

FASHION & STYLE

BY GREG CHAPMAN

HOW TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN A PROFESSIONAL LIFETIME WARDROBE FOR MEN

Your clothing is a projection of who you are, what you do, and how well you do it. It tells people your degree of success in your field.

The way we speak, our vocabulary, the way we present ourselves, the things we choose to talk about, and the way we dress, all reveal where we rank in the social hierarchy. Here's the good news: We can change how we're perceived and received almost overnight, by changing the first thing people see—our clothes.

The thing that takes wardrobes to a new level more than anything else, believe it or not, is...the way clothes fit. A model in a cheap suit can look better than an odd-size person in a very expensive suit that doesn't fit. Most suits look better on the hanger than on the people who purchase them.

The right wardrobe can change your life. We see countless examples of our clothing making a huge difference. One relatively new client of mine raises private capital for wealth management. He went from raising \$20 million his first year to \$25 million his second year, and from \$30 million the year he met us to \$310 million the year he began to wear our clothing. He maintains that from the first day there was a dramatic difference in the way he was received. People made decisions within hours or days, rather than taking



six months to "think about it."

Most people, particularly men, tend to buy new clothes only under pressure. Typically they will buy two or three suits at the same time and continue wearing them until they get worn out from dry cleaning. They then go out and buy three replacements suits and repeat the process.

Over a 40-year career, they end up spending about \$60,000 on suits but never have more than three to wear at any given time. If they were to spend three to five years building a "core wardrobe" of classic, well-made, properly-fitting suits, they would have an investment wardrobe that would serve them well throughout their career.

According to the Wool Bureau, good quality pure wool has a memory and it takes four to six weeks for a suit to recover. So, if one has enough clothing to wear

something no more than once a month (20 to 30 changes), a suit will never wear out, theoretically, because it will not have to be dry cleaned, which is what kills the suit. But there's another element that we haven't discussed. Ninety-five percent of today's clothing is put together quickly and inexpensively through a process known as "fusing." Forty years ago suits were made with a canvas interlining (called a hymo canvas). Varying degrees of handwork would make for a good suit with a hymo,



TRICKS FOR ELEGANT MEN TO BE SUPER DRESSERS

It is usually the people who march to their own beat, caring little about following the crowd, who eventually end up leading the pack! "Dressing" in today's "fashion" might be considered following the herd, while being "out of step", might be the mark of someone who thinks independently, likes what he or she likes, and the heck with what's popular at the moment. Some of these "tricks" cost almost no money, yet call attention to you and your sense of "flair", thereby causing people to take notice of you as someone worth watching, often the first step to a sale, a promotion and more. People respond to the unusual. Consider the following:

1. WEAR A POCKET HANDKERCHIEF IN YOUR COAT.
2. HAVE A MONOGRAM ON YOUR SHIRT.
3. CONSIDER A TRADEMARK SHIRT COLLAR STYLE: WIDESPREAD, OR WITH A TIE BAR, OR A SNAP TAB; SOMETHING THAT CAUSES NOTICE.
4. HAVE MATCHING BELT/SHOE SETS AND EVEN A MATCHING BRIEFCASE OR LADIES, A PURSE.
5. WEAR FRENCH CUFF SHIRTS WITH CUFF LINKS; CONSIDER MONOGRAMED CUFF LINKS, CONSIDER A SILK SHIRT.
6. WEAR AN EXPENSIVE, OR UNUSUAL WATCH, AND PERHAPS A RING.
7. ADOPT A TRADEMARK SUIT STYLE THAT BECOMES YOUR SIGNATURE STYLE; DOUBLE BREASTED IS THE MOST POWERFUL STATEMENT OF ELEGANCE. CONSIDER "FEATURES" LIKE 3 SLANT FLAP POCKETS.
8. SELECT GLASS FRAMES THAT COMPLIMENT YOUR HAIR COLOR AND CLOTHING COLORS MOST OFTEN WORN. CONSIDER 2 OR 3 PAIR.
9. STAND OUT. WEAR A VEST; IT ALMOST ALWAYS MEANS THAT YOUR SUIT WAS CUSTOM MADE.
10. CONSIDER WHITE COLLARS AND CUFFS FOR YOUR DRESS SHIRTS.
11. CONSIDER YOUR PATTERN COMBINATIONS; SOLID SUIT, SOLID SHIRT, SOLID TIE IS ELEGANT. ALL STRIPES, CAN PROJECT POWER. ALL WINDOWPANE, WITH TATTERSALL SHIRT AND "NEAT" GEOMETRIC TIE, SAY'S "FASHIONABLE".
12. THE ULTIMATE STEP IN SUPER DRESSING IS TO HAVE YOUR CLOTHING CUSTOM MADE, FOR THE PERFECT FIT AND THE POLISHED LOOK OF SUCCESS.

