

In Fashion: Trend-proofing the classics

by Sharon_Mosley

When you're out shopping for the post-holiday sales, don't just throw your money away on those fashion bargains that are never going to be "quite right." You know - the deal you got last year at the mall on the fake fur coat that looks like it could stand up and attack anyone that gets near you? You got it for a discount price. It looks so cheap you never did wear it, even to the neighborhood Halloween party. What a bargain, right?

CLASSIC STYLE - The little black dress in a classic silhouette is always a great buy at bargain prices. Shown here is the black evening shift dress from Banana Republic. CNS Photo courtesy of Banana Republic. Instead, spend your holiday cash on classics that can add years to your wardrobe. Scout out the designers and the labels you love to lust over. Then splurge on a real deal.

Here's a trend-proof shopping list that you can take with you when you're bargain hunting.

- Designer shoes. There are plenty of high-end designers who offer updated footwear in everything from casual flats to party heels to knee-high boots. Now's the time to take advantage of the end-of-season sales and buy shoes that will last you for years. Whether it's a new pair of pumps with a curvy heel or those jeweled slippers you've had your eye on for months, it's a bargain shopper's heaven out there now.

- Classic coats. Cold weather is arriving in some parts of the country. You can buy a classic wool coat or a ski parka for half the price and still wear it for months.

Look for the coats you'll wear for years. The trends don't change too much in outerwear. Stick to dark neutrals for dressier coats; go for color in sportier jackets. And don't ever pass up a deal on a trench coat - a silhouette that never goes out of style. I still love the black satin one I bought on sale last year after Christmas.

- Anything in leopard print. I'm also a zebra print fan. This is a little on the trendy side, but for years the animal print has proved to be a fashion stalwart. Steer clear of the sleazy-looking items, and you can find some real steals: little slip-on mules, ballet flats, handbags, scarves, or even coats on the wild side.

- Jeans. We all have our favorite brands and many of us live in these denim staples. Scout out the sales on the jeans you love. Or experiment by buying the brands on sales you've always wanted to try but didn't want to spend \$150.

- Black basics. Yes, we still turn to these fashion favorites constantly. So, why not find them at a lower price and put them in our closets? We know we will wear them. We can't live without them: the little black sheath dress, the black cashmere turtleneck sweater (I found a great kimono one at Banana Republic for half price) and the chic black leather jacket.

These trend-proof "classics" may have been hundreds of dollars at one time, and you would have never considered buying them at full price. But at a great price, those fashionable darlings will add fun for many years to come to anything you wear. Now you can splurge on them.

Sharon Mosley is a former fashion editor of the Arkansas Gazette in Little Rock and executive director of the Fashion Editors and Reporters Association.

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