette. A long skirt that accentuates your waistline is also a great option.

Dresses

Fit-and-flare dresses, as well as empire waists, accentuate the waist and float over the hips, drawing attention upward.



Outerwear

Cropped or structured jackets with details on the shoulders or sleeves help to balance out your lower half. Your jackets should have a structured shoulder, finish at the waist and/or have a tie at the waist.

What to Avoid:

Halter tops, skinny jeans, skirts that emphasize the hips and jackets that finish at the hips.

BONUS: Mini Capsule Wardrobe for The Triangle

The silhouettes presented in this mini capsule wardrobe were selected especially for the shape of your body and should be used as a reference when shopping for new pieces. A-line skirts/dresses, wide-leg pants, palazzo pants, tops with shoulder details, and structured jackets.



A jacket that has structured shoulders and finishes at the waist.



An off-the-shoulder top or bodysuit to create visual balance with your hips



A high waisted pant or jean with wide legs.



A-line dresses that enhance the bust



A form fitting dress that finishes below the knee with detail at the top/shoulders



A round skirt that accentuates the waistline

CHAPTER 4

Dressing the *Inverted Triangle*

For an inverted triangle shape, the focus is on balancing broader shoulders with a narrower waist and hips. Creating volume around the hips while simplifying the upper body can achieve visual balance.

Detailed Styling Tips:

Tops

Halter tops help minimize your shoulders. Avoid bulky shoulders, instead choosing fitted or minimalist tops to avoid adding volume.

Bottoms

Wide-leg pants, flared skirts, and bright or patterned bottoms create a fuller lower half. Details like pleats, cargo pockets, or embellishments on skirts and pants balance out your shape.

Dresses

Dresses with A-line silhouettes or ones that create volume around the hips work well. Avoid dresses with shoulder details, and instead opt for skirts with movement.



Outerwear

Jackets with waist definition and minimal shoulder padding are ideal, as they avoid adding bulk to your upper body.

What to Avoid:

Tops with embellishments on the shoulders, shoulder pads or strong shoulder details.

BONUS: Mini Capsule Wardrobe for Inverted Triangle

The silhouettes presented in this mini capsule wardrobe were selected especially for the shape of your body and should be used as a reference when shopping for new pieces. A-line skirts/dresses, wide-leg pants, palazzo pants, tops with shoulder details, and structured jackets.



A cowl-neck top that highlights the bust.



A fitted jacket or top with a peplum



Pants with details give the illusion that your hips are wider creating balance with your shoulders



A top that creates the illusion that your shoulders are narrower.



A mid-rise jean with a relaxed fit, such as a boyfriend jean is a great option for you.



A-line skirts create visual balance with your shoulders

CHAPTER 5

Dressing the

Rectangle

Rectangle shapes often have balanced shoulders and hips with little waist definition. The goal is to create the illusion of curves by accentuating the waist and adding volume to both the upper and lower body.

Detailed Styling Tips:

Tops

Look for peplum tops, ruffled styles, or tops with ruching to add shape. Wrap tops create the illusion of a waistline, while tops with embellishments can help create curves.

Bottoms

Pants and skirts with details like pleats or pockets add volume to your lower half, creating a balanced effect. High-waisted pants also define the waist and create curves.



Dresses

A-line and fit-and-flare dresses add fullness to the lower half and emphasize a defined waist.

Outwear

Jackets with waist definition and minimal shoulder padding are ideal, as they avoid adding bulk to your upper body.

What to Avoid:

Straight-cut tops or shapeless clothing that lacks waist definition.

BONUS: Mini Capsule Wardrobe for The Rectangle

The silhouettes presented in this mini capsule wardrobe were selected especially for the shape of your body and should be used as a reference when shopping for new pieces. wide-leg pants, A-line skirts, halter top, cowl neck, fitted tops, peplums and long cardigans.



A top with ruffles makes your shoulders seem wider creating definition with your waist



A blazer that accentuates your waistline is a great option. Especially if it has details or a structured shoulder.



A mid-rise jean with a straight leg and relaxed fit



Pants with details make your hips seem wider creating the illusion of curves.



An off-the-shoulder top makes your shoulders seem wider creating definition with your waist

CHAPTER 6

Dressing the

Oval Shape (Round)

For those with an apple shape, the aim is to elongate the torso and create structure around the waist while drawing attention to your best features, such as your legs and bust. This is the ONLY body type that shouldn't try to emulate the hourglass shape because the Oval body type benefits from concealing the waistline, which is the opposite of the Hourglass type.

Detailed Styling Tips:

Tops

Opt for tops with a V-neck or scoop neck, as these elongate the torso. Empire-waist tops draw attention to the bust while flowing over the midsection. Loose fitting tops are also a good option for you.

Bottoms

Choose pants with a flat front in darker colors that create a smooth look. Straight leg, boyfriend jeans and bootcut styles are flattering, as they balance the hips. Shorts and mini-skirts also work well on you.



Dresses

Empire-waist or A-line dresses are ideal, as they flow over the stomach area while focusing attention on the bust and legs. A dress with Ruching around the waist can also work well especially if it has a v-neck.

Outwear

Structured coats with clean straight lines that end just below the hips help elongate your frame.

What to Avoid:

Bulky and/or clingy fabrics around the midsection.

BONUS: Capsule Wardrobe for Apple

The silhouettes presented in this mini capsule wardrobe were selected especially for the shape of your body and should be used as a reference when shopping for new pieces. Empire-waist dresses, silk slip dress, Cashmere sweater, oversized shirt, V-neck tops, straight-leg pants, wide-leg pants, structured jackets and dressy shorts and blazer set.