Articles By Greg

ON greg chapman STYLE

I love to dress casually, but like my mother said, "Greg, there's a time and a place for everything!" This casual wear phenomenon has reduced some of us, (and elevated others) all to "lookalikes!" It has brought with it a change from the way the world has operated since its beginning where what we wear has told others who we are and what they can expect from each of us. It's confusing not to be able to tell the CEO of a company from the newly hired file clerk. Our clothing is our uniform, and just as in the military, our clothes remove confusion and tell us what people do and the level of respect that they are to be accorded according to their accomplishments. CEOs are Generals, file clerks are privates!

Like it or not, we can generally tell what someone has done with their life to date. We get an indication of what they are likely to do for us today and in the future by the look of their past success. This is, in a large part, evidenced by their clothing. Experienced people can pick a winner from across the street. "Generals see the difference in people more than the privates. That's how they became generals. If we understand how to use clothing and our image to speed our way to people's confidence, we can increase our wealth.

Like the military, there is a pecking order in the civilian world. Some of us simply produce more for society than others. And, the level of respect and opportunities accorded us for our efforts is really what we're all working for.

The clothes we wear suggest the pride we have in ourselves. Europeans have

pride in their clothes, we have it in the cars that we drive. Most people don't like to park their "loaner" car in public when their Mercedes is in the shop. They'll often mutter an explanation. Yet we'll wear \$50 worth of clothes, the same clothes that a workman wears, while we bill our clients hundreds of dollars per hour. It seems odd! Has the dot.com era totally robbed us of our desire to look our most successful best? The dot.com kids who are changing the rules are bright, but are they wise?

There's A Time and A Place for Everything

And now, are those who have done well losing their advantage by dressing in their khakis like the support team workers.

Is the decision to go "everyday casual" as are some firms, a function of a good economy? Is it likely that if we have a downturn, firms may have to compete harder for new clients, and may start to dress again? Probably.

For the time being, business goes on, but does it go on at the same level? Is there some loss in productivity? How about the Gross National Product the sum total of all money earned in the country in a year? Is there ever a postponed appointment because we're not dressed for the occasion? Sure, we'll eventually get the business next week. But if we had that appointment today, we might have taken care of another money earning opportunity at that time.

Is there ever a missed sale for lack of confidence? You bet there is. Lot's of them. And how about referrals. Does someone ever hold back giving a lead, just not being sure that the casually dressed business person may not be received as well by the prospective CEO client?

It's not that the "Generals" of our civilian society should never dress casually. There is a time and a place for everything. Is the office, where business is done and fees are charged, the place to wear the clothes that one wears when boating? "Dressing down" is one thing. Dressing to the bottom rung of the ladder is the issue here.

