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7 Steps to Building a Modest Wardrobe

REFRESH YOUR STYLE AND ENJOY
DRESSING MODESTLY AGAIN

Are you feeling burnt out with dressing modestly?

Is your modest wardrobe feeling a bit stale?

You are not alone. We all want to dress in a way that makes us feel and look our best!

But you're up against a lot!

Women who choose modesty are going against the crowd. You are choosing the road less traveled, and it isn't an easy road.

Whether you already love your modest wardrobe or feel a bit frustrated with your limited modest clothing options, we are here to help you collect items you love and items that express who you are: **beautiful, valued, and loved.**

At The Main Street Exchange, we offer women's clothing to help women and girls show their unique style while still dressing modestly.

We've created this guide to help you reset your wardrobe, hone in on your personal style, and enjoy dressing modestly again!

Is it possible for modest dressers to love their wardrobe?

Yes!

Let's find out how.



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UNDERSTAND **STYLE** AND **FASHION**



First, let's define style and fashion.

"Fashion" and "style" can mean very different things.

Style is personal and visually communicates who you are internally. Style is unique to your lifestyle and your taste.

On the other hand, fashion refers to passing trends. Fashion is a designer's work of art designed to display creativity -- not necessarily for your body type or lifestyle.

See the difference?

The goal is to be stylish, not fashionable.



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DRESSING WITH STYLE...

means you'll look and feel your best because you'll be wearing clothing that matches who you are on the inside. You'll be choosing clothing that fits your lifestyle and body type, and you won't have to spend lots of energy following trends!

But the million dollar question still remains: "How can you dress with style while remaining modest?"

Here are seven steps (and a free printable list!) to help you reset your wardrobe and enjoy dressing modestly again.



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1 SET YOUR INTENTIONS

Before purging your closet or making a shopping list, you need to set some intentions for your wardrobe!

How do you want to dress?

Who do you want to be?

What's important to you in your clothing right now? Comfort? Simplicity? Confidence?

Here's how you can set your intentions, and begin finding your personal style.

Choose 2-4 words that describe how you want to dress and who you want to become. Think about words that describe appearance (external), such as "comfy" and "colorful," and words that describe traits or character (internal words), like "brave" and "graceful."



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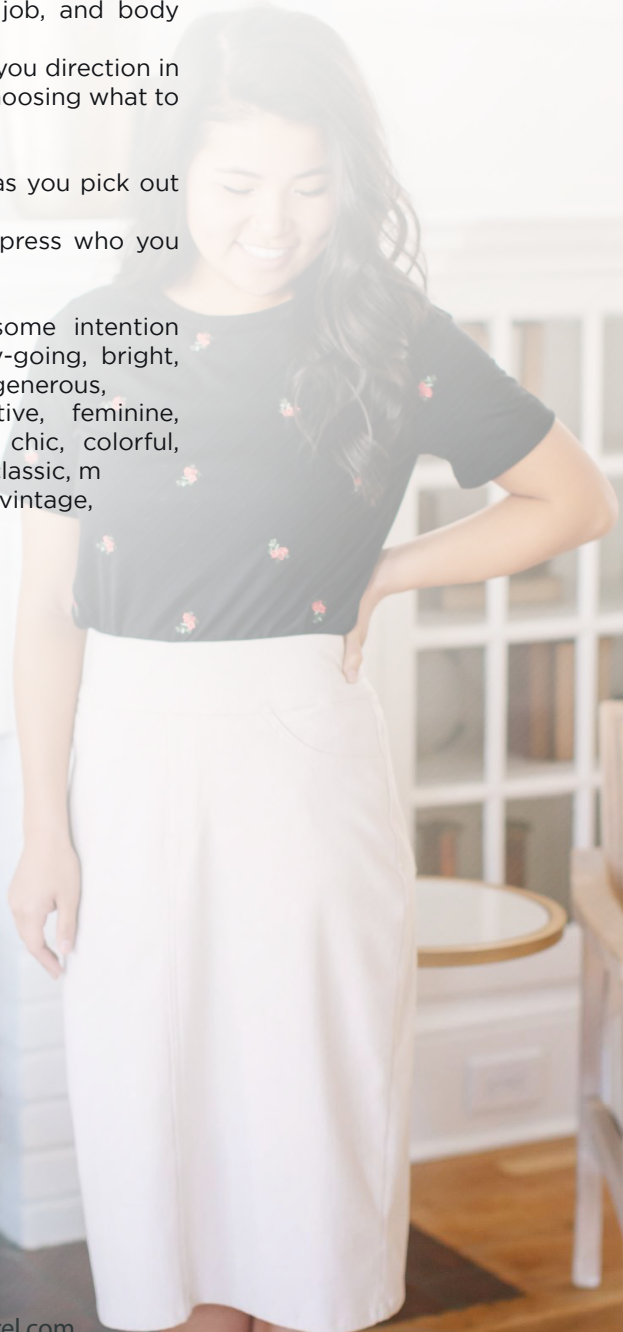
Consider your season of life as you choose your words. If you work from home right now, “formal” or “sophisticated” isn’t going to fit your current lifestyle very well. If you’re in an extra busy season of life, maybe “simple” or “minimal” are good intentions.

