

TPIS-BLUEPR-Menswear-Proportions

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Gentlemen, Antonio here. Okay. Today, we're going to talk about proportions in men's wear.

Now, I think the best way to emphasize and to get the point across is to show you examples of bad proportions and what they can do, because proportion is relative size and balance. What happens when we violate this? Well, let's look at a large man. Let's look at Andre the Giant.

If you ever saw Andre the Giant from a distance, even though he had a large head in proportion to his body, his head seemed small. His hands. His feet. His eyes. They all seemed small in proportion to the rest of his body. What this did, it gave him an oafish type of look.

Let's look at the complete opposite. Let's look at a small man. Let's look at that gentleman that plays Tyrion Lannister – I just killed the name – I actually do like Game of Thrones. But when you look at this gentleman, what do we see? We see a head that is large in proportion to the rest of his body. We see hands and feet that are actually large in proportion to the rest of his body. We actually see eyes which are large. What do we get? We get a very cute look.

Those are extreme examples. However, children. Why do we consider children cute? Why do we look at cartoon characters, especially modern day cartoon characters – look at Disney Princesses; I've got three daughters, so I do see them quite a bit – they've got large eyes. They've got larger heads. All of this is to give a cute look.

I don't want you to have a cute look. I don't want you to have an oafish look, unless that's what you're aiming for. Guys, I want you to be able to control the proportions, and to be able to offset that so that you don't come off as oafish, you don't come off as cute, unless you want to, okay?

The goal of a well-proportioned clothing is to create balance in the overall perception of the body. I'm going to talk about four areas that we can zero in on. But remember, it's going to be fit of your clothing, and it's going to be choosing the right fabric. Certain fabrics, especially if you're going for a more streamline look – you're going to want to go with lighter fabrics with less texture.

This fabric right here if you look at it, it's more of a denim. It's a heavier-weight fabric. This is not as streamlined as a very finely woven cotton or a lightweight cotton that could be worn on a dress shirt.

Little things like that are going to play into this. But let's talk about the particular example of shoulders.

If you are a large or you're a small man, you want to be careful of shoulders that in a sense are going to be building out and are going to make your head look larger. If you're a small man, you want to be careful of shoulders that are too close. They're going to bring it all in. All that's going to do is overemphasize your head.

But if you're a larger man, you're going to want to possibly – especially if you're large and you're tall – you don't want to wear something that stands out too much and makes you look like one of my boards or whatever here, but what you do want is you want to have something that actually balances the head. That's the thing. If you're a large man and you've got a small head, you want to make sure that you don't have shoulders that are making that head look smaller.

If you're a small man with a large head, you want to make sure that maybe you have the shoulders – you've got them just built out a tad. This is a very small amount, but you're going to want to maybe avoid the natural shoulders that would make your head look even larger.

The proper build of shoulders on a jacket – very important for the proportions and what kind of message you're looking to send.

Let's talk about shirt collars.

Shirt collars – and this is one that applies to almost all types of men – is really depending on what type of face shape you have. If you've a very rounded face, you want to be careful of the rounded type of collars. You're going to want to go something that's going to maybe lengthen them a bit. You're going to want to go for the down-pointed collars. You're not going to want to go for the spread collars.

On a lot of my shirts, you may see a spread collar, and that's where the collar's going to go out at an angle like this. Be careful of those, because they actually bring out the face ups. But if you've got a narrow face, you've got a long face, a spread can work well.

If you've got a medium – you don't really have a face that is really round or really narrow – you can wear a wide range of collars, but understand that rounded collars are going to make you look soft, that pointed collars are going to add a bit more of a jagged edge. Again, we're looking for balance in the proportion here.

Also, the size of the collar. The size of the collar is often measured not just by the back height and if you were to flip up the collar, but also from how the collar point length is. If you are a larger man, consider custom shirts simply so that they can make the collars larger.

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If you are a very small man, be careful of buying off the rack, especially shirts from companies that don't specialize in working with small men. Oftentimes, they're going to try to use the same collars that they would in a larger shirt. The proportions are going to be off.

We talked about shirt collars. Let's also talk about cuffs.

You want to make sure on the cuffs of your shirt. I've seen this with really small men. If they get a shirt that has too large of a cuff – you don't want to go for the double-length cuff. You don't want to go for oversized French cuffs. All that is going to make your hands look smaller.

Be careful also if you're a larger man. You don't want that really small cuff. It's going to make you look big and oafish.

We've also talked about cuffs on trousers as well. Let's go down. Let's look at our trousers.

If you are a larger man, you're going to want to go for a little bit larger cuff. If you are a shorter man, you may want to go with no cuff. If you decide to cuff, you're going to go for a cuff that's maybe one-inch versus a larger man – you may go for a two-inch cuff depending for 6'4". You can go for a two-inch cuff, and that will look proportionally fine with the build and the length of your trousers.

Now, let's talk about the length of things, from the length of trousers to the length of your jacket.

If you are a tall man, you can go with a slightly longer jacket. That's going to be fine, because we're going for the overall proportion of the jacket being about two-thirds, and then the lower part – it's not going to be that exact amount there, but that's what we're looking for in terms of your overall build.

For the shorter man, you're going to want to make sure that jacket is as short as possible. It's been coming into the trend nowadays to see shorter jackets on almost all body builds, but it's really going to be the short, thinner man who wants to make sure that jacket just barely covers the curvature of his buttocks, the reason being is proportionally, that's going to look right on you.

Now, when it comes down to the length of our jeans or the length of our trousers, make sure that that crotch is always at a point where – this is really bad for short men – if the crotch goes too low, proportionally, that's going to look off, but a short man can go with pretty much no break or a slight, maybe a quarter break. You don't want to go for a full break or having too much excess material down there if you're a short man.

However, larger men, taller men, can actually go for the full break, and they can even have a little bit of excess material down there. Again, they can even have the cuff, and that's going to look fine proportionally.

Last thing, golden ratio versus the rule of thirds. Guys, I get into this a lot more in the article. Understand that they're about the same thing. They are not the exact same things – and in fact, I'm going to link you over to a video that talks about this. Both of them come out of photography. They're both based off mathematics.

The idea is to create something that is aesthetically pleasing. That's what I'm getting at with that. You don't have to follow it. It's just something to look for though when you're putting an outfit together.

That's it, guys. Remember, proportion is one of those things that it's a bit more advanced. I go into a lot more detail, and if you've got questions about proportion, feel free to reach out. Take care. See you in the next video.

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