



Holly's Tiny Book of Style

WhoWearsWho.com



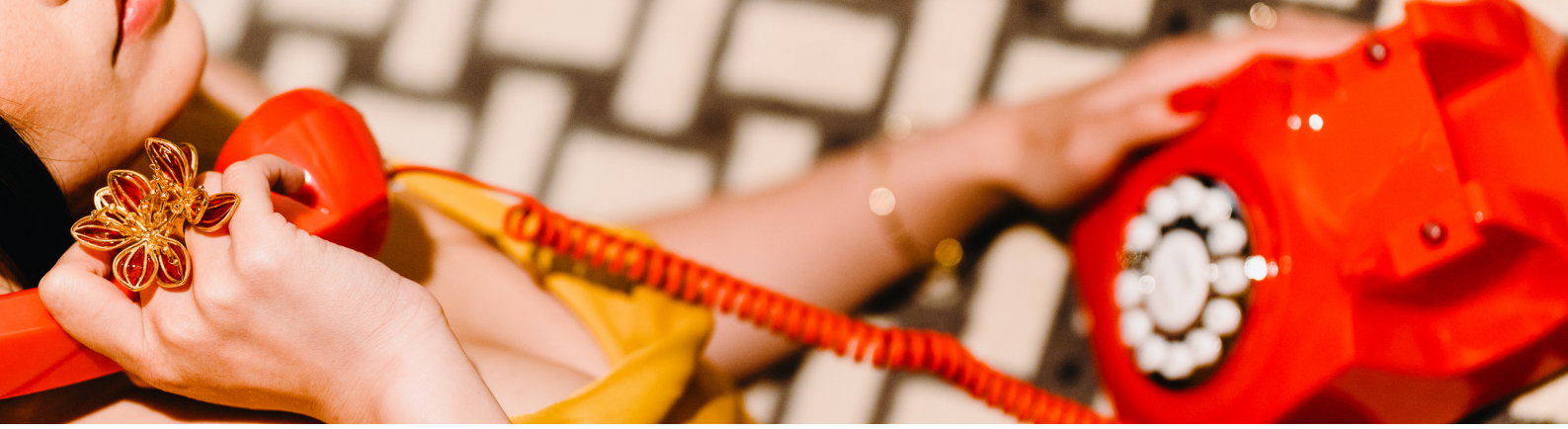


Table of contents

- 03 Introduction
- 05 Clear Out Your Closet
- 09 Cohere Your Style
- 14 Procure Your Additions
- 20 What's Next?
- 22 About Holly





Introduction

Welcome to Holly's Tiny Book of Style! I'm Holly – personal stylist.

I coach and consult on your everyday genuine style, helping you build and wear the wardrobe you love. (Even when you're running late, fighting a cold, and it's laundry day.)

This tiny book of is an introduction to the personal style framework I use with clients to discover, clarify, and live their signature personal style. I'm excited to introduce you to the process and the tools we use. I hope it inspires you to identify where your style blocks are and give you some ideas of how to overcome them. And if you ever want to go deeper and work together, don't hesitate to reach out.

How to use this tiny book

This tiny book is like a water skimmer dancing across a pond, or foam art on the top of your latte – we'll touch on each step, but there's so much more beneath the surface.

My style framework has three steps and each step has three tools.

So my suggestion for how to approach this is: mull on the tool that feels most intriguing to you. Let it create ripples in your mind like tossing a stone in a lake, and notice how those ripples reverberate into your everyday style.

Because tiny changes can do a lot of heavy lifting.



— Clear Out Your Closet —

There are three overarching steps to developing and implementing your signature style: clearing out your closet, cohering your style, and procuring your additions.

While these steps can be done in any order, when in doubt I start with a clear out. The state of our closets is the manifestation of our past decisions, so clearing it out gives us a clear slate to start with.

Clearing out your closet is where we clear the decks and prepare your space for the next iteration of your style.



— Create a Container —

A physical container, a time container, and an energy container.

Creating a container is what changes a closet clear out from a nagging todo to a project, and is ultimately how you finish the project.

