

Style

Sunglasses – how to find your fit



Anna Berkeley

Ask a stylist

need some new sunglasses and the last few I've bought haven't looked quite right. Can you give me some pointers so I know I'm on the right track?

Ah, sunglasses – better than any cream for concealing tired eyes and to give you that air of film star mystery. I depend on them a lot, having not had a decent night's sleep in about three years. To look your best in sunglasses you should consider your face shape and also the size of your face.

There are two types of people who can ignore the guidelines. Firstly, the fashion followers who just want the newest shape for summer 2022. If this is you, pick up a pair of bug-eyed supersized shades, or select a pink-, green-, orange- or white-framed pair and off you trot into the sunset. There is a veritable rainbow of colours out there: Burberry, Armani, Versace and Loewe all have a pretty range to choose from. I also like Coach's fun Badge Rectangle Sunglasses (£118, uk.coach.com) and Boss's green-lensed Acetate Sunglasses (£175, hugoboss.com).

The second category are those who are blessed with an oval face shape. Considered by stylists to be the “best” shape on account of its elegant, spherical outline, which looks a little like an egg if you scraped all the hair back. The oval does not need to balance anything as the widest point sits in the middle of its cheekbones and is therefore symmetrical with the rest of the face. Those with that shape can literally wear any style of sunglasses, although they look particularly good in a cat eye. This style has been popular since the '50s and with good reason! I



From top: Ray-Ban Oversized Acetate Aviator Sunglasses; Coach Badge Rectangle Sunglasses; Boss Clear Acetate Sunglasses with Green Lenses

adore the ladylike Celine Cat Eye Acetate Sunglasses (£290, libertylondon.com) or add some attitude with stud-edged Valentino tortoiseshell cat-eye sunglasses (£253, harveynichols.com). Alternatively, look at Ace and Tate's brilliant Capri which comes in seven colourways (£110, aceandtate.com)

The only thing to note is that the sunglasses shouldn't stray too far outside the edge of your face and the size should be proportionate to you. Please remember to look in a full-length mirror when choosing sunglasses so you can see the overall scale against your body proportions. Don't let them overwhelm you. One way of testing this is to put the sunglasses on, close your eyes for a

second and then look again. If the sunglasses are the first thing you see, they're too big. It's a little like the old adage, are you wearing them or are they wearing you?

What about everyone else? For square-shaped faces where you have a straight line from forehead to jaw like me and Kate Moss (the only physical similarity, sadly), you need to look for curved shapes and avoid glasses with a flat bottom. Choose an aviator – which are literally everywhere (thanks, Maverick). Saint Laurent's Classic SL 11 aviator never dates (£270, mytheresa.com) or try a softly rounded acetate frame from Ray-Ban (£146, fenwick.co.uk).

For long or oblong faces, where your face is roughly twice as long as it is wide, like Alexa Chung's, opt for a chic oval pair such as Ray-Ban's Oval Flat in Gold & Green Classic (£164, revolve.com) or ones with decorative detailing on the temples (think Sophia Loren, not Dame Edna Everage). I'm taken with Jimmy Choo's jewelled Yellow Transparent Cat-Eye Sunglasses with Swarovski Crystals (£250, jimmychoo.com). The detail works to shorten the length of the face and draws attention across instead.

Round faces are approximately the same length as they are wide, like Kirsten Dunst's. They look amazing in heavy angles which counteract the circular appearance of the face. The hexagonal Esther style from Chloe is super bold (£230, mytheresa.com) or



Actress Grace Kelly in 1956
Bettmann Archive

opt for a wider shape that also works to reduce fullness. Givenchy Black D-frame sunglasses (£229, harveynichols.com) will do the trick. Inverted triangle and heart-shaped faces, like Reese Witherspoon's, where the forehead is much wider than the chin, are best suited by glasses with emphasis on the top of the frame. A half rim, for example, can make the jaw appear wider than it actually is. Try DSquared's DQ0298 style (on sale at £69, linvelles.com) or Le Specs's elegant Navy Mountain High cat-eye acetate sunglasses (£75, net-a-porter.com).

The butterfly shape is especially good on a heart face by angling the frame inward towards the bottom, which helps to soften the angles of the face. I'd recommend Ted Baker's Anniya style (£130, tedbaker.com) or Polo Ralph Lauren's streamlined RA5254 Women's Butterfly Sunglasses (£91, johnlewis.com).

As I mentioned at the beginning, the size of your face matters. If you have a very small face, either look at children's sunglasses or try Ace & Tate which offers three frame sizes. Ray-Ban's Julie and the classic RB4122 come in XXS and the company has some great options in larger sizes too, such as the original Wayfarer. If you get stuck, try the brilliant virtual mirrors at Vision Express, Ray-Ban and Eyeconic. A word of warning though, it's actually quite addictive.

Hopefully these guidelines will aid your quest for the perfect sunglasses. Let me know how you get on.

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It's a little like the old adage, are you wearing them or are they wearing you?

In Oslo, a library for fashion zines

Interview | As fashion migrates ever more online, 22-year-old

Elise By Olsen is preparing to open a research library for the industry's printed ephemera. She tells *Helen Barrett* why

At 22, Elise By Olsen has spent much of her life refusing to be ignored by what she calls the “legitimate” fashion world.

At eight, she started a style and culture blog; at 13, she became one of the world's youngest editors-in-chief when she founded, published and edited Recens, a glossy style magazine for under-18s. (“It was unheard of that young people would take part in the cultural conversation or the fashion industry,” she says.) Later, she launched *Wallet*, a fashion industry journal.

The wunderkind from Oslo has worked as a cultural and branding consultant and at 17 joined a creative residency at Google in Paris at the invitation of Hans Ulrich Obrist, the curator and art critic. Her early magazines were, she says, born of frustration: “People in fashion hold on to their positions, even though they might not be as relevant as they possibly think they are.”