Remember that these intentions are not lifetime commitments; they are for right now. Consider your current lifestyle, hobbies, job, and body type.

Setting your intentions will give you direction in making wardrobe choices and choosing what to wear each day.

Thinking about your intentions as you pick out your outfit or purchase a new item will ultimately help you express who you are!

Need some ideas? Here are some intention words to get you started: easy-going, bright, elegant, charming, sporty, cute, generous, comfortable, assertive, attractive, feminine, brave, strong, patient, simple, chic, colorful, vibrant, simple, bold, effortless, classic, minimalist, timeless, edgy, preppy, vintage, feminine, and confident.



2 MAKE OBSERVATIONS

Look for style inspiration around you (remember, we're looking for style, not fast fashion).

Observe the style of those you know and see on a daily or weekly basis. Do you admire the personal style of someone in your life? Then it's time to take some notes! Take note of colors, textures, and outfit ensembles that you're attracted to.



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3 GATHER INSPIRATION

Gather style inspiration online, too.
Here are some ideas to get you started:

Make a Pinterest board featuring outfits and pieces you're attracted to.

Bookmark posts on Instagram.

Look at style boards.

Avoid fashion magazines or runway styles for your inspiration. These tend to focus on works-of-art fashion, not everyday, personal style.

Once you've gathered inspiration, pick out patterns in your collection. Are there a lot of pastels or denim? Are your outfits professional, feminine, or casual - or a mixture of several styles? Are you attracted to bold prints or minimal stripes?

Write down the textures, colors, and cuts that you repeatedly see in your collections.



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BONUS!

Ask a friend to look at your inspiration collection and find patterns for you. A friend will probably be able to make observations that you've missed.

Although having a specific style name such as "Bohemian" or "Vintage" may help you search on Pinterest, don't worry about naming your unique style.

Chances are, you're a unique mix of a few different styles, and there's probably not a name for it! What you like is part of what makes you, YOU! So don't feel boxed in by labels while defining your style.



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4 THE PURPOSEFUL PURGE

Next, open that closet!

Yes, we're going to do a closet purge. But this is not your average closet purge; you're going to do this with focus and purpose.

Remind yourself of the purpose of this process: you are finding your style so you can dress stylishly and modestly.

PRE-PURGE:

Quickly grab items in your wardrobe you KNOW need to go! Worn out? Torn? Doesn't fit? Put it in a box to donate right away.

READY, SET, PURGE!

Now, remove everything from your closet. Yes, everything!

Put like items together: tops on one pile, skirts on another, etc. If you're feeling ambitious, you can even clean the closet while it's empty!

Next, you'll go through your clothing, piece by piece. Make three piles of clothing: Yes, No, and Maybe.



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Pick up each piece of clothing and ask yourself these questions:

Does this fit with my intention words and wardrobe goals?

Do I love to wear this?

Is this a color I look and feel my best in?

