

INSIDERS' GUIDE STYLE

tial client or employer may not recognize your initials. A monogram is both more personal and more old-fashioned. The most classic lettering styles are English Script, Shaded Roman, and a sans-serif Gothic—all three are timeless.

- **Finishing touches.** An envelope should have your return address printed on the flap, and I prefer full words to abbreviations. Use numerals unless the number is ten or less. And if you want them to feel really special, have the envelope lined with tissue in a shade that echoes the rest of your color scheme.

HOW TO WEAR A WHITE SHIRT

An Interview With Simon Kneen
Kneen is a designer and the creative director of Banana Republic.

Every woman should have at least one really good white shirt in her closet. It's a staple she can mix into her wardrobe year after year. Here's how:

- **Get the right fit.** A white shirt is simple and unadorned by definition, so it's best to choose one made of a high-quality fabric—a crisp cotton without any stretch. Avoid anything with lots of darts or details that look too feminine, since a button-down shirt is best when it has a masculine cut. Choose one that is neither skintight nor baggy; it should just skim the body. And be sure to sit down in the dressing room. If the shirt then gaps at the bust or hips, you need to go up one size.

- **Pair it well.** If you're wearing the shirt with a skirt or classic pants, it looks best tucked in; with skinny jeans, try it untucked. Rolling up your sleeves to a point just below or above the elbow is a great casual look, but make sure that you won't need to roll them back down, since wrinkling is inevitable. If you throw on a sweater, make sure it's a V-neck that's low enough that you can still unbutton the second button of the shirt—otherwise it can look fussy.

- **Dress it up.** All that crisp white cotton is a great blank canvas for accessories, but that doesn't mean you should pile them on. Stick to one piece, like a state-



White shirts look best when the cut is simple, unadorned, and a little masculine.

ment necklace or a great cuff.

- **Handle with care.** You should launder white shirts, but don't dry-clean them—the chemicals can cause yellowing. The gentlest treatment is to wash them at home in cold water and hang them to dry; you can always have them professionally pressed rather than ironing them yourself. No

matter how careful you are, lotion, fragrances, and perspiration will inevitably lead to discoloration over time. If your white shirt is even the slightest bit dingy, it's time to say good-bye, so when you find one you love, consider buying two.

INTERVIEWS BY KAYLEIGH DONAHUE, KATE SULLIVAN, ELIZABETH ANGELL, AND SARAH VAN BOVEN

Better With Age

It's tempting to roll your eyes at a book about aging by two former models. But since Vivian Diller and Jill Muir-Sukenick are both 56 and also happen to be psychotherapists, we took a second look at *Face It: What Women Really Feel as Their Looks Change* (Hay House).

When did you start thinking about aging? JMS: "One of my first jobs, at age 15, was with the model Beverly Johnson. She said to me, 'From your first booking, you're thinking about your last.' At 15, I was already feeling old."

Is aging harder on beautiful women? VD: "If looks were her currency, that woman will have a harder time." JMS: "We always say that aging is the great equalizer."

Have you had plastic surgery? JMS: "I think about it." VD: "I capped my teeth. It made me feel better, not younger."

What do you tell women who struggle with aging? VD: "There's a mourning period when you let go of your younger identity." JMS: "Women have been trained to look at beauty in a narrow way. We want to help women see themselves at any age and think, I'm beautiful." —DAISY SHAW

