

QANTAS MEDIA AWARDS 2009 SECTION FINALIST – FASHION

# SEVEN DRESSES FOR SEVEN SHAPES

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to suit your  
figure type

Food myths  
busted

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salad

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# ttempo

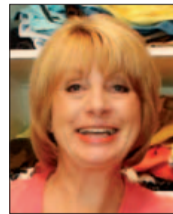
# Dress me UP

What is the perfect dress for your figure?  
KATE MONAHAN goes in search of answers with a Hamilton style coach.

Summer is the time for garden parties, outdoor weddings and race day events, yet it can be hard to find the perfect dress to wear.

There is certainly a lot of choice. In the past few years, dresses have been popular on the fashion catwalks and in stores, with an explosion of styles available.

Yet, what looks good on your friend may look like a sack or off-kilter bandage on you; the truth is, not every dress is designed to suit every figure.



To cut through the confusion *Tempo* has found dresses to suit seven different figure types, with expert advice from Hamilton image coach Jan Fisher, pictured.

"To me these are the seven body shapes that make the most sense," says Fisher.

She uses standard letter and number shapes to represent each of the seven figure types including X, A, O, H, V, I and 8.

The "X" shape is a typical hourglass

figure, with curves and balanced hips. According to Fisher, this figure type suits wrap dresses and A-line frocks.

Someone with an "A" shape is more like a classic "pear" or inverted triangle; they suit empire waist dresses and wrap dresses, but should avoid anything that hits on the hips, their widest point.

For many people, understanding your body shape helps to balance proportions, enhance good points and minimise others. "If you dress for your body shape, it makes a big difference to your appearance," says Fisher.

To put the theory into practice, *Tempo* headed to Hamilton stores with Fisher, looking for dresses for each figure type: seven dresses for seven figures.

However, we couldn't just stop at one dress each; instead we found two examples for each of the seven figure types, one at a high and lower price point. It proves you don't have to spend hundreds of dollars to get the look.



## 8 Body shape

You have a defined waist, which you should always show off. You may have slightly curved shoulders, but generally hips and shoulders are balanced.  
**DO:** Focus attention on your lovely defined waist with belts or outfits that nip in at your waist. Keep skirts tapered, to narrow your figure. Trousers should also be tailored to the body, straight legged or tapered in.  
**DON'T DO:** Flared pleated skirts or flared trousers. Also avoid A-line skirts and tulip dresses.

### KATHERINE SATIN COCKTAIL DRESS

from Cene, Ward St, Hamilton, \$219.90

**Why it works:** "I think it's a beautiful shape," says Fisher. "It tapers at the bottom which is good. Those with an '8' body shape have a lovely figure but you always need to define the waist. Generally they also have a slightly sloping shoulder, and this is good because the shoulder detail distracts."

### PRINCIPAL'S DRESS

From Principal's, Centre Place, Hamilton, \$109

**Why it works:** "This is the cheapie version for the figure 8 woman," says Fisher. "It has lovely draping and defines the waist. It tapers in and this figure needs to taper in at the bottom because they have a higher hip. The straps work well; they go right through and build up the shoulders."



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Are you confused about your figure type and what clothes suit you?

Has your figure or colouring changed, or are you unsure how to dress for your age, size or shape?

Are you plus size, short, tall or something in between, and wanting tips on how to look fabulous?

If you answered yes to any of those questions, we'd love to hear from you. No size is too big, no age too old. If you are thinking to contact us, please do.

*Tempo* is relaunching its Make Me Over

column for 2010, with talented Hamilton image coach Jan Fisher and *Tempo* editor Kate Monahan.

Every two months we will choose a Waikato person for a special makeover in *Tempo*.

The winner will get a one-on-one style and colour consultation with Jan Fisher, plus a styling session in Hamilton stores, showing you how to put the advice into practice. The winner will leave with a style guide folder and newfound knowledge and confidence.

This year we are also excited to announce

a new partnership with Centre Place, who will be supplying each winner with a \$500 gift voucher so they can start building their new wardrobe.

Each makeover story will be covered in the pages of *Tempo*, to inspire and offer guidance to other readers. Yes, you will be photographed, but we will make you look amazing, and it's guaranteed to be a fun, supportive experience.

To enter, send a letter (no more than 300 words please) to *Tempo* editor Kate Monahan. Tell us your name, address, contact

phone numbers, age, dress size and figure shape. Also, please share with us your style/figure questions or issues, why you need a makeover, and what you hope to learn.