Offices are stating that they have gone "business casual"! A sport jacket and slacks is "business casual." Cotton pants are "weekend casual"! A pair of wool gabardine or tropical worsted slacks "fall" like a suit trouser. It signifies an expense level and a taste level that doesn't come with cotton. Cotton wrinkles. It doesn't "fall". Cotton says, "I'm relaxed" I'm not working today. Not "thinking" — just enjoying life in my cotton khaki slacks, my short sleeved shirt and my Sperry topsider rubber soled boating shoes.

greg chapman

ON STYLE

Is this what I expect from my \$300 per hour attorney, or the guy who manages my money? Not me, thank you. Relax on the boat on the weekend. During the week, look like you're working, or I'll give my business to someone who may not spend more time on the golf course than in his or her office.

Here is how the "casual" trend should result in one's line of thinking: "When I'm doing business other than in a suit, I want to look as successful as I can. I'll wear expensive casual clothes. Since I don't wear a suit five days a week anymore, I can afford to wear expensive casual clothes and better suits when I wear them. I might even consider having my suits custom made, so I can look completely successful. If I'm going to wear a suit, I want to look as good in that suit as I possibly can."

Americans are by no means on the world's "best-dressed" list. What is it with us, the richest people in the

world? Where is our sense of pride and dignity? Is it really old fashioned to want to dress nicely and to make a "special occasion" of eating out at a nice restaurant? Do I want to sit behind white linen table cloths, crystal glasses in an ambiance that is formal and elegant and then see the guy sitting at the next table in his "boating" clothes? Do I want to be the guy in that restaurant in my boating clothes?

The woolen industry has figured out how to produce yarn from sheephair that is 150 to 180 strands to the inch and sells for \$400 per yard. It's the most luxurious thing that can touch your skin. Why do Silicon Valley's young millionaires want to wear the same cotton slacks that their gardener wears? Does anyone find this fad to be odd? Is it...

Lack of awareness?

Lack of exposure?

Lack of good taste?

Lack of good judgment?

Or, all of the above!

It's like striking it rich and going out to dinner at the finest restaurant and insisting that you really prefer the cheapest wine. The one you'd buy in

the drug store for \$3.99 per bottle! Then going out to get into your Hyundai, insisting that you prefer the features of getting around town in this small car to your Mercedes or Rolls Royce. First I left my Ferrari home on Friday's, driving my Hyundai one day a week. Now, I prefer to drive my Hyundai every day. Whoopee!


Today's role model tycoons, who have decided to be non-conformist, set a standard that everyone wanted to aspire to.

But, they can afford it. It doesn't mean that they are supposed to pull down the entire image of the country.

So the choice is, a. shall we all look alike, or b. shall we exercise our individuality? Do we choose to conform or not? Now, it's the conformist who chooses to dress casually. The most successful people are often contrarians in their thinking. Maybe it's time that we turn the tide of casual "look-alike" dressing and begin, once again, to express our success through dressing with taste and the look of success.

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As a professional lecturer, and merchant tailor, Greg Chapman has traveled the country, making speeches and measuring up thousands of clients for custom clothing. He has had the opportunity for over 30 years, to watch the incredible part that clothing has played in the success of many of his clients' careers. He is convinced that tasteful, flawlessly fitting clothing — whether a business suit or causal outfit — and properly accessorized, is the basis that can propel anyone's career to a higher status.



GREG CHAPMAN'S
EXECUTIVE TAILORED CLOTHES

**THE TWELVE MOST COMMON MISTAKES MEN MAKE WHEN
BUYING THEIR CLOTHING**

1. POSTPONING PURCHASES UNTIL SATISFIED WITH THEIR WEIGHT.

The single biggest mistake that people make is to delay their purchase of clothing waiting to lose weight. Clothing can be taken in and made smaller when and if you lose weight. It can't always be let out. The cost of taking in the circumference of a jacket and taking in the waist and seat of the pants is nominal. People postpone new purchases for years for a weight loss event that may never happen! They look "shabby" to save a theoretical \$100 in future alteration costs. Proper fit of clothing is not even about "size" as much as the far more important issue of how it fits their "structure". A suit that fits one's structure but is too big or small, looks better than a suit that doesn't fit one's structure, but is the right "size". The greatest incentive to lose weight, is knowing that new clothing is arriving on a schedule regardless of weight. "Waiting" for new clothes until you lose weight results in frustration, and looking not only overweight, but not well dressed. Clothes worn too tight, make you look more overweight. One's willingness to buy new clothing at whatever weight may result in a wardrobe of two or three sizes which keeps one well dressed while their weight is bouncing around. The result is that that person will look and feel good and ultimately probably seek and attain their best size and can then adjust some of their clothes to their new "permanent" size.

