

## Style

## How to match tops to trousers with flair

**T**rousers come in a variety of shapes and lengths these days and the tops I wear with my skinny jeans don't look as good with wide-leg trousers. Can you advise on the best tops to wear with different shapes of trousers?

Great question! (Rubs hands together with glee.) The first rule of thumb here, and apologies if you know this one already, is to wear volume on top with a slimmer silhouette on your lower half, or vice versa.

It's easiest to wear a wide leg, balloon leg or culotte with a fitted or semi-fitted top – statement sleeves optional – but if you like to tuck you can be a little creative with the fit. Vince's beautiful lilac style (£295, net-a-porter.com) will sit neatly (wear with chocolate brown, navy, denim and cream). To keep this looking smart wear the knit with a tailored trouser and a chunky loafer, court shoe or a simple, heeled sandal.

For simple chic in more corporate environments stay classic in a navy or midnight blue sweater such as Theory's fitted version (£175, net-a-porter.com). If you work in a creative industry, a puff-sleeved top from Tibi (£375, printemps.com) keeps the look architectural, especially with a balloon or barrel-leg trouser.

Texture can be the cornerstone of a good outfit. It creates depth and contrast – look at any street styler worth their salt and you will see how they incorporate different textures in each ensemble. I like leather with wools, bouclé with denim, crisp cotton with twills, or sweatshirts with

structured tailoring. Try Ninety Percent + Net Sustain's cropped ribbed bouclé sweater in off white (£175, net-a-porter.com). Don't forget you can wear a cardigan like a jumper – buttoned up and lightly tucked in. If it's very low, wear a fine vest, tee or sheer shirt underneath. Loewe's zingy yellow cardigan radiates springtime (£650, mytheresa.com).

Alternatively, a chic shirt works well and is easy to layer when you don't know what our mercurial weather might do. Nanushka's pink confection (£395, nanushka.com) is very flattering, and great on a small bust. Dries Van Noten has a lovely print shirt that will get you noticed, if you so wish (£430, 24s.com), and Paul Smith always has a good range of shirts with interesting stripes (£225, paulsmith.com).

For skinny, slim-leg and straight-leg trousers or jeans you can stay more relaxed up top. Please note though that the continuing trend for gargantuan tops, knits and blazers can swamp even the tall. You need a larger frame and chunky heels to balance all this out. The optimum word here is slouchy, not tent. If you'd like a loose-fit sweater for the weekend, look no further than Charl Knitwear's Craske style. Based on Norfolk fishermen's knits, it feels wonderfully substantial, cosy and protective (£265, charlknitwear.co.uk).

Another easy and more casual look is an overshirt (which will double up as a jacket for chilly summer evenings) – wear it layered with a long-sleeved tee or thin knit now. Again, they

often come up huge but APC has managed to stay very French and kept theirs nice and neat (£200, matchesfashion.com).

Find yourself a good hoodie or sweatshirt, too. I almost always dip into menswear for these – Acne or Carhartt are solid, though Navygrey's new sweat for women (£110, navygrey.co) might have just changed my mind.

And finally, a note on lengths. It bothers me when a trouser is neither here nor there lengthwise. Half-mast is wrong, bang on the ankle looks frumpy and long should be long and sit just off the floor when your shoe is on. Cropped trouser hems need to finish at the smallest point on your leg. For 7/8ths cuts, there is a flattering point above the ankle showing all of the ankle bones plus a sliver of leg.

For shorter culottes or crops, a midi length below the calf muscle is the right area. Work out your perfect hem lengths. Always buy trousers longer than necessary so you can tailor them to that sweet spot on the leg.



Anna Berkeley

## Ask a stylist



From left: & Daughter + Net Sustain Bonnie wool and cashmere-blend tank, £295; Vince lilac rib-knit, £295 (both net-a-porter.com)

**I want a comfortable wide-leg pant in a soft fabric but with a bit of definition so it doesn't show every lump and bump, to wear with a tank and a cashmere sweater and flats that aren't Uggs... maybe a velvet slipper or flat mule or chic clog?**

I really like Nanushka's bouclé-crêpe wide-leg in cream (£345, nanushka.com). Crêpe is very flattering, reassuringly heavy and skims nicely over any lumps. It comes in elegant vanilla or black, plus an array of prints. The elasticated waist allows for what we in the trade call "ease", so once it's on it sits almost flat and accommodates tummies and bums.

For a tank I would suggest & Daughter + Net Sustain's wool and cashmere-blend tank (£295, net-a-porter.com), which is softly tailored, or, if you meant a woven tank, then look at Vince or Theory. For cashmere, look at Lisa Yang and LouLou Studio or layer this apple green cardigan from Extreme Cashmere (£365, matchesfashion.com), which would look perfect with the vanilla trouser.

You certainly could get a chic clog. I'd recommend Isabel Marant's Thalie leather clogs (£350, net-a-porter.com). It's an easy heel height and the caramel hue goes with virtually everything.

Anna Berkeley is a London-based personal stylist. She has worked in the fashion industry for more than 25 years, previously as a buyer for Selfridges and Prada, and a consultant for Margaret Howell. Every month, she answers readers' questions about fashion and what to wear. Email her at [anna.berkeley@ft.com](mailto:anna.berkeley@ft.com) or message her on Instagram at [@annaberkeleystyling](https://www.instagram.com/annaberkeleystyling)

**Trend** | California is challenging the world's established fashion capitals as exciting new brands emerge in Los Angeles and San Francisco. By *Max Berlinger*

**T**o me, it doesn't feel like a city you decide to move to," the fashion designer Reese Cooper says of Los Angeles. "You just spend enough time there until you realise it's irresponsible to be anywhere else."

