



tailor made

In the first of our monthly men's tailoring advice columns, tailor **Tom Wharton** offers his expertise and answers your questions...

Dear Tom, I want to buy my boyfriend a tailored shirt for a Valentine's Day present; what type of shirt would you recommend for something a little different?

Well, this all depends on how different you want it to be. Basically, the only thing that prevents you from creating the shirt that you have always wanted for your boyfriend is your imagination. The possibilities are endless but to help you get started try asking yourself these questions first: Is there a shirt that you have always loved him wearing but there is just something about it that isn't quite right? Are the arms that little bit too long? Is the shirt length a bit short? Is the collar not right? You can match the shirt but tweak the little bits that you don't like and create the perfect shirt for him that you have always wanted. Create exciting little extras that will make his shirt even more individual; why not go for different fabrics on the underside of the collar and cuff? These can range from a gentle contrasting colour to some crazy Lawrence Llewelyn-Bowen styles; it just comes down to how daring you want to be. You could go for some coloured buttons, or some cutout double cuffs where he could wear his watch inside the turn back but still see the face. Go for the ultimate little personalisation and get his - and your! - initials embroidered on the shirt just to make sure that he always thinks of you when he pulls on his favourite bespoke shirt! Hey presto; you get him to look just how you want him to and he loves you even more because you have given him a beautiful bespoke shirt! Happy Valentine's Day.



WITH TOM WHARTON

Tom Wharton started his tailoring career in London with Bond Street tailors Hurst & Banks. Spotting a gap in the market Tom set up his own tailoring company, Barrington Ayre, last year. Tom Wharton can be contacted at Barrington Ayre on 0845 3009014 or 07511 794702; info@barringtonayre.co.uk; www.barringtonayre.co.uk

Dear Tom, I want to wear a smart shirt to work but don't want to wear a tie. What kind of shirt do I need to still look professional and sharp?

With the tie being worn less and less in the business world, the first impression still needs to purvey the right image so choosing and wearing the right shirt is now even more imperative. The first thing to consider when picking your shirt is the collar. Get this

wrong and the rest of the shirt will never quite appear right. The best thing to do is match your face shape to the best suited collar for you. If you have a slightly rounder fuller face with a rounder neck, keep well clear of high sharp collars otherwise you will look like a boiled egg ready for cracking. Instead you should go for a thinner collar band that is combined with a semi cutaway or full cutaway collar style. This will open up your face and elevate it too, so that you neck and face will look thinner and you will look a bit taller. If you are a taller, thinner man with a long thin face I suggest sticking with a classic collar that will follow the contours of your chest. Go for a slightly higher band width to compensate for your longer neck.

If you fall into the middle of these two categories, then you are rather lucky! You can be a little bit more free about your choice of collar. If you are a bit braver, and you can get away with it at work, why not go for the higher, double buttoned collar with a contrasting fabric on the underside of your collar? Or stick with a semi cutaway collar that can be as easily worn if a tie is required. Fabric wise for the office, I would suggest a plain colour, maybe with a nice herringbone pattern, stick to your blues, whites and pinks to stay smart, sharp yet stylish.

The other option is to go for a nice stripe, always vertical never horizontal. Again, I would advise not to go too punchy with your colour choice for the office and you could always have a contrasting white colour and cuff if you want to be a bit different. My best piece of advice is this: don't get bamboozled by the price of different fabrics; they suit different people in different ways. Just get a feel for the fabric that you like the best and suits your skin tone and shape. A bespoke shirt is for you, so be selfish; design how you want and with the help of your shirt tailor you will end up with a shirt that not only makes you look amazing it will also make you feel incredible and confident.

To ask Tom a question please email The Editor at editor@stylemagazines.co.uk.