

Tops in Fashion

From the dictionary definition, the word tops means "ranked highest" or "at most". When it comes to wardrobe significance, tops can mean the difference between a "so, so" ensemble and "wow"! Nothing says variety like this fashion workhorse! We can call any garment that we wear on the top half of our bodies a shirt, chemise or top. This can include blouses, tunics, lightweight knits and t-shirts. There is a top to fit every personality and budget, especially at the Goodwill Store & Donation Center!

Tunic/Smock: Traditionally a loose garment with no tailoring. Simple and basic pull-over styling. Cut to float away from the body, this works well for every woman of every size! They were seen on runways this season in silks and chiffons to create a breezy effect. They look great when belted over tailored pieces like jeans or a skirt. Ethnic prints are a key way to wear the tunic. While a good choice for most figures, larger gals should avoid loud prints and opt for solids in lightweight cottons, chiffons or satins instead.



Tailored Blouse: This is the most classic of all pieces in your closet. It's a fitted shirt with darting at the bust as well as figure hugging seaming down the sides and back. Often made of cotton or silk. Feminine details like rounded collars, ruffled bib fronts, blouson sleeves, and daintier buttons set this apart from the shirt. Make sure that fitted does not mean tight! Buttons that pull away from their closure is a recipe for fashion disaster! A nice tailored blouse should skim the body and define it, NOT constrict movement in any way.



Shell/ Camisole: This is a sleeveless blouse. In some cases made of fabric with buttons down the back or front, but seen more frequently as a knit pullover. This garment is the classy cousin of the tank top/ halter-top. If it doesn't show too much skin, it is appropriate under business wear. Camisoles are seen everywhere these days, with beads, ruffles and a million and one variations. An excellent wardrobe builder, they can be paired with virtually anything. Since they're on display those with less than perfectly toned arms should wear this under a jacket or layer under a lightweight cardigan. When done with ruffles down the front, this should be avoided at all costs by the larger busted gal, as it adds lots of volume to that area and calls more attention to it. Look for something with substantially larger straps as well to avoid a "wardrobe malfunction".



Shirt: This is a more traditionally man-tailored shirt without darting and feminine details. Square and sharp in its proportions, this is usually worn with office attire, tucked in with jeans, or under sporty “boyfriend” jackets. Simple and wearable for every body type, just make sure it has nice flat seams that will keep it sleek.



Knits/T-shirts: Just attempt to avoid the common knit or t-shirt. With so many different ways to go, adhere to the rule of what is appropriate for where you’ll be. I know that everyone wears them, but at least try to go for something with beading or an interesting neckline detail if you must wear them a lot of the time. It will make you appear classier than the average t-shirt and jeans wearer!



The best tip I can give you about tops is to really look at them as the “stand out piece” in an ensemble—so choose with care. Allow time to try on many different styles. Fit and proportion to the rest of your body should always be taken into consideration, as well as what you will be wearing it with. These “make it or break it” garments are easy to find at the Goodwill Store & Donation Center nearest you, at prices that will allow you to experiment and find your own “top style”!

