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13 Outfit Tricks to Look Instantly Younger



Marissa Laliberte (<https://www.rd.com/author/marissalaliberte/>)

Shave years off your looks—no miracle wrinkle creams required.



Embrace patterns



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No matter what the pattern, that visual interest will look playful and fun, says Dina Scherer, wardrobe stylist and owner of **Modnitsa Styling** (<http://www.modnitsastyling.com/>). But picking the right ones will have an even bigger impact. The straight lines in stripes, zigzags, and geometric patterns can look conservative and strict, so pick ones with softer edges instead. "If you're wearing patterns to increase your youthfulness, I recommend more curved ones that are on the brighter or more colorful side, versus two-toned," she says. Avoid these **style mistakes that make you look older** (<https://www.rd.com/health/beauty/dress-to-look-younger/1/>).

Go fly-free

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You might start carrying weight in different areas as you get older. If you have more around your muffin-top area, pants and jeans that fasten with a zipper or button can squeeze in, creating that uncomfortable spillage. Ditch the fly and find a pair of flattering pants that you can pull right on, says Lauren Rothman, fashion stylist and author of *Style Bible: What to Wear to Work*. And she's not talking about those elastic-waist mom jeans you might have in mind. Think skinny ankle pants, cropped styles, and culottes instead. "A pull-on pant can be very flattering and is not as dated as it once was," she says. "At this point, it's so stylish that they come in all silhouettes." Check out these other [fashion tricks to look 10 pounds thinner](https://www.rd.com/health/beauty/dress-to-look-thinner/1/) (<https://www.rd.com/health/beauty/dress-to-look-thinner/1/>).

Brighten up your color palette

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"Darker shades tend to read more conservative and give off the message of more of an authority, polished feel," says Scherer, "which is not bad but can age you because it takes away from your approachability feel." On the other hand, lighter, brighter shades make you seem more open and fun, which in turn make you look younger, she says. (**[Find out what else does your outfit color say about you](https://www.rd.com/advice/work-career/outfit-color/1/)** (**<https://www.rd.com/advice/work-career/outfit-color/1/>**.) Wearing bright-colored accessories like scarves, necklaces, and broaches near your face is a particularly good way to highlight your features and make you look fresh-faced, Scherer says.

Don't stick with crew necks

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If you spent your younger years in higher necklines, your chest will be untouched from the sun—meaning you won't have the damage that sunbathers might. (These are more **[weird ways the sun affects your body](https://www.rd.com/health/wellness/sun-affects-your-body/1/)** (**<https://www.rd.com/health/wellness/sun-affects-your-body/1/>**.) Choose tops that reveal your décolleté to display a spot that shows little aging. "If you're lucky enough to be one of those women without sun damage, you won't have wrinkles there," Rothman says. "When you do choose to show that off, you're going to win the war on aging."

Or go for more coverage

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While a bare décolleté can be flattering, covering up more won't make you look matronly. **Styling a turtleneck right** (<https://www.rd.com/health/beauty/how-to-wear-a-turtleneck/1/>) draws the eye up, meaning you'll bring less attention to any extra weight around your midsection. If you think of your body like an exclamation point, you want to keep the attention to the top and bottom, Rothman says. "You want to hit either the point on the exclamation point with a great pair of shoes or cropped pants, and/or concentrating on that top part of the exclamation mark," she says. "Anything around the neck is important." If turtlenecks feel stifling, try a shawl collar, which looks like a waterfall of fabric around your neck and chest, she suggests.

Replace your black clothes

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Black is popular because it's so versatile, but its starkness can make you seem older. For your new go-to versatile pieces, choose browns and grays, which will make you seem younger and more approachable, says Scherer. "Browns and grays can replace it in a way that's very slimming and very neutral," she says. "There's not that intensity that ages you and makes you a bit more strict." (You'll wish you knew these **secrets to looking younger** (<https://www.rd.com/health/beauty/how-to-look-younger/1/>) sooner.)