Is this a cut and style that flatters my body type?

Place each item on a Yes, No, or Maybe pile.

As you put items on the “No” pile, ask yourself, “Why am I getting rid of this?” You might answer something such as, “I actually don’t like this color” or “This dress is really cute, but it just isn’t comfortable.”

Being consciously aware of what doesn’t work for you will help you make better wardrobe decisions and define your personal style.

Next, put your “No” pile in a box or bag to donate.



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Put the “Yes”

items back in your closet! Glance at the clothing that made the cut. Are there colors or styles that are repeated? Maybe you'll realize that you wear a lot of earth tones or sweaters or denim.

Just like your “No” pile, being aware of what works for you (or doesn't work) will enable you to make better clothing decisions in the future. And the “Maybe” pile?

Don't get rid of it yet, especially if you did an extensive purge. Try living without these items for a few weeks. Put them somewhere where you can still access them if needed, such as in a clear tote in your closet or under your bed.

Some of these items might be great to accessorize with or supplement your wardrobe later. But first, you want to focus on building your core wardrobe and honing in on your personal style.



5 LIVE WITH LESS (THE CLOTHING DIET)



You may be tempted to go on a big shopping spree at this point, but try to resist it!

Can you live with less clothing for a few weeks?

Think of a healthy diet or cleanse. You eliminate unhealthy foods or ingredients for a while and get rewarded with a healthier body!

Going on a clothing diet will allow you to clearly see what you love wearing and what isn't working. Giving yourself limitations can help you define your personal style.

In the meantime, be creative with what you have. Ask yourself what essentials are missing in your wardrobe!

And don't forget -- keep noticing what clothes you feel good in and looking for patterns in what you love!



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6

DETERMINE YOUR RESOURCE

There's a truth we need to get out in the open: effortless, chic wardrobes aren't effortless - they take energy and time!

Good, beautiful things need to be crafted and require time and energy - whether it's a latte, a speech, or a floral arrangement.

A modest, beautiful wardrobe will take work -- but it doesn't have to happen all at once.

Now you're ready to find your resource. There are three resources for building a wardrobe, and most people have at least one. They are money, time, and creativity.

If you are blessed with a generous clothing budget, your resource is money. Once you decide what you're missing in your wardrobe, find a trusted brand, and purchase what you need! If your clothing budget looks a bit meager, perhaps your resource is time.

If you aren't able to pay full price for the pieces you need, you'll want to wait for sales, coupons, or birthday money. Maybe you'll spend time shopping at thrift stores or online at places like Thredup or Poshmark.



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These ventures can be fun, but remember that it's still using a resource - your time.

Or, perhaps your resource is creativity.

If this is you, you'll be thinking outside the box! Experiment with the clothing you have in some new ways.

You could refresh an old item of clothing with a DIY project or a fresh dye wash. Do you know how to sew? Is there a simple item of clothing you make yourself?

Maybe you'll sell something you're not using and use the money for a new item of clothing. Perhaps you could organize a clothing swap with some friends.

Use your creativity to move your wardrobe forward!

Acknowledge that a great wardrobe doesn't just happen - it takes work! Next, decide what your resource (or resources) are. Now you know where to put your energy when you need new items.



7 CREATE A MASTER LIST & COLLECT THE ESSENTIALS

So, you've set your wardrobe intentions. You've collected inspiration and purged your closet.

You've taken note of what colors, styles, and looks suit your lifestyle and body type. You've even gone a few weeks on a clothing diet - wearing what was left in your closet after the purge.

Now, how can you start purchasing clothes you want, while leaving the items that aren't your style in the store?

It's time to turn to a tried and true method -- making a LIST!



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Think of it as goal setting for your wardrobe. Your list will give you direction and keep you from making decisions you regret!

Everyone's master list will be different because you'll focus on your personal style, not fashion trends.

However, there are a few tried-and-true classics that are building blocks for modest, stylish, wardrobes and we've created a free, printable list to get you started!

Here at the Main Street Exchange, we strive to offer you classic, modest items that are versatile and will help you build a wardrobe you love and wear with confidence!