2. TRYING TO GET "MILEAGE" OUT OF EXISTING SHIRTS AND TIES.

The better the match of a specific shirt and tie combination to a specific suit, the less likely it will work well with everything in one's wardrobe. In selecting the perfect tie from hundreds of ties, looking for precisely the right colors to accent the suit and often a shirt, it's rare to find a tie that makes just the right statement, and at the same time goes with several other outfits. Order or buy at least two "dedicated" shirts and ties as part of the outfit as though they are only intended for that outfit. Then, have a half dozen to a dozen "basic" shirts white, blues, ivories, etc. that work with a number of outfits.

3. BELIEVING THE STORE HAS YOUR BEST INTERESTS IN MIND.

One must realize that stores are not in the business of making you look good, as much as to sell merchandise and to get rid of their inventory. Commission bonuses are adjusted daily to move merchandise that is due for payment. The salespeople will recommend whatever they make the highest commission selling! In terms of expecting them to give you a good fit, you must realize that a salesman or tailor who recommends too many expensive alterations will lose his job.

quickly. Alterations are expensive and can take all of the profit out of a suit sale. A well prepared customer should understand his or her own physique and instruct the store what they expect in "fit", before the sale is agreed to. Stores, left to their own devices will do as little as possible.

4. LACK OF AWARENESS OF ONE'S OWN PHYSIQUE; AND HAVING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR PARTICULAR "FIT" CHALLENGES

A man invests more money in clothes with less information than in any other investment that he makes. It starts with knowing your own body and taking charge in the fitting room letting them know what you expect if the sale is to be complete. If you stand with erect posture and realize that your arms swing backward and the sleeves need rotating, tell the salesman and the tailor in advance. Be aware of your tendencies and negotiate for adjustments as a condition of the sale. One reaches a point where their increase in knowledge and their desire to look as good as possible, leads them to conclude that they may be better off having their clothing made.

5. LACK OF GOOD JUDGMENT AND LOST OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NAME OF COMFORT BY DRESSING "BUSINESS CASUAL"

Many men have no idea of what separates clothes for gardening from clothes to see clients. They literally are wearing the same pants for business as their gardeners are wearing to take care of their yard. Basic rules include; Cotton slacks for weekends, wool slacks for weekday business. Knit golf shirts for weekends, woven long sleeve shirts for business. Shoes; rubber soles for weekends, leather for business. A jacket of some sort, has been a staple of any business outfit. Casual shirt/slack combinations should be selected in terms of color and pattern with a basic jacket in mind. This way, any day that starts out in slacks and a shirt, can be pulled together by a specific dedicated jacket that was pre-planned to go with a number of combinations. Days that may have a new short notice initial appointment, should start with a shirt to which a tie can be added, along with the jacket to make a legitimate business casual sport outfit for an important new appointment.

