



# I MESSENGER

## THE FASHION DOCTOR IS IN THE HOUSE!

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### WARDROBE ESSENTIALS EVERY WOMAN MUST OWN

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Not every woman is fortunate enough to have a walk in closet the size of those shown on “MTV Cribs” or “The Real Housewives Of Beverly Hills.” With a little fashion know how, it is possible for working moms, single girls, divorcees, and recent college grads to build a wardrobe on a budget that is versatile, hip, date-worthy, and can take one from day to evening. **Dr. Ngozi Etufugh is a Manhattan Oral and Maxillofacial surgeon** who has a ‘passion for fashion’ and can be seen strutting the streets of Manhattan in everything from Chanel, Zara, H&M, Top Shop, and Christian Dior. For Dr. Etufugh, fashion is not about how much money one spends, but how bold one feels and the confidence they project. It’s not about the label. It’s about knowing how to create a look that expresses who you are on any budget. Here she shares her “closet confidential” that can take any woman from frumpy to fierce.

#### *The Shoes*

**Ballet Flats:** When heels simply won’t do, ballet flats are a must. They pair easily with just about anything. Not to mention, they’re as comfortable as they are chic!

**Casual Strappy Sandals:** It’s impossible to get through summer without a pair of these. A classic leather pair will always be in style.

**Metallic Strappy Sandals:** Think of silver (or gold) as your nighttime neutral—subtle enough to go with everything from black to red to a plethora of patterns. A slight platform adds comfort to these 4¼-inch heels, so you can dance all night in them.

**Black Heels:** A good pair of black heels will last you a lifetime. Whether you’re headed to the office or out for cocktails, black heels are a must-have!

**Running Shoes:** These should be comfortable and provide great support whether you’re at the gym, hiking outdoors, or exploring a new city.

#### *The Clothes*

**A Striped Tee:** When it comes to Ts, a striped one is a must-have. It's easy to wear, casual, and oh, so versatile! Throw it on with a pair of denim and ballet flats for a classic look, or go bold and mix it with a printed pant.

**A sleek pair of black trousers:** With a flattering fit not only transcends trends, it is a master of multitasking. Without question, black pants are one of the few wardrobe staples that you can wear with just about anything else in your closet

**Cardigan:** Whether you're trying to stay warm or you just need a good layering piece, a cardigan is a wardrobe staple. Pair it with a fitted pencil skirt for the office, or, for the weekend, button it up over a classic white tee and jeans.

**Tailored Blazer:** Every closet should have a tailored jacket that can be worn with jeans or over a cocktail dress. To keep it feminine, be sure the silhouette is fitted.

**Wrap:** There's nothing that complements an evening dress as well as an understated, equally sophisticated wrap. And while a silk-and-cashmere shawl is no substitute for a parka, it will keep you warm when your exposure to the elements is limited to quick jaunts to and from the car—and it will go just as capably with more casual attire, like jeans.

**French-Cuff Dress Shirt:** Nothing elevates a pair of trousers, a skirt, or a suit like a classic French-cuff dress shirt. The simple upgrade of the cuffs adds elegance to an otherwise ordinary shirt and helps create a look that will feel as appropriate for pitching a new client as it does for hosting a casual Sunday brunch.

**Skinny Jeans:** They go with everything. Enough said. Be sure to find a pair that fits you to a T.

**Little Black Dress:** Is there anything more classic than the LBD? The key here is to keep it simple. Add a statement jewelry piece and you're good to go.

**A Dress That's Just for Fun:** Once you've got your classic LBD, pick up a dress that's just for fun. Something that at first glance might not seem totally practical, but it's worth every penny because you feel good in it!

**Tailored Skirt:** Interviews, meetings, or dinner parties: a tailored skirt is the perfect staple for looking both dressed up and sophisticated.

**Black Leggings:** Whether you wear them as pants with an oversize sweater, under billowy dresses for extra coverage, or sexy tops, black leggings are a must-have.

**Cold-Weather Coat:** Even if you don't live in a cold climate, who's to say you won't visit New York City, the Rocky Mountains, or perhaps more realistically, your relatives in Iowa over the holidays? It's better to be prepared.

**A Bra for You:** Finding the right bra can be quite tricky. Start by getting yourself measured to find the correct size, and then choose a bra that's comfortable and will work underneath a variety of different style tops.

**A Bra for that Special Someone:** Have some fun with this one! Lace? Neon? Whatever makes you feel the best!

**Black Tights/Pantyhose:** There are women who think flaunting their legs for the world to see is the last thing they'll ever do in their lives. Some turn to wearing pants, leggings and long skirts. Others turn to hosiery and yes, black tights. What sets black tights apart from the rest of the hosiery department? It goes with absolutely everything like your favorite Little Black Dress, dark patterned dress, a mini skirt, shorts, boots, flat and the list goes on.

**A tank top** is an extremely versatile clothing item for women. You can cover it up with a black blazer or a cardigan for formal occasions, dress it up with a scarf or a neck piece for those trips to the mall or just wear it plain when you're heading to the beach or about to call it a night.

**No-Show Underwear:** Sometimes even thongs won't do the trick. For those lightweight fabrics and form fitting pieces, seamless panties are key. You'll be surprised how often you'll reach for a pair of these.

### ***The Accessories***

**Leather Handbag:** A leather handbag will last for years to come. It's functional and chic. A medium-to-large size is ideal so that a girl-on-the-go can easily fit her iPad, iPhone, and all other daily essentials in here.

**Clutch:** Whether you're headed to a cocktail party or a date-night at the movies, the clutch is the easiest way to dress up any look.

**Weekender Bag:** For those weekend getaways where a tote is just too small and your heavy-duty suitcase is too big.

**Sunglasses:** No matter if you're a Jackie O. or an Audrey Hepburn in Breakfast at Tiffany's, pick a shape and style that makes you feel like a star. (Not to mention, a good pair is essential for hiding those tired eyes!)

**Understated Jewelry:** Your essential accessory. The piece you wear from morning until bed time. You feel naked without it. Whether it's a pair of earrings, your grandmother's necklace, or a vintage ring, keep this one piece classic and simple.

**Watch:** You know what they say: punctuality is a virtue. A good watch will keep you on time, and it's an excellent layering piece between piles of gold bangles.

### **A Trend to Invest In:**

#### ***Animal Prints***

Why they keep coming back: “Animal prints play off the idea of women being vixenish, wild, and fierce,” says Dr. Etufugh. So it’s no surprise that fashionistas have been spotted in the prints since the cave-dwelling days?though the trend is most strongly identified with the 50s and 60s, when it was favored by sultry pinup girls, like Bettie Paige and Ann-Margret.

**Keep them if:** The pattern is in the “large cat” family (cheetah and leopard prints) or black-and-white zebra zigzags, which have the most staying power. Accessories like handbags, belts, and ballet flats hold up well, as do blouses and basic sweaters, like cardigans and V-necks. And stow coats and dresses with enduring silhouettes, such as wrap and A-line designs.

**Toss them if:** “The print is really bold?giraffe or spotted pony?or in unnatural colors, like lime green or pink,” says Dr. Etufugh. Also ditch larger-than-life patterns that aren’t true to scale.

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**Dr. Ngozi Etufugh**

**ihenaewu in the Igbo language means what is reining, what is of the moment, what is happening? Fashion as a whole is constantly looking forward. To keep up one must have style. Welcome to my blog. I am a fierce risk taker when it comes to fashion. I believe every day is an excuse to get dressed up. Evoking visual fantasy is my overall style. It is my hope and wish that you get inspired to take bold risks in your personal style, as well.**