

"We need to ditch our casual look"

THE MOTHER AND DAUGHTER

SARAH, 30, AND SHARON BLACKSHAW, 58



"I do know these trousers are a no-no," laughs Sarah as she sorts through the selection she's brought to the shoot. "But I hate getting my legs out, so if it's not trousers, it'll be a dress with black opaques – even in the height of summer. So I always feel like everyone else looks stunning in their floaty summer dresses, whereas I look a bit awkward." Sharon is in the same camp: "I don't even own a dress, so cobble together a skirt/jacket combo which never feels dressy enough. I also find it incredibly hard to find dainty shoes for my size 8 feet, and am nervous about anything but conservative colours."

THE STYLIST'S ADVICE

"Here we have two gorgeous women, but their outfits are hiding their best features rather than accentuating them," says Lynda. "Sharon has fantastic legs, but her skirt swamps them, and you'd never guess Sarah has a perfectly proportioned size 14 figure." Lynda's style prescription reads as follows...

1 Luxe fabrics equal instant polish
Swapping easily creased, 'daytime' fabrics such as linen and cotton for luxurious, flowing ones such as silk and stretchy jersey instantly adds a dash of easy glamour. They flow beautifully and will look great on the dance floor.

2 The right hemline makes all the difference
Sarah's height (6ft) means she can pull off a maxi dress. The ideal length for Sharon, however, is on the knee. Opting for a tulip shape helps accentuate her legs.

3 Add a touch of patent
Swapping Sharon's suede kitten heels for patent slingbacks gives her outfit a sharper, more dressy edge.

4 Beige should be banned!
It's not a 'celebration' colour. Opt for flattering jewel colours, such as amethyst, turquoise and ruby red. Wearing them in a simple block colour also means you can pick quirky accessories, such as Sharon's clutch and Sarah's feather headband.

5 Pick tummy-tuck dresses
Both these dresses are ruched at the empire line – this is an easy way to create the illusion of a flat stomach.

6 Glam up your flats
Sarah is comfortable in flat shoes, and they look great with this maxi dress. We've upgraded her simple gladiators (*before*) to opulent, gemstone-encrusted sandals.

• All of our makeover volunteers went to John Frieda for a hair restyle to accompany their new looks. To book an appointment, call 020 7491 0840; 4 Aldford Street, London W1K 2AE. All flowers were supplied by Mary Jane Vaughan at Natoora.

EXPERT ADVICE

HAIR

By Giles Robinson and Chloe Altman

DO learn simple DIY hair tricks that look polished. You can create an easy 1940s wave (*as seen on Maria, page 37*) using curling irons. The trick is to curl all your hair in the same direction and then brush it out, which will give the end result of a uniform wave.

DON'T let your hair go flat. Lift your roots and give hair a boost after you've shampooed it by massaging in John Frieda Root Awakening Leave-In Spray, £4.79. It'll make your hair much easier to manage and leave it smelling deliciously minty.

DO get the texture right. If you're wearing your hair up, never wash it the morning of the wedding as it will be too fluffy to do much with. Washing it the day before is better. Its lived-in texture will help your style to hold.

DON'T come undone. You want your up'do to last the whole day, and here's a trick to make sure it does: bend one half of each pin back on itself before you tuck it into your hair.

IDEAS: STYLISH HEADPIECES



Net, £39, John Lewis



Silk, £240, Gina Foster



Ribbon, £20, J by Jasper Conran at Debenhams



Silk, crystal and net, £35, Fenwick



Straw and satin, £249, Gabriela Ligenza