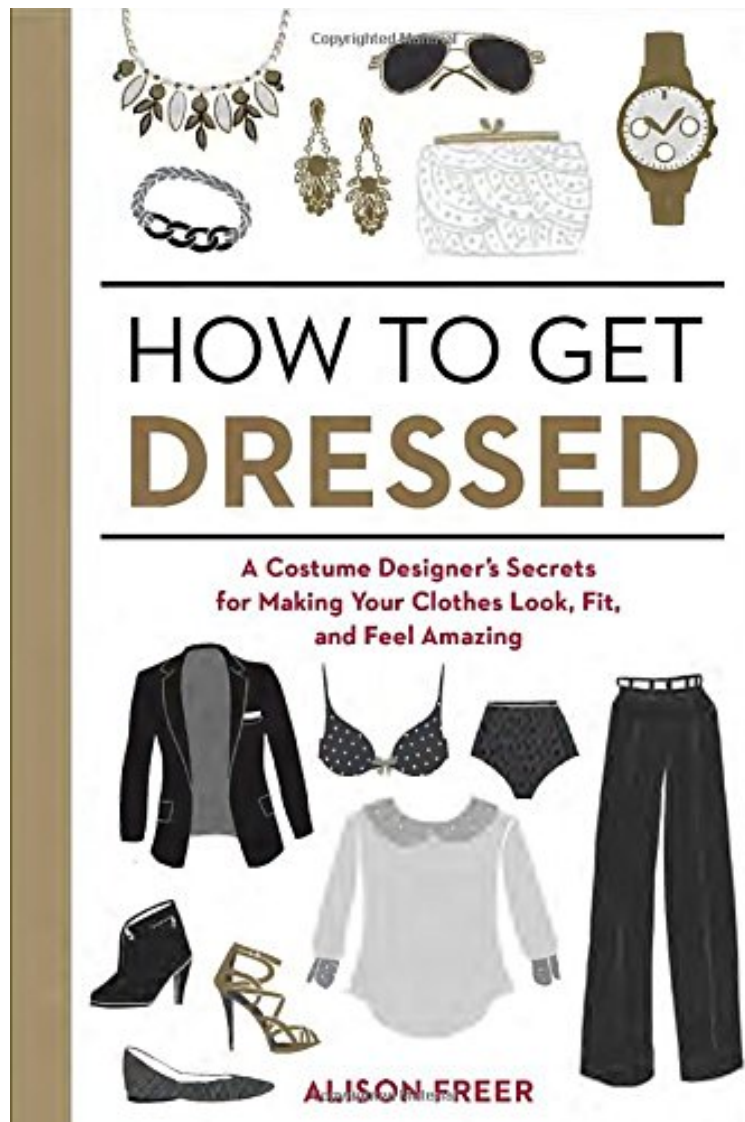


[E-BOOK] How to Get Dressed: A Costume Designer's Secrets for Making Your Clothes Look, Fit, and Feel Amazing

How to Get Dressed: A Costume Designer's Secrets for Making Your Clothes Look, Fit, and Feel Amazing

Alison Freer

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Alison Freer : How to Get Dressed: A Costume Designer's Secrets for Making Your Clothes Look, Fit, and Feel Amazing before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How to Get Dressed: A Costume Designer's Secrets for Making Your Clothes Look, Fit, and Feel Amazing:

202 of 212 people found the following review helpful. Useful, Practical Tips from a Witty, Funny ChickBy Jillian