Now, Olsen is embarking on her most ambitious project to date, as founding director of the International Library of Fashion Research. What proclaims to be “the world's most comprehensive repository of specialised fashion research and contemporary fashion publications” is an extraordinary trove of printed ephemera – two tonnes of magazines, lookbooks, show invitations, catalogues and so on, dating from the mid-1970s to the present. Opening in October, it will be free of charge and open to everyone.

Its home will be the former Oslo West railway station (Olsen and her team share the grand, Italianate building with the Nobel Peace Center, among others) and across the courtyard from her collaborators and supporters, the newly opened National Museum of Norway.

Olsen worked closely with Hanne Eide, the museum's curator of fashion and dress, to get the project off the ground. “We have a mutual mission,” says Eide.

Olsen, who is slight with bleached-white hair and delicately tattooed wrists, shows me around the premises, navigating builders and engineers as they bang around. When it is finished, there will be two floors: one for exhibitions, the other for shelving and study.

How would Olsen describe the library? “As a neutral space for fashion discourse – that's my mission,” she says. “The archives will all be on bookshelves. It will look like a physical study room, over there is going to be a large table where you can use the archive on site, printing and scanning facilities . . .”

But there will be no clothes, because the purpose of the library is not to study fashion, but how it is mediated. “We will be extracting the costumes and looking only at processes and methods. No dummies, no mannequins.”

Striding around the bright, white-walled premises in a minimal black ensemble and futuristic turquoise boots

‘There's something about taking over something that's dying as a concept and doing it in a new way’

with high heels, Olsen is startlingly assured. She speaks in rapid-fire paragraphs delivered in fluent English.

A stack of taped cardboard boxes with labels such as “YVES S LAURENT – CHLOE – LANVIN – GIVENCHY” and “BALENCIAGA” holds some of the collection, most of which Olsen was given by Steven Mark Klein, the American cultural theorist and her mentor, who died last year aged 70. What makes Klein's collection worth preserving?

“Because promotional material has always been disposable, and it's been thrown away, and used only for marketing and sales,” says Olsen. “Each of these publications are not necessarily so valuable, but in their totality it's incredibly valuable . . . for students, researchers, entrepreneurs . . . anyone who needs to understand the history of fashion.”

Klein's huge gift was shipped over from his East Broadway apartment in Manhattan to Oslo in 2020, when the project was first conceived. More has been added as word has spread. Olsen shunts aside another neat box: “This is part of a donation that we received from



Elise By Olsen's five favourite things in the library . . . in her words

Visionaire No 18 'Louis Vuitton'
Visionaire really pushed the idea of the fashion magazine. Its issues are highly conceptual artefacts and collectible objects by themselves, like this Louis Vuitton clutch filled with unbound pages.

Martin Margiela press release
The press release is the ultimate fashion communication medium, often with a highly promotional or commercial purpose. Commerciality is what makes fashion, fashion. This Margiela press release from 1997 features an A4 copy paper text and loose C-print images, wrapped in a linen cloth pouch.

Comme des Garçons SHIRT SS 2012
Fashion printed matter, such as lookbooks or catalogues, are often very costly pieces, with the best printing, the best graphic designers, the best photographers. I think these – distributed on store counters to customers for free – are some of the best publications we have in our permanent collection, not because they are economically valuable in themselves, but in their totality.

Balenciaga Men's SS 09 booklet
Ryan McGinley shot Nicolas Ghesquière's Balenciaga 2009 collection. Perfect binding, really high quality print. Steven [Mark Klein] used to be an art book collector and always drew parallels between artist books and fashion publications.

'Rick Owens Furniture' by Michèle Lamy
Our collection includes a wider scope than what is traditionally considered to be “fashion” books. This is a catalogue of a collection of Rick Owens furniture designed by his wife Michèle Lamy.

Clockwise from main: Elise By Olsen, founding director of the International Library of Fashion Research; view of the interior of the Oslo library, which opens in October; the library exterior
Jacqueline Landvik; Magnus Gulliksen



Comme des Garçons: email correspondence, catalogues, lookbooks.”

Olsen and Klein met when Klein spotted coverage about Olsen's self-publishing empire and contacted her via email in 2015. And “from that moment onwards he bombarded me with links – any references to culture, music, art, and it was like 20 links a day.”

Klein had finished with his collection when he gave it to her: “He said, ‘I've completed my research, I'm done with this material and people should be able to access it.’” Olsen visited him regularly in New York and feels his absence as the library nears its opening date. “I was his student and he was my teacher and it was a monologue. I was taking notes and really listening to him. I had such respect for him.”

Now, Olsen is focused on continuing his work. As part of the library's partnership with the museum, there will be exhibitions, editorial work, a symposium and collaborations with leading fashion schools including Central Saint Martins in London and the Parsons School of Design in New York.

Her generation is often assumed to disregard print. Olsen clearly loves it, but why? “It's bold. It's on the newsstand and not to be ignored. It is more legitimate and it is this antidote to the media cycle online.”

Could she be doing Anna Wintour's job in 15 years' time?

“Ummm . . .” There is an uncharacteristic pause before her answer arrives. “So I don't believe in monthly magazines. We need to slow down. It's not sustainable to print 500,000 copies of one issue every month and send it out to global distribution and so on. Magazines need to be completely transformed.”

“But commercial publishing is interesting. It's decreasing in sales and in reach and influence – and that means it can have an amazing revival.”

Then she adds: “But there's definitely something about taking over something that's dying as a concept and doing it in a new way, for a new audience.”

“Such as a library.”

The International Library of Fashion Research opens in Oslo in October