A loose fitting top that highlights the bust detracting the attention from the mid-section



Wear shorts if you have nice legs, that will detract the attention from your mid-section



A slip dress is a great option if you are thin because it has a loose fit, but it still follows your natural curves



A mid-rise jean with a straight, flare or bootcut leg works well on you



Wear a long shirt with a loose sweater to conceal your mid-section



A long jacket with a straight cut works well on you because it elongates your body and conceals your mid-sections. Try a double breasted blazer or a long cardigan

CHAPTER 7

Dressing to Flatter Your *Body Features!*

There are many ways to flatter your natural shape by drawing attention to your best features and skillfully concealing others. With the right styling techniques, we can artfully enhance each of these areas.

To Appear Taller Tips

- Opt for sleek, straight, and tailored pieces that create a column-like effect, enhancing the illusion of height. Pairing these with platform heels can elevate this effect even further.
- Choose high-waisted jeans with straight, bootcut, or flared legs to elongate the body. Avoid cropped styles, as they can visually shorten the legs.
- Over-the-knee boots are a powerful choice to extend the look of your legs. On the other hand, avoid booties or mid-calf boots, as they can visually “cut off” the legs.
- Nude heels are another excellent option, especially if they complement your skin tone. A nude shoe with a pointy toe elongates the leg line seamlessly.
- Platform shoes can add additional height, particularly in nude tones, for a balanced and refined appearance.
- Dresses and tops with longer necklines, such as V-necks, halters, and turtlenecks, draw the eye upward and add to a vertical effect.
- Embrace monochromatic outfits, which create a continuous line and amplify the appearance of length. In contrast, color blocking can break up the line and diminish the effect.
- Steer clear of cropped pants, horizontal stripes, mini dresses, low-rise jeans, and, as mentioned, booties, as these can counteract the goal of a lengthened look.

For a Slimmer Look

- Embrace shapewear to refine and smooth your silhouette.
- When choosing jeans or trousers, aim for styles that reach the ankle or fall slightly below. Dark hues with a gently tapered leg and minimal detailing (like pleats) are especially flattering.
- Pencil skirts with a high waist that hit at or just below the knee create a streamlined, lengthened look.
- Dark colors, particularly monochromatic ensembles, are universally slimming. Black is always chic, but other deep shades achieve the same effect, creating a continuous vertical line that enhances a long, lean silhouette.

If You Have Thick Thighs

- Choose solid, dark-colored bottoms over bright or patterned ones. Avoid styles with extra detailing, like pockets or embellishments, as these can draw attention and add volume.
- Steer clear of ultra-fitted bottoms like skinny jeans, mini skirts, shorts, and sweatpants, which tend to highlight the thigh area. Instead, opt for fit-and-flare dresses, skirts, and pants, as well as trumpet, A-line, and flowing long skirts.
- For a balanced look, pair a dark bottom with a statement top to shift focus upward.
- Pointed-toe heels, especially in a nude tone, help elongate the legs. Avoid booties, as they can shorten the leg line and create a thicker look.

Pencil skirts that fall at or just below the knee offer a balanced and flattering silhouette.

If You Want to Conceal Your Waistline

- If you'd like to draw attention away from the midsection, focus on showcasing your legs or bust. Choose fitted bottoms paired with loose, untucked tops, or skirts that highlight your legs. Ensure the top is not gathered at the hem.
- Embrace monochromatic dressing for an elongated effect, and consider layering with blazers or loose-fitting tops to add refinement. A double-breasted jacket can offer structure without drawing focus to the waistline.
- Empire waist dresses and silky slip dresses work well, especially for slimmer builds, creating a balanced shape without emphasizing the midsection.
- Avoid pieces that bring attention to the waist, such as belts or cinched details.

If You Have a Long Torso

- High-waisted bottoms are ideal for visually extending the legs and balancing the proportions of a long torso.
- Crop tops are excellent for creating the illusion of a shorter torso, particularly when paired with high-waisted bottoms. Off-the-shoulder tops, bustiers, and cropped or belted jackets also create a balanced look.
- Avoid styles that elongate the torso, such as turtlenecks, halters, and V-necks, as well as cropped pants or low-rise jeans, which can disrupt overall proportion.

CHAPTER 8

Embrace Your

Unique Style and Shape

As we reach the end of this journey into dressing for your body type, remember that the true purpose of style is to enhance and celebrate the unique beauty that already exists within you. Dressing well isn't about conforming to a single standard of beauty; it's about using fashion as a tool to express your personality, boost your confidence, and highlight your natural shape.

Each of us has a body that is unique, carrying its own proportions, strengths, and beauty. Learning to dress with an awareness of your body type isn't about hiding or changing your shape—it's about creating harmony with your clothing choices so that your personality and confidence can truly shine. The best-dressed people aren't those who fit a mold, but those who understand their own proportions and preferences and use style as a form of self-expression.

As you curate your wardrobe and put these tips into practice, embrace what feels authentic and empowering to you. Style is a journey, and as trends come and go, you'll find that timeless personal style comes from confidence, self-acceptance, and a wardrobe that aligns with who you are. Use this book as a guide, but ultimately trust your instincts and allow your wardrobe to reflect the best version of yourself.



About the *Author*



Juliana Renz's journey in the fashion industry has been one of continuous exploration and artistry, marked by a dedication to bringing concepts to life through fabric, form, and design. With years of expertise in fashion design and manufacturing, Juliana has honed an acute understanding of the transformative power of personal image. Her studies in Fashion Styling at the renowned Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City further enriched her skill set, enabling her to share her knowledge with individuals seeking to refine their personal image.

Through her consultancy, Through the Ring, Juliana aims to educate and inspire, guiding her clients toward an elevated sense of confidence through an authentic and polished personal style. Her work is a testament to the power of image as a medium for self-expression and empowerment.

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