We will also need a full-length photograph so we can get a sense of your figure type before we meet.

We will keep all letters on file and pick one every two months to feature in *Tempo*.

Send to: Make Me Over, Kate Monahan, *Tempo* editor, *Waikato Times*, Private Bag 3086, Hamilton.



# V

## Body shape

You have wide shoulders and narrower hips, bottom and/or thighs. Your bust size is average to large, you back wider and waist may be high or large. With rounded upper body lines and straight lower body lines, you can appear top heavy.

**DO:** Soften your shoulders with halter neck tops or deep, narrow V-necks in a darker, plain fabric. Keep it simple up top, with no details, and collars and lapels should be narrow.

**DON'T DO:** Epaulettes and shoulder pads are a no-no, as are puffy sleeves, wide collars or anything that builds up the shoulders.

### ELLEN H CHIFFON DRESS

From Shine, Centre Place, Hamilton, \$249

**Why it works:** "Nice converging lines break up the space of the shoulders which is good for the V-body shape," says Fisher. "They have big shoulders and a smaller waist, a typical swimmer's body shape. If you put a tiny (shoulder) strap on them, it wouldn't be in scale. The deep V-neck is also good as minimizes the bust."

### STAXS DRESS

From Staxs, Centre Place, Hamilton, \$69.90

**Why it works:** "Because V-shapes are wider in the top than the bottom, this dress is all about creating an illusion of balance," says Fisher. "The mini peplum balances the top half with the bottom half so they look even. Often this body type is high-waisted so with the belt we have lowered the waist a bit." (Limited Express leather belt, \$89.90, from Cene, Ward St, Hamilton).



# A

## Body shape

Narrow at the shoulders and wider at the hips and/or thighs, this body type can appear bottom heavy. They have an average to small bust, narrow back and small waist.

**DO:** Elongate your figure, balance your shoulders and hips and show off your curves without over-emphasising them. Empire dresses, wraps, A-line frocks and matching jackets and dresses suit you.

**DON'T DO:** Anything that makes your bottom half look big – pleats on the waistline, clingy fabrics or anything that hits at the widest part of your hips – are to be avoided.

### MICHAEL PATTISON SILK DRESS

From Cene, Ward St, Hamilton, \$389

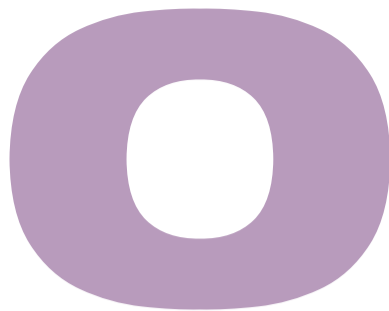
**Why it works:** "The emphasis should be up top because generally A body shapes are bigger in the hips," says Fisher. "We need to define the waist because they generally have a small waist. The ruching detail across the bust is great, because it makes the top look fuller than what it really is and generally this body type has a smaller bosom."

### STAXS DRESS

From Staxs, Centre Place, Hamilton, \$79.90

**Why it works:** "I like the draping through the bust area, with the defined waist," says Fisher. "This dress is a little more 'princess line' which is great on this shape. The dress drapes softly in an A-line over the butt, which is good if you have a fleshier bottom half. The fabric needs to fall nicely and not cling. Sometimes these people have sloping shoulders, so the thicker (shoulder) straps are good."





## Body shape

Great legs and round curves. A large figure with a round body, tummy and shoulders and a flat bottom.

**DO:** Focus the attention away from your middle to your legs or face, and use clothing and accessories to create one long, vertical line. A-line dresses and empire line and trapeze dresses are flattering, skimming over round tummies. Detail should be above the bust or below the knee.

**DON'T DO:** Avoid any waist details, including belts, pockets and gathered waists. Clothes should drape; stiff or shiny fabrics are not so good. Avoid large repeating patterns over the torso.

### DAVID POND DRESS

From Identity, Ward St, Hamilton, \$379.90

**Why it works:** "The gentle pleating over the tummy area hides the stomach," says Fisher. "They usually have gorgeous legs and this dress has a lovely hem to focus on that. This body type tends to have a big bust so the lovely low v-neck is exquisite for the décolletage."

### BELLA DRESS

From Cene, Ward St, Hamilton, \$199

**Why it works:** "It drapes and flows over the tummy and lower half," says Fisher. "The vertical lines of the pleats are going to lengthen and slim."