The easiest way to visualize creating a container for clearing out your closet is time. Four hours on Friday afternoon. For the next five days - twenty minutes each morning and twenty minutes each evening. Two hours today and two hours tomorrow. Etc.

When you start with the end in mind and you're more likely to finish. As in life, so in style.





Respect Your Maybe

One of the reasons decluttering is so difficult (apart from coming face to face with the hundreds of decisions we've been putting off making) is trying to force decisions that you don't have yet.

"Maybe" when it comes to clearing out our closets is a limbo place, it's items that are at a crossroads. Do they stay or do they go? So respect your maybe.

You still have to finish. You can't put something into the Maybe category and leave it there forever. Respecting your maybe is about making space to let yourself make a decision. It's not about keeping your clothes in limbo forever. You do eventually make a decision.

Respect not deference. Respect the crossroads and the space of limbo enough not to rush through the discomfort. But do not defer to it or your style will live in limbo.

Reclaim Your Space, Reclaim Yourself

Style is intimately connected to our sense of identity. When we reclaim our closets, we can also reclaim ourselves.

Reclaiming your space is take the clothes you're getting rid of out of your house. Don't go through the hard process of decision making only to leave them in bags at the back of your closet.



Quick tip to never end up here again: make a plan for how you'll get rid of your clothes when you buy them.

Quick tip for right now: most of your clothes are probably good enough to be reused by someone else. Some of them will be good enough to be recycled or upcycled or down cycles. Unless you had an actually very nasty accident happen in your closet very few of your clothes are probably actual garbage.

— Cohere Your Style —

This is the step where we bring your style together in a coherent fashion so you can wear it day to day.

When it comes to our day to day style, I say aim for “engaged autopilot”. You’re an active participant in your life and your style, but it doesn’t consume your morning or your every waking thought.





Change Your Defaults, Change Your Life

We all have default outfits, and we all have default choices. Sometimes we call them go-tos or uniforms or old faithfuls or old standbys - these all amount to default choices. When we don't know what to choose or need to get out the door in a hurry this is what we go with.

Defaults are amazing! They are how we get dressed on overwhelmed and running late days. We would lose our flipping minds if we didn't have them - choice overload and decision fatigue would rule our day and we would have no hope of a closet we love.

And yet...

When you're elevating your style.
Or entering a new life phase. Or
deciding to become brave
enough to wear the clothes you
love.

Your defaults can turn into ruts
very quickly.

So when you're looking to
change your style, change your
defaults and you'll change your
baseline.

When you change what you
default to, you change your style.

What do you automatically reach
for?

What would you like to reach for
without a second thought?





Go 5% Fancier

When in doubt, go 5% fancier.

You can think of 5% fancier a little bit like the inverse of the Coco Chanel quote “Before you leave the house, look in the mirror and take one thing off.”

Chanel’s advice works great if you have a habit of over accessorizing and are aiming to embrace understated elegance. But remember Chanel was born in 1883, when “getting dressed” even in the most basic outfit, meant something a century away from “throwing on a t-shirt and jeans.”

5% fancier is a smidge fancier than your version of normal, choose ONE item of your outfit to elevate. Choose an accessory OR your makeup OR a garment and bump it up a notch.

You’ll elevate your style without worrying about being overdressed.



Embrace Your Triggers & Glimmers

Triggers are things that spark a (usually negative) reaction.

Glimmers are things that spark moments of deeply rooted capacity expanding emotions – like joy, or peace, or delight. (More about glimmers [here](#).)

Both can exist in our closet.

A trigger can be the top you wore on the first date with that terrible ex that you keep because you look amazing in it, and also you kind of forgot how bad that relationship was – until you suddenly remember.

A glimmer can be the pants you bought on a birthday trip with your sister and that makes you smile every time you see them.

Triggers and glimmers are part of being alive. Embrace that you have them. And curate your closet for more glimmers, fewer triggers.

— Procure Your Additions —

This is the part where we bring in what's missing. Once you've cleared the slate and brought coherence to your style, the list of items you need to add is usually pretty small and very specific.