6. A LACK OF AWARENESS OVER HOW TO USE THEIR IMAGE TO ENHANCE THEIR RESULTS.

The "uniforms" that we wear either attract or put off the people whom we're seeking as our clients, friends or more personal relationships. If you project an image of "class", and wear the "uniform" that is appropriate to any given encounter, it increases your results, and particularly the doors that others will open for you to their friends and associates! These "rules" are in place. People ignore them; Golf shirt, means for Golf. Black tie, means formal occasions. Break the rules and you're singling yourself out as being too cheap or lacking basic judgment. Setting one's "personal style" doesn't necessarily mean suits, but it should project good taste. A pride of dressing well and projecting an image of good taste and success will enhance someone's career, along with their hard work, higher education, etc

7. GIVING ONE'S ALLEGIANCE TO A STORE, DESIGNER NAME OR PERSONAL SHOPPER WITHOUT HOLDING THEM ACCOUNTABLE.

90% of the people we meet or talk with are "happy" with their clothing and the source they turn to. They are satisfied far too easily. Most of them look terrible in their clothing and all of them could have stood a major makeover. The fit of clothing is not subjective. There are accepted rules for the fit of a jacket or slacks and 95% of it is ignored by vendors with lack of ability or too

strong a profit motive. I witnessed a well known newscaster and movie critic purchasing expensive suits in a major department store and was horrified of what the fitter overlooked in the altering of those \$4,000 suits!

8. LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF ONE'S BEST COLORS, CUT, PERSONAL STYLE.

While many men have hardly give a moments thought to what they like or look good in, many other successful men have carefully studied their own physique, colors, etc. They subscribe to fashion magazines, clip ads for a wish list, read books and generally develop a sense of their own personal image. A blue eyed blond Scandinavian is going to look better in suits, shirts and ties of different colors and cuts than those that would look best on a brown eyed olive skinned Italian!

Nothing. Yet, they are often both sold the same suit, jacket, shirts, off the rack. Clothing should be personalized to the individual's coloring, but also for their "personality type", as well as their profession. And, the fit is still the most important factor.

9. LOSING TRACK OF TIME; DEFERRING MAINTENANCE, WEARING OUT THEIR CLOTHES UNTIL NEED FOR REPLACEMENT. THEY BUY CLOTHES AS AN "EVENT" AS OPPOSED TO A "PROCESS"!

Men are notorious for postponing the purchase of clothing year after year. They are uncomfortable with the process of purchasing clothes and don't consider it a cost of doing business like maintaining a well appointed office, cars, productive office staff and other assets that contribute to their success. Every 2 or 3 years they buy two or three suits and wear those new clothes 80% of the time and the previous 3 suits from 2 years ago, 20% of the time. They "store" additional worn out clothes in the back of their closet. Every other year for 40 years, 20 cycles of \$5,000 each, (\$100,000) is spent and the new purchases are essentially "replacing" worn out clothes from the previous purchase or the purchase prior to the last. There were too few clothes being worn and dry cleaned too frequently, causing the suits to be temporary. With a purchase of better made clothes, and more clothing to be rotated between wearings, the money spent could have been a permanent investment, with dozens and dozens of classic outfits that could have been accumulated. One should set a schedule of additions and fund it with a dedicated account that accumulates every 3, 4, 6 or 12 months; resulting in a purchase.

10. BUYING "QUANTITY" IN FAVOR OF "QUALITY".

The true cost of something is what you spend, by how many times you wear it. In other words, How well and for how long does it serve you? Does it do the job you paid for it to do? When someone meets you, all they see is what is in front of them; not the other clothes in your closet.

Putting your our best foot forward, always will serve you better. You must invest in the proper "uniform", and the difference in the fit, and the quality of construction is most of what sets you apart from someone else of much lesser means that might buy the same suit. With a few tricks of mixing and matching solid fabrics to double as suits or blazers, you can have more "outfits" without having to compromise with ill fitting, poorly made glued together suits that are more of a liability than if you don't wear a suit at all.

11. GETTING BY ON TOO FEW CLOTHES.

Most men think they have plenty of suits when they hit from 5 to 10 suits in their wardrobe.

