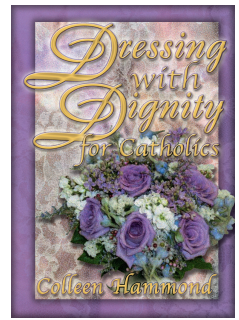


# Dressing with Dignity

## Outfit Check\*



***"There is a difference between dressing attractively,  
and dressing to attract."***

### 1. Is my blouse well-designed?

- Try on the blouse and bend over. If you can see down your shirt, so can everyone else.  
*FASHION TIP:* Tape it to your chest, otherwise this blouse has to go. Or try a scarf or camisole under it.
- When wearing a knit shirt, take your fingertips and press them into your shirt over your breastbone. When you take your hand away, does it spring back? If so, this top too tight! (Well-endowed ladies: be extra careful!)  
*FASHION TIP:* Get rid of the blouse. It's not going to get bigger overnight!
- When wearing a blouse that buttons down the front, stand sideways and look in the mirror. Put your hands on your hips like "chicken wings" and try to touch your elbows together behind your back. If your blouse gaps, you're in danger of exposing too much—not to mention losing a button and exposing even more!  
*FASHION TIP:* Blouses that are too tight are unbecoming, especially for a lady who dresses with dignity. Try buying a blouse a size or two larger to allow the blouse to be looser and for you to be able to move more freely. Or, try a camisole (or a plain, loose t-shirt) under the buttoned blouse. (Make sure they pass the Outfit Check!)
- Does your blouse plunge too low in the front? A blouse is not attractive or demure if it dips lower than two fingers widths below the pit of your throat. It should also have sleeves that cover your shoulders and upper arms. And also make sure you're not exposing your upper back.  
*FASHION TIP:* Use a fashion scarf to fill in the low spots of your blouse.
- Does my top have any type of writing or message on it? A confident lady has the good taste not to use her bosom as a billboard. A top with a message doesn't work.  
*FASHION TIP:* Insist on others treating you with dignity, and don't make yourself a billboard. Ditch it.

### 2. Am I showing my belly?

- Reach up as if you're getting something off the top shelf. Does that expose any back or belly skin?  
*FASHION TIP:* Pull out that camisole or t-shirt again, and make sure they pass the Outfit Check.

### 3. How long? How short?

- Below the knee is considered fashionable and dignified. Does the skirt or dress have slits? Forget it! It's better to forego altogether a skirt or dress with slits. If an outfit has a slit in it for 'ease of movement', then it's probably too tight for comfort...or elegance! Unless they stop below your knee, slits are out.  
*FASHION TIP:* You can find long, flowing skirts almost anywhere today. A dignified lady keeps her kneecaps covered...even when she's sitting. And don't forget to wear a slip!

### 4. Tight, Clingy, Sheer...

- Can you see an outline of your panties or bra through your clothing—either because your clothing is too tight, too clingy, or too sheer? Are any undergarments hanging out of your outer clothing?  
*FASHION TIP:* Trash any clothing that is tight, clingy or transparent. It's undignified and in bad taste.



***Before you leave the house, here's a little poem my daughter came up with  
as an "Outfit-Check":***

**"Heads, shoulders, knees and toes. Doesn't work? Then out it goes!"**

- Put both of your hands on your *head*. Does the skin around your waist show (stomach or back)?
- Put your hands on your *shoulders*. Are they covered? Check your neckline, too, and make sure it isn't too low.
- Bend over and put your hands on your *knees*. Does your top hang open and away from your body? Does your clothing cover your knees? Check for slits.
- Bend down and touch your *toes*. Does your back show?

If you can pass the head-shoulders-knees-and-toes test, congratulations! You are now developing a style all your own—and *Dressing with Dignity*!



(Abbreviated and taken from *Dressing with Dignity*, by Colleen Hammond.)

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\*Based on the guidelines developed by Donato Cardinal Sbarretti, the Prefect of the Congregation of the Council under Pope Pius XI. "A dress cannot be called decent which is cut deeper than two fingers breadth under the pit of the throat, which does not cover the arms at least to the elbows, and scarcely reaches a bit beyond the knees. Furthermore, dresses of transparent material are improper."

Also adapted with permission from *Secret Keeper* by Damah Gresh.