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Don't be slave to trends

DON'T BE SLAVE TO TRENDS

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Jumping on board with every fashion fad could make you look out of touch. "If you're trying to follow the latest trends then you're automatically going to be thrown into the 'trying too hard' group," says Jack Prenter, founder of style website [knownman.com \(http://www.knownman.com/\)](http://www.knownman.com/). "It's important that you try and dress younger, not like your children or grandchildren." **Establish a signature style** (<https://www.rd.com/health/beauty/find-personal-style/1/>) that won't get dated, and fill your wardrobe with timeless pieces instead.

Prepare to chew some skin

PREPARE TO SHOW SOME SKIN

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Just because you don't have the body you had in your 20s doesn't mean you have to spend the rest of your life avoiding skirts and dresses that show your legs.

"Sometimes women are aware of veins and the way their legs have perhaps aged or feel self-conscious that they are not tan enough," Rothman says. Her advice: Quit worrying—after all, you're not the only one out there with pale calves. Prep your legs with leg makeup, which helps cover imperfections, or just slick on some lotion to add smoothness, she suggests. Plus, try these **[tricks for avoiding winter pallor](https://www.rd.com/health/beauty/avoid-pale-winter-skin/1/)** (<https://www.rd.com/health/beauty/avoid-pale-winter-skin/1/>).





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Try a slight crop

Try a Slight Crop

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Even if you're too self-conscious to show your whole calf, don't hide your ankles. "As we age, we're so consumed with how many parts of our body we feel like we have to cover up, but a few don't need to be covered," Rothman says. "Elongating the leg a bit with that cropped pant is very flattering and sexy, and it's a part of your body that doesn't tend to show age." Plus, the shorter hemline gives you the chance to show off gorgeous shoes, whether you like booties, flats, or pointed-toe loafers, she says.

Make sure you have these other **[fall fashion staples](https://www.rd.com/health/beauty/timeless-fall-fashion/1/)** (<https://www.rd.com/health/beauty/timeless-fall-fashion/1/>) in your closet.

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Find the right balance between slouchy and polished

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Structured two-piece sets and other tailored pieces look polished, but that sophisticated look can also come across as more aging, says Scherer. Go for pieces that fall off the shoulder a bit or have a longer, asymmetrical silhouette to shave years off your look. "If it's a little oversized, it can read as a little more casual and doesn't hug the body the same way, so it has that message of a more youthful feel," she says. Just don't cross the line too far—baggy jeans and sweatpants will swallow up your whole body. Find oversized pieces with clean lines, avoiding embellishments or details, to look younger while staying age-appropriate. (Don't miss these **secrets of women who always look put together** (<https://www.rd.com/health/beauty/easy-fashion-ideas/1/>.)

Bare your shoulders

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Don't be afraid to show off your arms with a sleeveless or cap-sleeved top. "Unless you need it for warmth, you don't need the shawl," Rothman says. Keep it age appropriate by picking tank tops that aren't too tight, and make sure you have a well-fitting bra that doesn't create bulge. Use these **[tricks for arms worthy of showing off](https://www.rd.com/health/fitness/stronger-arms/1/)** (<https://www.rd.com/health/fitness/stronger-arms/1/>)—no exercise required.

Simplify your accessories

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Be picky when deciding which to show off every day. Instead of piling on bracelets and necklaces, remove a few pieces before heading out the door. "Whilst older generations are huge fans of jewelry and watches, the youth of today are generally very minimalist," Prenter says. You can keep wearing all your favorite pieces, just with a more youthful twist.

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Add a bit of height

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Getting older, you might shift from a “pain is beauty” mindset to wanting more comfort from your clothes. No need to teeter along in stilettos—especially if your balance isn't what it used to be—but don't banish all your heels just yet. “It's still age-appropriate to wear heels,” Rothman says. “The perfect level of style is when there's some comfort in there.” Swap out your five-inch pumps for kitten heels, platform shoes, or wedges so you can **wear heels without the pain** (<https://www.rd.com/health/wellness/high-heel-pain/1/>).

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