

Work on your resolution in updated workout wear

by Sharon Mosley

Chances are there are a few of you out there that have recently made a New Year's resolution to hit the gym and get in shape, no matter what. Well, what are you waiting for? A great sale on all those new clothes and shoes you need to make your grand entrance at the fitness club?

WORKING IT OUT - Update your workout wardrobe with fitted jackets, capri pants and slip-on shoes. CNS Photo courtesy of www.landsend.com. New workout gear is a great motivator for getting in shape. It's worked for me. After years of big T-shirts and baggy sweat pants, it was time for a change. And the new active wear is really a whole different fashion ballgame. After stocking up on a few new basics, I feel like I've already lost 10 pounds.

Here's the skinny on what you need to buy to slim down your fitness wardrobe:

First, it's all about layers with today's workout wear, especially if you're exercising both indoors and outdoors. Start with a tight-fitting dry layer like a tank or T-shirt, then add a warmer layer such as a microfleece top, and top with an outer protective layer like a wind jacket or nylon shell for extra warmth if necessary.

The newest performance wear marries function and fashion with the latest technology that manages "sweat" (and you do want to sweat, don't you?) with lightweight "breathable" materials that wick away moisture and keep skin dry when working out.

Just look on the labels the next time you're out shopping for a new jacket - you'll be amazed at what techno-wonders are hanging around in the finish on these fabrics. How about anti-microbial features? Yes, that's odor control. And then there are some workout clothes that have built-in ultraviolet-ray protection for those sunny days on the running track or at the golf course. Want to glow in the dark on a night run through the park? There's a luminescent jacket just for you, complete with hidden pockets for keys, phones or Ipods.

And then there's the new "stretch" features in activewear pieces. Looking good has never been so easy or so comfortable. "Fitted" is the key word to the latest styles of workout gear, not tight. It's a whole revolution from where the big and baggy girls and guys used to hang out. The stretchy fabrics do flatter most figures with a variety of silhouette options.

I love the plush fleecy tops and jackets, but there are lots of choices: V-necks, bra tops, muscle tees and long sleeve tees. You can choose your own layers, mix and match. The pants are just as versatile. Shorts and skorts are popular, but capris are a great alternative, too.

For the guys, the darker colors seem to be getting the most workout at the gym - from navy to black, white and gray. And of course, activewear supporting your favorite sports team is always a favorite on windbreakers and hoodies topping off T-shirts, running pants and gym shorts.

And probably the best way to update your activewear wardrobe? Gotta get a new pair of shoes. Step out in a pair of clunky old tie-ups and you'll feel like a duck out of water, especially when you slip into some of the new athletic footwear that has surfaced in the past few years.

There's a style to fit every sport - from not-so-basic running shoes for the gym, technical shoes for competitive athletes and walking shoes for every day. The colors are amazing; the fashion trends are even more exciting. To me, the sporty slides that slip on are some of the best advancements in athletic shoes in recent history. In a wide range of designs, I had to try these to believe that they would actually stay on. Since I'm usually not running a marathon, they are a great match for my treadmill workouts and walks around the neighborhood. And no more dangling shoelaces! Expect to see many more of these sport slip-ons to wear at the beach this summer, too.

Fit is one of the most important criteria however when you're buying new athletic shoes. It's critical. Here's where a professional shoe salesperson can come in handy no matter what brand you're buying.

But while looking good is a great way to kick-start your new year's workout routine, most important of all - as someone else has said many times before - it's time to just do it!

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