## Body shape

A classic "hour glass shape", this curvy figure has shoulders and hips in equal width, a medium bust and smaller waist. Hips and thighs are usually bigger than your bottom, and the body appears balanced.

**DO:** Showcase your waist, elongate your figure and show off your curves in wraps, a-line and belted shirtdresses. Sweetheart necklines, off-the-shoulder and strapless dresses also suit you.

**DON'T DO:** Avoid anything baggy as you need to show off your waist. Also avoid detail and horizontal lines on the widest part of your hips or bottom.

### GREGORY SILK DRESS

From Gregory, Victoria St, Hamilton, \$449

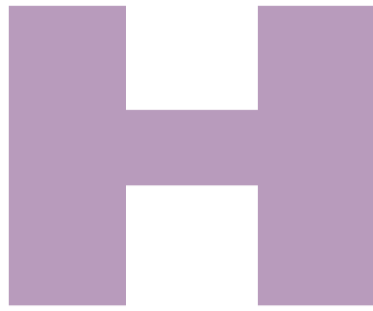
**Why it works:** "It defines the waist and this body shape always needs to define the waist," says Fisher. "The bodice is beautifully fitted and the design lines are flattering. Unlike the 'figure 8' body shape, the 'X' doesn't have to have dresses tapering in at the bottom." (Cream pearls, \$199, also from Gregory).

### PRINCIPAL'S DRESS

From Principal's, Centre Place, Hamilton, \$89.90

**Why it works:** "The inverted pleating is nice because it nips in under the bust and has nice shaping, showing off the waist. This is also one you could wear a belt with if you wanted to."





## Body shape

With similar width in the shoulders, waist, hips and thighs, this figure type can appear boxy. Clothes should lengthen or create a subtle suggestion of a waist.

**DO:** Go for an uncluttered look, putting details above the bust or below the knee to create shape. Monochromatic outfits and draped fabrics help create a long vertical line. Empire and A-line dresses, and princess cut, flatter.

**DON'T DO:** Avoid voluminous styles and too much pleating or shaping. Details at the waist and waistbands or belts across the middle are a no-no. Instead, soft straight lines or a chunky necklace can help slim.

### JACQUIE DRESS

From Jacqui.E, Centre Place, Hamilton, \$129

**Why it works:** "We've used the belt to pull it in, but not on the natural waist line," says Fisher. "It's above, and generally, on the H body shape the smallest area is through the rib cage so empire-lines work well. With this body type, you have to create the illusion of a waist."

(Silver beaded belt, \$39.90, and necklace, \$37.90, also from Jacqui.E).

### STAXS DRESS

From Staxs, Centre Place, Hamilton, \$89.90

**Why it works:** "With the H-shape you need to give the suggestion of a waist because they don't have a naturally defined waist; they are usually just straight through," says Fisher. "Using design lines we can make it look like they have a waist. The raised cummerbund helps pull it in above the waist and the converging lines at the top lengthen and slim, shaping through the mid-section."



## Body shape

A slim or boyish figure, with straight body lines and few obvious curves. This is the "model" figure, with a similar width in the shoulders, waist and hips. It tends to be more angular or bony, and the body appears balanced.

**DO:** Use clothing to create the illusion of curves and a more womanly figure. Belted dresses and wrap tops/dresses create a defined waist. A-lines, princess cuts and bias cut dresses also flatter you.

**DON'T DO:** Tight clothes or voluminous styles will swamp you, and you may get overwhelmed with kimono sleeves or anything with built-in curves.

### JACQUIE DRESS

From Jacqui.E, Centre Place, Hamilton, \$189.90

**Why it works:** "This person needs to give themselves curves and shape because they are straight through, up and down," says Fisher. "The detailing at the bosom makes it appear bigger, and there is a lovely flare to the skirt. The panelling elongates and slims. The fabric is so soft and floaty, but there are strong design lines."

### STAXS DRESS

From Staxs, Centre Place, Hamilton, \$69.90

**Why it works:** "If you didn't have any hips and your figure was just straight up and down, this dress gives you curves in all the right places," says Fisher. "The peplum adds curves and shape around the hip area."

■ Information on body types from Jan Fisher Image Coach. For personal styling advice or a consultation contact [jan@imagecoach.co.nz](mailto:jan@imagecoach.co.nz) or call 07 843 8191.

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