Hastings Alison Freer is a Hollywood costume designer, and I've followed her style articles on the website xoJane for years. Her advice online has never led me astray, and I've used many of her tips to great success (including making my own wax-coated denim). I was obviously super excited about her book, and I have to say, it didn't disappoint! How to Get Dressed is like Lucky Magazine or Cosmo, if either of those magazines were actually remotely useful. Where fashion magazines fall short, How to Get Dressed delivers. It's not a book about fashion, but about style. It's not about trends, but about making YOUR personal style work for you. It's not about following fashion rules, but about breaking them to great success. It's about looking great, but still being yourself. What more could we ask for?! Well, the book offers a lot more than that. I think my favorite section of the book is the chapter on closets. As a person with far too many clothes and clutter in my life, I long for organization, and Alison's tips for organizing one's clothes and closets are actually useful and doable, and make me think that even *I* could be organized (that remains to be seen, but that's because of me, not Alison's awesome tips)! As an avid knitter, I jumped with joy at her spot-on advice for storing knits (don't hang them up by the shoulders--they'll stretch!), and learned a great many tips on storing other types of garments that I didn't know about. That's the thing about Alison: she REALLY knows her stuff. She isn't just a fashion blogger who can put together a cute ensemble; she's a professional, unionized costume designer, and she knows how various fabrics and garments inherently work (nylon doesn't unravel; the physics behind a bra; how darts and other alterations work). If there's a problem with your clothes that you can think of, Alison likely has a quick fix in her book. The best part of How to get Dressed is Alison herself. Her personality and voice are clear in her writing, and you feel like you are BFFs with her by the end of the book. While she is incredibly knowledgeable, all this information would be a snooze in the hands of another writer, but Alison keeps the book moving along. It's not just a reference book to look things up in for future use, but also just a pleasant, entertaining read (and I rarely read nonfiction for pleasure). Unlike those fashion magazines I mentioned before, Alison doesn't try to say "this style is better for this body type" or "this is unflattering for this body type," but instead she tells you how to make your clothes fit your body. In fact, some clothes that you might think are unflattering could be extremely flattering if they were properly fitted to you! When I read fashion magazines, I feel like I need to throw out all my clothes and start over, which is of course totally impossible and cost prohibitive. But with How to Get Dressed, I feel like I already have a lot to work with, most of my clothes just need some extra love to really sing. Alison really supports every woman (or man) as an individual. As she says in her book, the fashion "rules" we've heard all our lives are really just to make us all dress and look the same, and that is so boring I could scream! Alison has a chapter about finding and nurturing your signature style. I love this idea, because without a signature style in mind, I feel like I am just buying whatever I see in stores, but not putting my own spin on it, which results in me dressing just like everyone else. Alison makes no judgment on different styles, and is supportive of everyone's unique style. I think that's what I love most about Alison, and How to Get Dressed. I didn't feel like I needed to change who I am in order to look great, or buy a bunch of new expensive clothes. It's the only book or magazine I've read that emphasizes the fact that every style and every body can look and feel great. Buy this book! Buy it now, and start feeling great in the clothes you already own!

220 of 235 people found the following review helpful. Make Your Clothes Work For You By Eva Woods It's hard to know where to start on this review, because I loved *so many* things about the book, but I'll try to go in order! It's wonderfully inclusive. Too much fashion advice focuses on one body type, narrow gender expression, what's "flattering" rather than what you love. How To Get Dressed does none of that. It's got advice for everyone. It doesn't treat one type of body as more worthy of feeling and looking beautiful than any other. The author doesn't just use feminine pronouns, but uses "people who..." as well, and talks directly to the reader frequently through the book. You can really feel the care that's been taken not to exclude anyone or make them feel like a gate-crasher to femininity, which is so rare and so important. It's incredibly practical! I kind of went in like, "I'm dressed. I know this stuff" but NOPE. Broken heel strap? Bloodstain? Bra strap won't stay put? Alison Freer seriously has a fix for everything. I now know what to put in my bag for every wedding I ever attend forever and ever amen. This was a big one for me, and my fave chapter: How to create a signature look. I haven't put this into action yet, but I can't wait to go into a shop and not have to wonder "Yeah but will I really ever wear it?" again. That's because there's a whole chapter in here that helps you figure out what you need before-hand, and whether any item fits in with the steez you're trying to cultivate. It's super enlightening. And finally, it's funny. Just skimming through it I laughed out loud. There are tons of TV behind-the-scenes stories, personal anecdotes and examples so you don't ever feel like it's a text book. I absolutely love this book, and plan on buying copies for a friend's daughter who's graduating high school, my sister for her birthday, and a new mom for mother's day. There's so much useful stuff in here for any point in your life, because everyone wants to get more out of their clothes, and this book tells you how.

46 of 47 people found the following review helpful. Stylist Approved By D. Elle I am a personal fashion stylist, and consume tons of fashion and style-related content on a daily basis from blogs, magazines, etc. so it is rare that I read anything new and educational. Most of the material out there about fashion is regurgitated from the same sources. This book was a complete exception. It totally wowed me with its cover to cover tips and practical advice. There was so much in here that I've already been able to share some new tips with my clients. Alison shares so much information about tricks to remove stains, make clothing fit better, improve the comfort of your clothing, and so on that could only be gathered from years of experience. It was so refreshing to read a

book written by someone who isn't afraid to actually share valuable knowledge!

Costume designer Alison Freers styling kit is a magical bag of tricks, built to solve every single wardrobe malfunction on earth. TV and film productions wait for nothing, so her solutions have to work fast. In *How to Get Dressed*, Alison distills her secrets into a fun, comprehensive style guide focused on rethinking your wardrobe like a fashion expert and making what's in your closet work for you. She provides real-world advice about everything style-related, including: Making every garment you own fit better Mastering closet organization The undergarments you actually need The scoop on tailors and which alterations are worth it Shopping thrift and vintage like a rockstar Instead of repeating boring style rules, Alison breaks the rules and gets real about everything from bras to how to deal with inevitable fashion disasters. Including helpful information such as how to skip ironing and the dry cleaners, remove every stain under the sun, and help clueless men get their sartorial acts together, *How to Get Dressed* has hundreds of insider tips from Alison's arsenal of tools and expertise.