Clothes that are worn too frequently, require cleaning to get the wrinkles out which limits the life of the clothes. Over a 40 year career, most men buy clothes every 2 to 4 years, essentially

replacing clothes that they've worn and cleaned too often. If a man keeps adding to his wardrobe building on what he has, rather than waiting until his wardrobe needs replacing, assuming the clothes are well made and fit him, he'll eventually have a permanent investment in a large lifelong wardrobe. Most clothes aren't made the way they were for centuries, with a hieno canvas interlining inside and days of hand stitching. That centuries old process gave way to "fusing", a gluing process, which makes for a cheaper look and for not much longevity. Building a wardrobe of better made clothing that can be eventually rotated allowing 4 to 6 weeks between wearings, allows clothing to recover naturally, and to last forever; without being worn and dry cleaned to death. This philosophy is at the heart of our Wardrobe Plan Program.

12. DEPENDING ON THEIR WIVES FOR HELP AND ADVICE: (Sorry ladies!)

Many well intentioned wives rarely see the inside of a boardroom or understand the concept of the "Suit as a Uniform" of business. They are often more interested in dressing their husbands for "fashion", in suits of a different cut, style and fit and colors, than what best serves a man on the battlefield of business. Sort of like seeking out a trusted adviser in the wrong area. When it comes to men depending on their wives to tell them what to wear, wives really want their husbands to make the decision, then ask what they think, rather than to put the entire burden on them from the start. As a point of interest, many men select their clothes without their wives help or opinions without their wives present, as well as in the presence of their wives. They've learned to trust their own instincts and in the process have become sensitive to what cuts, styles and colors they look and feel best wearing.



A HISTORY OF CUSTOM TAILORING AND THE
COMPROMISE OF
READY-TO-WEAR, OFF THE RACK CLOTHING
by Greg Chapman

No. 2504-



A Few Dollars

will enable you to dress as well as any man. Our ready-made clothing is very fit as good, strong and stylish as tailor-made clothing that costs six times as much. It wears well and keeps its shape. We will guarantee to keep you well dressed for comparatively few dollars a year, and it will pay you as well as us. It will pay you immensely just now.

No. 1319.



Your Clothing

is the first thing that another person sees. He doesn't carefully note your coat and trousers, but he takes in the general effect and judges you accordingly. If the clothes are bought here the effect is stylish. You may be able to obtain the same appearance some place else, but you're not always sure of it. Here you ARE sure.

(Ads from The Clothing Book by Charles Austin Bates 1898)

Ready-to-wear clothing brings with it a huge compromise in every respect; proper fit, quality and service! Compared to fine custom tailoring, you might consider fine dining compared to fast food. Society answers people's demands for either a rich product and satisfying experience or a compromise, at a cheap price. As time goes on, and less people have experienced the original "higher road", they're unaware that they've given up anything. Imagine, someone who has only experienced the empty calories and the quick grab it and run approach to dining, rather than being attended to in the finest restaurant while enjoying the culinary delights of a fine professionally trained chef!

Never intended to appeal to "Gentlemen" or "Ladies" with tailors, but rather to provide inexpensive office wear for office support staff, (at 1/8th to 1/6th the price) the ready to wear industry expanded as manufacturers and retailers downplayed the compromise of fit and quality while focusing on the lower price and the "convenience" of immediate delivery.

As time went on and costs of advertising and store rents were factored in, along with the cost of overstocked unsold merchandise, the gap in price began to close. As stores grew and costs such as medical insurance, workman's compensation, retirement plans all became a factor, the need for larger profit margins closed the gap further. Traditional "keystone" (doubling) markups began to head to 2.5 and 3 times costs, at retail alone!

When "wholesalers" found a career opportunity wedged between manufacturers and retailers, their job to call on store buyers, suddenly now three levels of business needed to make a profit (manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers) totaling 900% of the actual cost of materials and manufacturing. A \$200 product would start on the rack, before mark downs for \$1800! As profit margins pushed prices higher, alternative less expensive compromised approaches to manufacturing became necessary. The centuries old traditional canvas interlining, requiring several days of handstitching, which was part of every suit ever made throughout eternity through the 1960's, finally began being replaced, first on the lowest end of the price scale, and eventually 95% of all suits, with a heat transfer method of gluing a backing to the cloth; called fusing; a process which takes minutes rather than days and produces a "suit without substance", adequate for a time, but not destined for long term serviceability or a look of importance to the wearer.

