



## What Shall I Wear?

By Claire McCardell

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**What Shall I Wear?** By Claire McCardell

**The revolutionary fashion designer credited with originating "The American Look," Claire McCardell designed for the emerging active lifestyle of women in the 1940s and '50s.**

She was the originator of mix-and-match separates, open-backed sundresses, and feminine denim fashion; she started the trend for ballet flats as a wartime leather-rationing measure. Spaghetti straps, brass hooks and eyes as fasteners, rivets, menswear details and fabrics: they were all started by McCardell. Her Monastic and Pop-over dresses achieved cult status, and her fashions were taken up by working women, the suburban set, and high society alike.

First published in 1956, *What Shall I Wear?* is a distillation of McCardell's democratic fashion philosophy and a chattily vivacious guide to looking effortlessly stylish. Mostly eschewing Paris, although she studied there and was influenced by Vionnet and Madame Gres, McCardell preferred an unadorned aesthetic; modern and minimalist, elegant and relaxed, even for evening, with wool jersey and tweed among her favorite fabrics.

*What Shall I Wear?* provides a glimpse into the sources of McCardell's inspiration--travel, sports, the American leisure lifestyle, and her own closet--and how she transformed them into fashion, all the while approaching design from her chosen vantage point of usefulness. A retro treat for designers and everyone who loves fashion--vintage and contemporary--and teeming with charming illustrations and still-solid advice for finding your own best look, creatively shopping on a budget, and building a real wardrobe that is chic and individual, *What Shall I Wear?* is a tribute to the American spirit in fashion.

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## **What Shall I Wear? By Claire McCardell Bibliography**

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Review**

"Claire McCardell's clothes were timeless. She was the first designer to look not to Paris for inspiration but to the needs of the American woman." — **Michael Kors**

"What I truly appreciate was her fabric sensibility, even with more constructed fabrics like denim. She made them all look so soft and drapey. The halters she did were so modern. The thing is, you look at some of the things she did, and you can't believe it was the '40s." — **Anna Sui**

"Humble fabrics and rich designs--Pure Americana! Purely inspirational!McCardell broadened all of our visions and elevated the entire fashion industry to another level." — **Geoffrey Beene**

"I identify so much with Claire McCardell . . . that I can't believe it." — **Isaac Mizrahi**

"Her sportiness and chicness for me are definitely revolutionary." — **Guillaume Henry, Creative Director, Carven**

"Claire McCardell . . . has had tremendous influence on fashion even up to today . . . there is a spirit of independence and humor that transcends the context of the era." — **Sarai Mitnick, Coletterie**

### **From the Publisher**

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"I identify so much with Claire McCardell...that I can't believe it." --Isaac Mizrahi

### **About the Author**

Claire McCardell (1905-1958) pioneered a style of clothing both casual and chic. In 1990, Life magazine named her one of the 100 Most Important Americans of the 20th Century. She attended Parsons, learning to construct clothing by taking apart Vionnet samples. As head designer of Townley Frocks, she was one of the first American designers to have name recognition, as the company began to sell its fashions branded as "Claire McCardell Clothes by Townley." Her work is in museums across the country and has been the subject of retrospectives at the Smithsonian and the Fashion Institute of Technology.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Timothy Rowe:**

The book What Shall I Wear? make one feel enjoy for your spare time. You can use to make your capable

far more increase. Book can to get your best friend when you getting pressure or having big problem along with your subject. If you can make reading through a book What Shall I Wear? to get your habit, you can get more advantages, like add your current capable, increase your knowledge about some or all subjects. You may know everything if you like wide open and read a reserve What Shall I Wear?. Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science reserve or encyclopedia or others. So , how do you think about this e-book?

**Anna Yates:**

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**Mamie Shaw:**

Playing with family within a park, coming to see the coastal world or hanging out with close friends is thing that usually you might have done when you have spare time, after that why you don't try issue that really opposite from that. 1 activity that make you not feeling tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you have been ride on and with addition of knowledge. Even you love What Shall I Wear?, it is possible to enjoy both. It is great combination right, you still desire to miss it? What kind of hang type is it? Oh can occur its mind hangout fellas. What? Still don't have it, oh come on its called reading friends.

**Bradley Sparks:**

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