A New York Times Best Seller "Professional costume designer Freer spills all her secrets for transforming your closet into a truly functional wardrobe. Her tips tackle clothing fitting issues, closet organization, undergarment truths, brilliant thrifting tips, and more. For someone looking to overhaul their closet, this is not a book to miss."--Bustle "Freer has quite a few styling tricks up her sleeve, and now it's easier for everyone to gain access to her straight-forward advice for cheap. Her new book *How To Get Dressed* gets to the nitty-gritty of revamping your wardrobe."--Huffington Post "[Freer is] refreshingly down-to-earth in her first book, which is packed full of helpful tips for building and maintaining a stylish wardrobe . . . for those looking for a comprehensive and highly readable clothes-care book, this is the one."--Publishers Weekly Alison really nails the basics of good style while allowing room for readers to inject their own personality into a look. Most of all, her writing constantly reminds me of what fashion is really supposed to be: fun for everyone. --Jane Pratt, founder of xoJane.com "Years in the trenches of Hollywood have made Alison Freer an authority on every single clothing problem that could befall a person. As a result, this book is crammed full of wardrobe tricks that really work and is a truly indispensable guide to getting dressed."--Nancy Jo Sales, Author of *The Bling Ring* and contributing editor at *Vanity Fair* "Not everyone can have two maids at her beck and call. Alison is right about many things, but mainly this: ironing really is for mere mortal humans. Her purrfect fashion advice will have you looking your very best (but not better than moi!). Two paws up, dahhhhlings!"--Ashley Tschudin, Official Voice of Choupette Lagerfeld, @ChouettesDiary About the Author ALISON FREER is a costume designer from Texas living and working in Hollywood. With more than 150 TV shows, films, commercials, and music videos under her belt, she has reams of hard-won, practical wardrobe expertise at her fingertips. Alison is also the clothes editor at xoJane.com, where her unique take on how to solve common fashion and style conundrums has won her a dedicated following. Alison is also a contributing editor to Racked.com, in addition to hosting TLC's *A Makeover Story* during its fifth season. She also appeared on Melissa River's *TV Candy* on the TV Guide network as the show's resident style expert. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Introduction: Good Clothes Open All Doors I am a costume designer living and working in Hollywood, California. You might be wondering what a costume designer even does, which makes sense I wondered the same thing, even as I was agreeing to be one! If you've ever thought that your favorite character's wardrobe on that really great show was the bees knees, you have a costume designer to thank for it. Because that character didn't just wake up that way a clever costume designer created the look you love so much. Being a costume designer means I'm the one responsible for the designing, fabricating, shopping, fitting, accessorizing, altering, repairing, and customizing of every single piece of clothing that actors wear while on camera right down to their underwear and socks. Whether I'm working on a film, TV show, or commercial, I'm pounding the pavement at fabric stores, boutiques, flea markets, shopping malls, and costume houses twelve to fourteen hours a day, every day. The jobs I take are particularly unglam because there is a world of difference between a professional costume designer who dresses actors as the characters they play and a celebrity stylist who exclusively outfits stars for red carpet appearances. One of us (the celebrity stylist) has every top clothing and jewelry designer in the world on speed dial, while the other (the costume designer, that's me!) usually has only five hundred bucks and a pocket full of ingenuity to get the job done. You're not likely to find me delivering ball gowns to hotel suites in glamorous locales or being name-checked in an actor's Oscar acceptance speech. More often than not, I'm standing on a ladder in a dusty costume house looking for showgirl outfits or hunched over a folding table in my basement office on a studio lot, trying to figure out how to sew soda cans onto a furry seal costume in time for the afternoons shoot. But I wouldn't have it any other way, because the thousands of hours I've spent in the trenches figuring out what works for my actors' wardrobes has made me an authority on anything and everything having to do with clothes from determining what constitutes proper fit to what to do when a wardrobe crisis strikes. I've also made a ton of mistakes along the way, so whatever your particular problem, I can guarantee it's happened to me and that I probably have the solution. I actually lied my way into becoming a costume designer. (That's some hot career advice right there, by the way: fake it til you make it!) I've been a rabid collector of clothes, shoes, handbags, and accessories my entire life so much so that my first apartment in Los Angeles really just functioned as one giant closet. There were rhinestone cowboy boots