Not only does Cooper now call the city home, his eponymous clothing label is also headquartered there. He lives in the city's gritty downtown district and often drives an hour away for weekend hikes with his girlfriend. You can see glimpses of that life in his designs, which are a mix of outdoor gear, streetwear and workwear. Cooper also makes use of his adopted city's robust manufacturing infrastructure, with almost everything he designs made within a 10-mile radius, he says.

Cooper is one of several new designers making a name on the West Coast. There's Josué Thomas of Gallery Dept in West Hollywood, and Eli Russell Linnertz of ERL in Venice Beach. Farther afield, in San Francisco, Evan Kinori designs an eponymous clothing line and recently opened his own store there. The retail scene has been active, too. In 2020 the acclaimed Belgian designer Dries Van Noten opened his first US flagship store in LA, in a large, artful building in West Hollywood. The label Bode opened its second store there – four times the size of its original New York location – in February.

Los Angeles, with its laid-back, unrushed energy, is the perfect host to young, enterprising designers looking to make waves beyond the established fashion capitals. Cooper says that, while in some cities it may be difficult to create connections as a newcomer to the fashion industry, he's found it easy to make inroads in LA. "Once I was here," he says, "it was a few quick introductions to, like, a friend who makes



## Wild about the West

**'In a place where "capital-F fashion" doesn't exist, I can look at clothing with a less trend-driven perspective'**

hoodies. Or you go to the dye house and they're like, 'Oh, we do denim too.' Things spiral quickly."

Gallery Dept's Thomas grew up in Los Angeles, and his work is infused with the city's love of vintage and thrifting. He's taken an artisanal approach, creating upcycled garments that are splattered with paint, sun faded, cut up and reassembled or embellished with patches. Resembling wearable art, they have become part of the uniform of the city's creative class.

"There's a history of manufacturing here," he says, noting that much of his collection is made locally. "There are a lot of resources. I think there's a freedom and good space to develop something." Perhaps because it's where the film industry is based, LA has long drawn dreamers and those hungry for glamour. Thomas says: "You can move to LA and be anybody. That's part of that creative magic."

Up in San Francisco, Kinori has built a company that looks and feels different from what's happening in Los Angeles – or New York or London or Paris, for that matter. It's distinctly American in its workwear silhouettes, modernised through thoughtful fabrications.

"I don't think California has been a literal influence," says Kinori, who is from Connecticut. "But perhaps by living in a place where 'capital-F fashion' doesn't really exist, I'm allowed to look at clothing with a less trend-driven perspective."

That separation makes a difference.



Clockwise from main: designer Reese Cooper in his Los Angeles studio, photographed for the FT by Ryan Young; styles by Josué Thomas's Gallery Dept; Reese Cooper streetwear; San Francisco-based Evan Kinori ULY Inc.

fashion houses have been setting down roots, and a new generation of designers have built their fortunes in the abundant sunshine here, built on more casual styles – John Elliott, Jerry Lorenzo of Fear of God, Mike Amiri of Amiri, Rhuigi Villaseñor of Rhude and Greg Chait of The Elder Statesmen to name just a few.

"There's probably some novelty to making clothing in a city that's more off the grid with regards to the fashion world," says Kinori. "It may be less expected and thus stand out a bit – but that's not why I'm here. It's just helpful not to see what other people are doing all the time and not see trendy ways of dress on the street."

Thomas says that, when he decided to create clothing that was less polished and mass-produced and had a more one-of-a-kind look, he felt that staying in LA would benefit him. "I think subconsciously I thought I shouldn't go to New York or Paris or Milan, because it's so saturated and they have a history of doing things a certain way." Still, Paris came calling anyway – his brand, Gallery Dept, was tapped by the French maison Lanvin for a much-hyped collaboration last year (another collection was launched last month).

California is experiencing certain struggles – with housing prices, a homelessness epidemic and the effects of global warming. But it still has a mystique that continues to draw young, carefree creatives. The way of life, with its warm weather and lush golden hour, is bewitching. "I can't really picture where else I would be," says Cooper. "The place I get my juice from is downstairs from where my outerwear is made. And it's on my walk to the studio. I can just pop in, say what's up to everybody, see how things are going. I don't think I could do that living anywhere else."

## Modern Menswear



**TRUNK**

trunkclothing.com  
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Kinori's clothing and business feel less dictated by the gruelling industry schedule of showing clothes and shipping them to stores many times throughout the year, and more about creating a model that is small yet sustainable and, crucially, works for him.

It should be said that in terms of fashion, California – and Los Angeles in particular – is no backwater. There is a long, well-established history there, dating back to Hollywood costume

designers such as Adrian or Edith Head, who, long before social media, created the most widely seen images of clothing in the world. The Sunset Strip helped to popularise a certain haute hippie and rock-star look, a stark and definitive contrast to New York's more formal fare. Further up the coast, Levi Strauss popularised jeans – arguably America's most important contribution to the fashion lexicon.

Recently, though, more traditional