

## ETIQUETTE EXPERT

## How to select the proper men's dress shirt



Margit Erickson

*'Costly thy habit as the purse can buy, But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy; For the apparel oft proclaims the man.'*  
— Hamlet

When talking with a gentleman fact to face or when watching television, especially in close up shots, I can't help noticing men's shirt collars. It is, after all, the article of apparel that is closest to the face. Quite often they are rumpled, wrinkled, curled up or the wrong color with the tie.

Here are a few tips on selecting a dress shirt:

A fine quality shirt is 100 percent cotton. It may cost a bit more but it is clothing that is next to the body almost like a second skin. It has a look of luxury and is the shirting fabric choice of a well dressed man.

Buy a shirt and tie at the same time. All colors have different shades and tones which do not always blend well together. It's easier to match colors when you have both in hand that to try and remember colors hanging in your closet. For variety, choose

two ties while you're at it.

Even though all the solid colors in shirts today are acceptable, white is still the color of choice for dress. However, light blue, cream, ivory or light gray are also good choices along with pinpoint stripes.

Just as in necklines for women, men need to choose the right collar style to balance the shape of the face. For a long narrow face, choose a collar that is more rounded. If your face tends to be more full, a longer pointed collar is best. Some 75 percent of men wear collars that are too tight. This causes flesh to overhang which is unsightly. To determine correct size, encircle your neck just under the Adam's apple with a tape measure, then insert one finger inside the tape. Remember that as you age, pounds add on and even a half inch around the neck makes a difference. Choose a larger size, you'll not only look better but be more comfortable.

And speaking of stiffening, all shirt collars need at least a mild starch for a crisp, smooth effect. It does away with the limp look and improves your appearance 100 percent.

The straight point is the most popular and versatile of all shirt collars. Be sure that the points of any collar touch the shirt when your tie is knotted.

A good quality shirt has a long tail and should be long enough to meet between the legs — usually seven inches to nine inches below the top of the trousers.

There should be a gauntlet button — a button sewn halfway up the sleeve opening. Buttons should be mother-of-pearl and sewn on with cross stitches, not

front of a good collar forms an upside down V with the edges of the collar meeting at the throat. No space should be left between the edges. Also, the shirt should not show above the knot in the tie.

What about short sleeved shirts? You will never catch a successful executive, male or female, wearing one to the office. Why? Because when you wear one you immediately lose your credibility and are not taken seriously.

As John Malloy states in his Dress for Success book, "Never ever wear a short sleeved shirt to the office, unless you are in the short-sleeved shirt business!" It is better to wear long sleeves and roll up the cuffs if necessary.

If you want to monogram your shirt, you need to do it in a subtle, discreet manner. Initials should be in a straight line with your first, middle and last initials in a row using either black, navy or medium blue thread.

They are properly worn in only two places: first, believe it or not, a few inches above the belt on the left side, or on the upper part of the pocket. Any place else on the shirt is considered too showy.

## Proper introduction

When conducting an etiquette seminar, we usually discuss proper introductions. I bring out five points necessary to execute a proper introduction. One of them is to smile. What a pleasant thing to do, and yet it means so much when you're meeting someone for the first time.

I'd like to share this quote from Shad Helmstetter, author of Finding the Fountain of Youth Inside Yourself. "What a wonderful, magical thing a smile is! And how remarkable it is that some people do it so seldom."

"Of all the gifts of human spirit, of all the simple treasures that do so much to enhance our lives, to make us feel better, to quicken our step, to give us an immediate lift in attitude or bolster our confidence or light up the day, there is nothing so attainable as a smile. What incredible, positive uplifting power that one simple expression has in it!"

Margit Erickson is an etiquette expert who hosts seminars and writes a monthly column for the Observer.



AED lesson: Tom Shurtleff assists Jeff Carrico with AED trainer.

## Parish gets defibrillator

Sudden cardiac arrest can occur anywhere, any time to any one, including on church grounds.

Early defibrillation is the key to survival because it's the only way to successfully treat most sudden cardiac arrests. Time is critical — for every minute without defibrillation, the chance of survival drops 10 percent. If eight to 10 minutes pass without it, the victim has almost no chance of survival.

St. Fabian Catholic Church in Farmington Hills has responded by buying an automated external defibrillator (AED), one for the church and one for the school gym. This was made possible through the generosity of an anonymous donor. The St. Fabian Health Ministry, in collaboration with the Farmington Hills Fire Department and Providence Hospital and Medical Centers, scheduled several training sessions for parishioners to learn to use the AED and to learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation. CPR is the next link in survival after early defibrillation. In March, 150 parishioners were instructed in the proper use of the AED and CPR in a program called Operation Heartbeat. The class was led by Lt. Thomas Shurtleff, a Farm-

ington Hills paramedic. Additional instructors were provided by his department and Providence Hospital.

The AEDs provide voice and visual commands to follow and are nearly foolproof. The Good Samaritan Law in Michigan protects laymen from liability when using AEDs or CPR in good faith.

The AED has two self-adhesive pads, which are placed on the victim's chest. The responder pushes a button and the AED analyzes the heart rhythm. If the rhythm shows ventricular fibrillation (a chaotic beating of the heart), a shock is advised and the responder pushes a flashing button to deliver the shock. The goal is to restore a normal heart rhythm as soon as possible. Survival rates approach 50 to 60 percent with early defibrillation.

The AED costs \$4,000. The American Heart Association offers a public access to defibrillation program. Information is available at [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org). Information about AEDs is also available through the American Red Cross.

For more information about Operation Heartbeat, call St. Fabian parish at 553-4610.

## V formation

The shirt collar in the back should be one half inch above the collar of the jacket. In the

Just saw the Eiffel Tower for the first time.

Started his own business last year.

Has an incurable disease.

Incurable, but fully manageable. Asthma shouldn't keep you from doing what you want, even taking a breath at 12,000 feet. There are many different ways to manage your asthma, even during exercise, in order to minimize its impact on your life. And your UMH's physician is uniquely qualified to help you create a personalized plan to care for your asthma. To schedule an appointment, call your neighborhood U-M Health Center or 1-800-211-8181, or visit us at [www.med.umich.edu/learnmore](http://www.med.umich.edu/learnmore). We accept a variety of health care plans, including **MICARE**. You can breathe easier.

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