lining the walls of my living room, a dozen cut-up vintage prom dresses hanging in the bathroom, and nothing in my bedroom but racks of clothes and a mattress on the floor. One day my neighbor (who also happened to be a commercial director) came over to borrow something, took one look at this total mania, and asked, Whoa, are you a costume designer? He didn't even notice the white polyester dress I had bubbling away in a pot on the stove, which was an unsuccessful attempt to dye it black using India ink. (There aren't enough words to explain how badly that experiment failed, by the way so save yourself a headache and skip to chapter 10 for some pro-style dyeing tips if you're interested in making the things you own change colors.) I froze for all of three seconds before I decided to answer that yes, of course, I was indeed a costume designer. I suspected that whatever a costume designer actually was, I could probably be one. I innately knew that what I already loved doing could probably become my career and that I likely could be just as good at it as anybody else. That director called to hire me for a small commercial the very next week. And just like that, my career was born. It wasn't fate, it was just an incredible opportunity that I smartly grabbed and then held on to for dear life. People always ask me what special skills I learned to become a successful costume designer and are consistently shocked when I tell them that the answer is Pretty much none! Not only did I not attend fashion school, I barely attended college. I struck out on my own early in life, taking on a number of jobs that depended solely on my ability to communicate well and get people excited about things. I was a shopgirl in clothing and jewelry stores, and the experience I gained while working with the general public is what most effectively prepared me to be a costume designer because dressing people is really all about sales. I can paint a picture with words and images that allows people to believe in me and see what the end result will be and give them the confidence to let me spend rather large amounts of their money! Long before I worked retail, I was a scrappy eighteen-year-old DJ at my local alternative radio station. I started out as the receptionist but eventually badgered them until they broke down and gave me an overnight on-air shift, provided it didn't interfere with my daytime responsibilities. I slept in my office (which was also the station's front lobby) from the time my shift ended at 5:00 a.m. until my daytime receptionist gig began at 9:00 a.m. I learned how to talk, communicate, schmooze, and how to figure it out at all costs. Skills I'm still utilizing to this very day. That's not to say that I don't still wake up almost every single morning wondering, Why do these people trust me? What's wrong with them? And what if I screw everything up? I've learned the hard way not to psych myself out too much to just push through and focus solely on the task at hand. This single-minded, eyes-on-the-prize, dogged determination is what makes me uniquely qualified to solve any wardrobe problem the universe manages to come up with. (It's also the reason I can't ever attend a wedding without being grabbed out of the congregation at the last minute to tie the bride's French bustle or repair a flapping bra strap.) Looking back, I'd really been preparing to become a costume designer my entire life. I just never realized it. As a teen in Texas, I'd be dropped off at the mall by my parents each and every Saturday with my five best buds and \$30 of babysitting money in my pocket. While my pals were busy blowing their allowance on CDs and Slurpees, I was hunting for cool clothes I could actually afford that fit the vision of myself I had in my head. (Figuring out what image I wanted to project to the world via my wardrobe makes me the very first character I ever dressed!) This was a valuable lesson because while having great style is an essential part of being a costume designer, good budgeting skills are really at the heart of the job description. Designers who go over budget don't tend to get rehired, so knowing your way around a clearance rack is a very valuable skill. Being a costume designer means that when things go wrong, I'm the one who takes the heat. You haven't really lived until you've gotten a shocking amount of red lipstick out of a white Gucci blouse in front of a live studio audience because someone hugged an actor too forcefully in the middle of a taping. It costs about \$1,000 per minute while the camera is held and everyone waits for me to fix it. Situations like that are why I've had to come up with a stable of solutions to disasters that really work and work incredibly fast. Wardrobe disasters are a way of life when you're a costume designer, and I've had every single one possible happen to me at some point in my career. So the next time you find yourself suffering from a terrible clothing malfunction, you can take heart in knowing that what you are experiencing has likely happened to your favorite star as well. But you can also rest easy because now that you're holding this book, you've got the solution to almost any dastardly wardrobe disaster that could occur. In the coming pages, I'm going to pull back the curtain and show you what really goes on behind the scenes at a wardrobe fitting. We'll figure out together who the heck you really are and what your clothes are saying about you, and I'll let you in on all the style secrets my actors probably wish I wouldn't while teaching you how to keep the clothes you've already got in your closet in tip-top shape. (Because, yes, wardrobes need tune-ups and maintenance, too.) I'll also open up my costume designer's tool kit and share all the gadgets I use to make those stars look like stars. Because the old saying really is true: Good clothes open all doors. But I'm of the belief that it's not so much what you wear that makes people sit up and take notice; it's how you wear it. By the time you're done reading here, there won't be a single one of my secrets you won't know. Everyone's wardrobe could benefit from having a professional costume designer (and her secret bag of tricks) in their back pocket and that's just what this book is: Me, Alison Freer, at your service.