

Love Yourself in Lingerie

If you would rather take a cold shower in winter than even think about donning some sexy lingerie to parade around the house, image consultants Isobel and Anna Martin aim to change all this. Follow their advice to have you feeling sexy and self-confident, day and night.

If you're cringing at thought of yourself in some sexy lingerie, don't worry, you're not alone. Most of us focus on the negative aspects of our bodies and are often so consumed by the fact our bodies don't fit the social 'norm', we rarely celebrate who we are and what we have to offer.

In *How to Look Good Naked* Carson Kressley does a great job demonstrating how we view ourselves much more negatively than those around us do. Just as he reveals to the women on his show, we are all beautiful and unique and, let's face it, if we all looked and dressed the same it would be a very boring world.

Life is too short to focus on the negatives and, having worked with women of all shapes and sizes, we are here to tell you that ALL women can feel sexy in lingerie, simply by selecting the right garments for their body shape and lifestyle.

Lingerie, including your underwear and nightwear, is wonderful in that gives shape to your body and can do a great job of highlighting some areas and camouflaging others. Sure, we all have the casual bras and underpants for when the time requires, and we

are all guilty of having our favourite flannelette pyjamas or tracksuit to slop around it at home, but there's something about a little bit of satin and lace to make us feel so much more sexy and self-confident.

What a lot of us forget is that lingerie needs to fit properly to give support and definition to our body shapes and be a natural extension of us. It is important to be properly fitted by a professional. The wrong size is not only uncomfortable, it fails to provide all the necessary support for your posture and it makes you bulge in all the wrong places.

Most lingerie shops and department stores should have trained professionals who understand sizing and styles. There is a vast range of lingerie brands for all body types to choose from and it can be easy to be overwhelmed by all the different labels. Talking to an expert will allow you to shop with confidence. They will advise you on the styles suitable for you and will save you a lot of time.

Try to avoid going lingerie shopping when you are in a rush. Take time to try on different styles. Different brands also tend to have slightly different sizing ranges so you need to try on

bras before buying them. When trying on lingerie don't forget to put your clothes back on. Lingerie needs to sit comfortably under your clothing so it gives you balance and shape.

Your body shape influences the types of clothing styles that suit you and lingerie is no exception. If you have a large bust select styles that give shape to your bust line and help minimise bust size, while providing support. Smaller busted women need styles that give definition and should look for bras with padded cups. If you are bigger on the bottom, padded cups can help create balance. Straight body shapes look great in straighter lines while curvy body shapes look good in softer lines. Everyone's body shape is different, so if you're not sure what body shape you are, an image consultant can help you here. Lingerie is the foundation of your wardrobe so take the time to find out what styles work for you. Well-fitted lingerie should flatter, enhance and give proportion your body shape.

Tips on Choice

To find the perfect pieces of lingerie this winter think about your personality, lifestyle and any

Sporty



Sports Bra (\$69.95, 10-18, B-E) by Berlei, 1800 645 045

Straight



Bra (10-16, B-DD) and brief (10-16) set, (\$34.95) by Bassoni, (02) 9723 9222

Curved



Bra (\$54.95, 10-14, A-D), and culotte (\$39.95, S-XL), by Elle Macpherson Intimates, 1800 338 235

There are many lingerie pieces that offer great functionality. We have put together the following list to help with your selection process:

- For fuller figures try Berlei or Trinny & Susannah
- For curved figures try Elle Macpherson Intimates or Le Mystere
- For straight/athletic figures try Fine Lines or Bassoni
- For shapewear try Hollywood or Nearly Nude
- For maternity wear try Loveable or Bendon Lingerie
- For nightwear try Elle Macpherson Afterwear or Bendon Loungerie
- For sportswear try Bendon Sport or Berlei Ultrasport

Bra (\$59.95, 10-16, A-E) and brief (\$19.95, 10-16), for fuller figures, by Berlei, 1800 645 045



upcoming special events. This will influence the clothes you wear and the lingerie worn under them. Are you comfortable wearing lingerie with lots of frills and lace? Is your lingerie appropriate to the occasion? Will lingerie with lots of detailing be appropriate for a workplace or are you better selecting lingerie with less noticeable seams and lace? This does not mean that your lingerie needs to be boring. There is an abundance of sexy lingerie with more subtle lines available.

We recommend colour-coordinating your lingerie with your clothing. If your skirt or dress is made of a light fabric and is not lined, a slip or petticoat will prevent the see-through look. Remember, some things are best left to the imagination.

Select colours that best complement you. The right colours harmonise with your skin tones and make you look and feel amazing. Camisoles in your colours look great under tops and jackets, and why limit yourself to daywear? Look fabulous in your nightwear as well.

The same rules apply for nightwear in regards to colours, body lines, personality, lifestyle and occasion. Are you after something

sexy and romantic or will more practical nightwear suit your needs better? Dressing in your colours makes you radiate and is a great tip for looking taller and slimmer.

Select items in fabrics that make you feel luxurious and sexy. Again, your body shape will dictate the styles best suited to you. Aim for overall balance and proportion. If you are bigger on the bottom half then select garments with more detailing on the top and keep the bottom half plain. The opposite applies if you are bigger on top. If you are petite, keep everything in one colour to give the illusion of height and be cautious of long billowing garments that may overwhelm you. Vertical lines are always your friend. Remember to follow the lines of your body.

Buying lingerie in smaller quantities more often gives you the opportunity to ensure it meets your needs and lifestyle changes. If you love the lingerie piece you can always go back to the store and buy more. This will save you wasting money on impulsive items you don't wear.

Where possible, wash your lingerie by hand as this will reduce fabric and elastic distortion and will extend its lifespan. Don't forget to

adjust bra straps as the elastic starts to stretch and replace the garment once the fabric gives. A bra is not much use if it no longer provides support and lacks sex appeal.

Always invest in a good quality sports bra that is designed to give the right amount of support for the kind of sport you are undertaking. Your body will thank you later!

Once you have the correctly-styled underwear, cover it with clothing that works for you.

Remember, you don't have to be a size-eight supermodel to enjoy the luxuries of good quality lingerie. With so much to choose from, there's something for everyone. It's just a matter of spending a bit of time on 'you' and working through your options to find the right pieces to help you look and feel amazing. **em**

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Shapewear



(Left) Skinny strap tank (\$45.95, S-L) by Nearly Nude, www.nearlynude.com.au
(Right) Chemise, (\$250, S-L) by Elle Macpherson Intimates, 1800 338 235

Nightwear



Maternity

Bra (\$59.95, 12-16B, 10-18C-E) and brief (\$29.95, 10-18), by Loveable, 1300 429 468