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HERE'S OUR MASTER LIST OF MODEST WARDROBE ESSENTIALS:

■ Ankle-length black skirt or dress

■ There is no end to the ways you can wear a long black skirt or dress! It can be formal with an elegant blouse and heels, or you could take it in a more casual direction with some everyday tops or sweaters! Not only is it super versatile, but it's also comfortable!

■ Knee-length black skirt or dress

■ This will match with everything and can be worn in the summer or winter with tights and booties.

■ Denim skirts

■ Denim basically lasts forever - plus it's a great way to add texture and character to your wardrobe.

■ Modest camisoles and tanks for layering

■ You won't regret stocking up on these core items.

■ Jackets and cardigans



■ Basic tees

- Start with a few of your favorite neutrals and later add colors, stripes, or graphic tees if you like.

■ Sweaters and blouses

- Getting dressed is easy when you have a few comfortable and beautiful stand-alone sweaters or blouses. Start with neutrals, then add on from there. Be sure to pick out colors and styles that look good on you!

■ Leggings and tights

- A must-have for staying warm and modest while wearing a skirt or dress!

■ Skorts

- Whether you're on your mat at home, at the gym, or playing sports with friends, you'll need these so you can feel comfortable and sporty while staying covered!

■ Maxi dresses and skirts

- We don't need to tell you why these are popular! They are comfortable, elegant, and functional and a must for any modest wardrobe. Add some of your favorite solid colors, florals, or prints to your wardrobe with these.

■ Formal dresses

- You'll want a few formal dresses that can be worn simply as a stand-alone dress for weddings, banquets, or other special occasions. Make sure you have formal dress options for warm and cool weather!

■ Shoes

Ankle boots

- Ankle boots keep you warm in the fall and winter and look great with dresses and skirts! Choose a neutral color that will match with most of your dresses or skirts.

Sandals

- You'll want a pair of casual and formal sandals.

■ Heels

- Pumps, block heels, kitten heels, or platforms; it's a good idea to have at least one pair of formal heels!

■ Sneakers



■ Sneakers aren't just for the sporty types! Try low-top sneakers that are feminine and functional.

■ Flats and loafers

■ These look great with dresses and flowy skirts and can be worn in any season!

Remember, building a modest wardrobe and defining your personal style takes time. Purchase quality items that fit you well and are versatile. Be patient with yourself and know that you'll need to adjust your wardrobe and style as your lifestyle changes, too.



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CONGRATULATIONS!

You've come a long way!

You've set clothing intentions, and you observed the styles of those around you. You've purposefully purged your closet, gone on a clothing diet, determined your resources, and created a list of items to build your modest wardrobe.

You are ready to build your modest wardrobe and enjoy dressing modestly again! We hope you find items that you love and express who you are: beautiful, valued, and loved. At The Main Street Exchange, we'd love to be a part of your wardrobe journey. We strive to offer beautiful, modest pieces for the everyday woman.

With an emphasis on neutrals and simple pieces, our clothing is curated to bring out the effortless confidence and unique style found in each woman.

We believe that confident women create a life fulfilled and fulfilled women bravely go forth into the dreams that God has placed in their hearts.

Come and visit us at our store
at **3000 Lincoln Hwy East Gordonville,
PA 17529**

or online at

mainstreetexchangeapparel.com.

You can call us at **717.598.8309**

Happy modest dressing!

With love,
The Main Street Exchange



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HERE'S OUR MASTER LIST OF MODEST WARDROBE ESSENTIALS:

- Ankle-length black skirt or dress
- Knee-length black skirt or dress
- Denim skirts
- Modest camisoles and tanks for layering
- Jackets and cardigans
- Basic tees
- Sweaters and blouses
- Leggings and tights
- Skorts
- Maxi dresses and skirts
- Formal dresses (warm weather and cool weather options)
- Ankle boots
- Sandals (casual and formal options)
- Heels
- Sneakers
- Flats and loafers

MORE MODEST STAPLES FOR MY WARDROBE:

