

# Tailors tell us their tips on how not to look awful in a suit

Because it's not as easy as it looks



By **SAM DISS**  
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Buying a suit looks easy. "That one," you say, pointing to something that is roughly in your size. You might try it on and it might feel weird but what do you know? Don't all suits feel like this?

The difference between a good suit and a bad suit is massive: as with anything, you get what you pay for – and nothing will beat a freshly cut, impeccably-tailored new whistle – but the next best thing is to listen to the advice of some of London's finest young tailors on how to not look like you've fished something out of your old man's wardrobe.

Listen up and you'll never hear someone say "haha when are you in court, mate!!!" ever again.

**Charlie Baker-Collingwood - Founder, *Henry Herbert Tailors***



Charlie pinning a suit (credit: Henry Herbert Tailors)

**What looks good in a shop window, might not look good on you**

Short trousers and a short jacket might suit the mannequin, but will leave you short changed when you come to put the suit on.

**Think hard on funky linings**

They may seem like a great idea for the weekend, but come Monday morning with that important meeting, you might feel a little sheepish. Always choose rich colours with heritage, rather than patterns which might leave your colleagues dizzy.

**Choose a style which is timeless**

A bespoke suit will last forever and so choose a style which is timeless – those skinny lapels and one button jackets might look the part now. But what might your children say in 20 years time?

**Colin Heywood - Managing Director And Head Of The Front Shop; *Anderson & Sheppard***



Colin in the front shop (credit: Ian Terry)

**Have a good idea of when and where you want to wear the suit and its purpose**

You can then discuss your precise requirements with the salesman before he guides you through the available cloths and styles. We have over 4,000 cloths to choose from and so many choices of style and it can be overwhelming unless you have an idea of what you are looking for. Particular cloths are suitable for certain uses and not at all suitable for others and being clear about the purpose of the suit helps to avoid any disappointment.

**Visit the shop in the morning**

Make sure that you see the cloth in daylight to make sure that the colour and texture are exactly right – try to make an appointment in the morning to make the best use of the light.

**If you don't ask, you don't get**

Although many tailors have a particular house style and cut, they will try to accommodate your wishes so do not be afraid to ask for what you want.

**Tight isn't always right**

Sometimes people believe that a suit has to be tight to fit. A suit that is very fitted may be flattering when the wearer is standing completely still but will pull across the buttons and shoulders when he moves making him look heavier.

**Dominic Sebag-Montefiore - Tailor And Creative Director, *Edward Sexton***



Founder, Edward Sexton, pinning a jacket (credit: Edward Sexton)

**Avoid fitting the body and not the shoulders**

Most men try and fit the body and don't get the right fit on the shoulders. If the shoulders and collar fit the body can be altered easily by a good alterations tailor.

**Avoid too tight trousers**

So many men today think it is flattering to have a close fitting trouser, but if you go too close the trousers pull and do not look smart.

**Michael Hill - Creative Director, *Drake's***

**The most important thing to remember**

It's perhaps an obvious answer, but fit really is the most important thing when it comes to tailoring. Get that right and the rest pretty much takes care of itself. Certain styles of tailoring lend themselves much more easily to a natural, flattering fit than others.

While there is nothing wrong with a little structure, we favour unstructured tailoring, as a soft shoulder line tends to work better for a lot of men, ourselves included. Combine this with a gently suppressed waist and a higher rise on the trousers, and already you have a highly elegant shape that confers an air of timeless style. A suit like this will always look good.

(Main Image: *Drake's Easyday Autumn/Winter 2017*)