As retailers began demanding manufacturers to take back unsold merchandise and to adjust prices retroactively to allow the retailers to maintain their own guaranteed profit margins, quality went further downhill while manufacturer's traditionally lower profit margins had to be raised to absorb the "participation" in the partnership in the success or failure of the sale of any given style or product.

Inexperienced, inexpensive help in stores gave end users little of the depth of knowledge or personal relationship they had enjoyed with the tailors who had often served two or three generations of their families. While personal tailors had often frequently visited their clients in their homes or offices, department stores and specialty stores trained their customers to make repeated trips to the store to purchase, alter and pick up completed merchandise in a relative serve-yourself manner, compared to the good old days of personal service.

Manufacturers and large chain stores and advertising agencies recognized the human need for prestige by association, so began making "stars" of designers, which meant paying large royalties, further increasing the profit margins. Designers would design and produce beautiful well made merchandise, (albeit for an "average" body), and with high labor costs, proper handwork, canvas interlinings and top quality fabrics, the prices, after 3 distribution levels of profit would exceed the price, of a comparable suit made by the finest tailor, with the advantage of proper fit and personal service: a far cry from the original 1/6th to 1/8th the initial cost of ready-to-wear!

With one's reputation in place as a designer, secondary lines of lesser made clothes would be directed to the mass market of unsuspecting buyers who had little understanding that the clothes they were buying had little in common with the top of the line garments which had made that designer's reputation. These "lesser" fused, inexpensively made lines, (Polo for Ralph Lauren,

Mani for Giorgio Armani, etc.) produce 95% of the profits for designers and stores while the top of the line 5% supports and re-inforces their reputations!

Meanwhile, tailors unable to compete began to close up shop or those who remained were forced to eliminate their apprenticeship and began using standard block patterns to produce a quicker, faster moving less labor intensive approach to making "semi-custom, or made-to-measure suits, usually made in a factory, cut 20 at a time stacked on tables by size, (size 40, 42, 44, etc.) while "alterations" are incorporated for sleeve length, waist size, etc. to "personalize" the suit while being made.

Tailors weren't about to tell customers of the compromised short cut approach, so those customers, assumed their clothes were custom made because they were being measured (8 to 10 measurements, only) and because they were selecting fabrics from a swatch book and styles from sketches. Due to their lack of experience they have been slow to recognize the compromise in custom tailoring as compared to the old time, legitimate pattern-making tailors who have progressively died off, giving way to a lesser approach.

Pattern making tailoring has been almost entirely replaced with the semi-custom standard pattern approach in the western world, the USA, Canada, England, Italy and Europe! Because mass produced clothing (and standard "block patterns" were slow to make their way to the Orient, tailors from India, China, Hong Kong, trained during occupation by the British, still produce clothing made to each individual client's shape and distribution. However, their level of "discrimination" of proper fit often leaves a great deal to be desired, but most importantly, their access to proper components, their lack of sophisticated technique of the actual making of the garment, and the demands to produce fast piece work at low prices to address local merchant tailors and the end buyers desire to buy at cheap prices, makes for a suit that potentially fits well, but one that may look reasonably decent in quality, only until it's been dry cleaned a few times..

So, the choice becomes either a compromised ill fitting semi-custom fit of decently made quality in the western world, or a potentially superior fit, at the risk of lack of quality workmanship in the Orient.