Define Successful Shopping

When you define what successful shopping (generally) or a specific shopping trip (specifically) means to you, making it happen, becomes much easier.

When we don't define what a successful shopping trip means to us, it's easy to fall into someone else's definition.

It could be the clothing store's definition (which is usually buy as much as you can), or a cultural definition, or a definition leftover from childhood, or something else entirely – but it's often is not ours, and often does not get us to our goal.

More often than not we have a specific goal, it is to “buy clothes we love” or “buy clothes that fit” or “replace this pair of pants” or “find an outfit for a speaking engagement ” or “something to wear to that wedding” or “something to wear with that sweater I never reach for.”

If your goal is to buy clothes that fit, or clothes you love, or something for that wedding, then your shopping is successful when you buy clothes that fit, or that you love, or for that wedding.

If your goal is to buy clothes that fit, and the store has nothing, then buying something out of a sense of obligation isn't success – it's just an obligation.

Building a wardrobe you love to wear is just as much about what is not hanging in your closet. You can't build the wardrobe of your dreams if you clutter it up with clothes you bought (or kept) because you felt you should.

What does success mean to you?





Ground in Your Now

Don't shop for a previous incarnation of yourself, or hold out for a far flung future. Shop for yourself as you are now, and the very next version of who you are becoming.

Otherwise your closet gets too cluttered too easily. You find you have beautiful standalone pieces but they are isolated items that don't cohere with the other pieces in your closet.

Grounding your purchases in your now and very near future is how you make your next closet clear out a task, rather than an archeological dig.

Quick tip: a token of what you're building towards, that beautiful far flung future, is a powerful thing. And in this context, that item is a symbol and a spell, not your day to day closet.

Secure Your Additions

I say this in a couple dimensions.

The first part of securing your new clothes is buying them. It sounds obvious but buying clothes is a commitment and commitments can be scary. Making the purchase has a “we’re really doing this” feeling to it.

When we’re leveling up our style we’re often spending more on our clothes than we ever have before, and we’re doing it with more hope in the game. We’ve all had experiences of clothes not working out, and we don’t want that to be the case here too.

So this is about getting to the space where you can make the purchase, bring it home, and wear it.





Securing your additions is also about taking care of your new purchase.

Maybe it's incorporating a dry cleaners run or a hand wash routine into your week. Maybe it's learning how to get your clothing altered so your new clothes can keep up with you as your body changes. Maybe it's upgrading your hangers so your new clothes don't slip off and end up on the floor of your closet. Maybe it's picking up some cedar or lavender sachets to help keep pests away.

Securing your additions is about investing in building a wardrobe worth keeping.

— What's next? —

Like I said at the beginning, this is a tiny book – we can only skim the surface for the moment.

My style framework has three steps and each step has three tools.

So my suggestion for what's next is: mull on the tool that feels most intriguing to you. Let it create ripples in your mind like tossing a stone in a lake, and notice how those ripples reverberate into your style.





If you're unsure what stood out the most or want to work with something immediately implementable, I recommend Going 5% Fancier.

If you're near your closet you can do it right now – take a look at what you're wearing and choose ONE element to scootch a fraction fancier.

Tiny changes can do a lot of heavy lifting.

Thank you for taking this time, I have no doubt your style will appreciate it. And if you ever want to go deeper and work together, don't hesitate to reach out.



About



Holly Chayes is personal style coach and consultant with a focus on everyday genuine style, and helping individuals build and wear the wardrobe they love. Because our lives are lived between monumental milestone moments.

She has a background in costume design & wardrobe supervision for theater, knitwear design & pattern writing for handknitters, and building & running marketing and operations systems for creative businesses.

She is the host of Talking About Clothes with Holly Chayes – a podcast where she talks about clothes with the people who wear them.

Find out more and get started at:
WhoWearsWho.com/Get-Started/

Headshot credit: Meredith Hart

Stock photo credit: Tamara Velázquez from capturenow via Canva





Talk soon!

WhoWearsWho.com