Interesting, custom clothing, (rather, semi-custom clothing) is enjoying a level of attention and is becoming a fast growing segment in the market, mostly because retailers are looking for ways to increase sales without increasing their inventory costs! When sales were brisk, they weren't about to be bothered with the more labor intensive, time consuming aspects of measuring, fitting, writing orders, submitting orders to factories or workshops, notifying clients of fittings or completed merchandise. Having been spoiled by putting a garment in a bag and swiping a charge card, they haven't been concerned with the compromise of fit but now for their own survival and profit, many are seeing some of the advantages of "custom clothing" in one form or another and how they can put it to use for their own purposes.

An understanding of one's own body will serve one well to play an active part in the outcome of the completed garment, rather than being at the mercy of the provider of any clothing which is being purchased: off-the-rack, or semi-custom.

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or a cheap suit, with a hymo front.

The typical "break point" in the stores where fused suits stop and canvas hymo front suits start, is from \$1800 to \$2000. For a little more you can have a custom made suit that will still look good 25 years later.

The key to building a wardrobe is to view the process of being well dressed as just that—a process. By adding new clothing to your wardrobe at periodic intervals you begin to put "time" to work for you, much like putting money away for your children's college, or funding your retirement program.

Thirty years ago I devised the Wardrobe Plan Program. Many hundreds of my clients have built amazing wardrobes with this simple concept. "Time," which is usually the enemy, racing forward, making things obsolete or worn out, suddenly becomes the key to force-feeding your wardrobe with regular additions arriving on a schedule. Whether you call on us to make your clothes, or you set up a dedicated account funding it with so much each month, you'll see a miracle happen.

Start with solid fabrics that can be broken up and worn as separates. There are many advantages to buying custom-made clothes, one of which is that you can purchase a navy blazer and the slacks of the same fabric, which allows you to wear it as both a blazer and a suit. Add tan, grey and charcoal slacks and you've got four outfits revolving around one jacket. The next item for your wardrobe might be a suit that could mix and match with the blazer and navy solid slacks; it might be a grey and blue muted plaid, a houndstooth or tweed, or a textured fabric that could be worn as a jacket with the navy slacks, or as slacks with the navy



blazer. If the accent colors in the plaid or houndstooth permit, you might wear it with the grey, charcoal, and/or tan slacks as well.

Now with the two suits and two or three extra slacks, you have seven or eight different outfits, which are already getting you through nearly two weeks without repeating the same outfit. By taking the strain off the same pants worn every week, you're allowing them to "recover" with the wrinkles falling out without cleaning. Now, by adding another outfit in three or four months, you might even get another mix and match outfit out of the navy blazer suit. Perhaps those medium-grey solid slacks had a matching jacket that could look as good with the navy slacks, as it does as with a medium-grey suit. Depending on your best colors, the same concept can revolve around a black blazer suit, or dark brown, deep olive, tan solid, taupe, teal, royal navy, rust, or

virtually any color. Start with the family of colors that accent your hair color or your eyes. That's a great start. Then build on it. The efficiency of staying within limited colors to start will allow you to wear the same six to 12 shirts with virtually every outfit. Fewer shoes, belts, and ties all can offset the expense of buying more expensive, better made, even custom-made clothing. As styles change, since the fabrics are ageless, you might do a little re-styling, and well-made clothes, particularly custom, can be let out from three to five inches, when all the seams and darts are opened; this can extend the life of a good suit an extra ten years, if you change weight, or consider styles that require changing the "silhouette" of the suit.

Classic, well-made clothing, made of high-quality fabrics, can serve you well for 20 to 30 years, looking like clothes that you just purchased. View your clothing budget as a PR and advertising expense. You are your business. You might leave your car around the block, but your clothes go with you into every encounter and should be your first consideration. ■



Greg Chapman, Owner of Greg Chapman's Executive Tailored Clothes in Beverly Hills California, serves a who's who clientele of CEO's, professional athletes, entertainers, politicians, and entrepreneurs. His clients order perfect-fitting clothing from swatch sheets or by e-mail from across the country. Many of his clients attribute a large part of their astounding success to the image they acquired from their custom wardrobe.