

Jo Ann Roberts

*Art &
Illusion:
A Guide to
Crossdressing*

*Volume 2 — Fashion & Style
Revised & Expanded
Third Edition*

Creative Design Services has been serving the information needs of the transgender community since 1985. We are the largest commercial publisher of non-erotic, "how-to" information in the U.S. The CDS product line includes books, periodicals and videos. Write for a free catalog brochure. CDS also produces the Paradise In The Poconos getaway weekend twice a year in May and September. Write for dates and prices. CDS is committed to quality in its services and its publications. If you are ever dissatisfied with a CDS product, return it for a refund or replacement, no questions asked.

Cover art: © LeVaughn, 1993



Jo. Ann Roberts

*Art &
Illusion:
A Guide to
Crossdressing*

*Volume 2 — Fashion & Style
Revised & Expanded
Third Edition*

"You are what you do when it counts,"
John Steakly
Armor

*This book is dedicated to Jaini and Jo...
They were there when it counted.*

Art & Illusion: A Guide to Crossdressing, Third Edition, Vol. 2 - Fashion & Style
copyright©2000 by Creative Design Services, PO Box 491, Lionville, PA 19353-0491

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be stored in a retrieval system, transmitted, or reproduced, in any way, by any means, without the express written permission of the publisher.

Preface to Third Edition, Vol. 2

This volume has evolved the most since I first published *A&I* and the *Companion*.

I've learned quite a lot about women's fashion over the ensuing years. In 1991, I was asked to prepare a series of workshops for the Be All Weekend in Cleveland then. I prepared two in particular that have worked out very well for me. The first was called—at that time—Beauty Tips. It has since become *Art & Illusion Tricks & Tips*, a workshop that I've given at least a hundred times all over the country. The other was called Updating Your Wardrobe. The latter is now called *Fashion & Style* and forms the basis for this volume.

Of major significance to us as crossdressers is the fact that women's clothing has been resized, again. If you gather the appropriate materials together, you will find that women's clothing sizes change about every five years or so. I am currently a size 14 (in 1994 measurements). I have a book from 1948 with a size chart that shows I would have been a size 22 back then. What's happened is two things. One: women are getting bigger, especially around the middle. Perhaps the demographic sampling techniques are just getting better, but it is now said that 60% of American women are a size 14 or larger. Two: fashion merchandisers realized they were missing a very large (no pun intended) market segment by not carrying larger size *fashionable* clothing. Many department stores won't even consider carrying a designer's line if it doesn't include at least a size 14 and some retailers insist on going up to an 18.

Many fashion designers are now women where twenty or thirty years ago they were almost all men. What that means is the female designers are more conscious of the need for larger clothes that fit well. Donna Karan, for example, is a size 12 herself so she's particularly interested in how her clothes fit. Anna Nicole Smith, the Guess Girl, is also a size 12, and she's consider "big."

Almost every major department store now carries larger size clothes and even Victoria's Secret carries size 14 in many of their styles. Only Fredericks of Hollywood is still stuck in the 50's. Nothing they sell fits me and I've not been able to figure out why they sell 44DD bras and shoes up to size 12, but no dresses above a 10 or 12. Curiouser and curiouser.

In any event, we now have a lot more choices in clothing and styles. There's no excuse not to dress well and look nice. I tell people during my classroom lectures, "I don't care if people realize I'm a male that's crossdressed. But I want them to say, 'Doesn't he dress well!'" If you look like a clown, people will treat you like one. Just about everything you need to know about clothes is in here. I hope you enjoy it.

Oh, yeah... almost forgot. When you see this: **TIP** it means that something special is mentioned. And, thanks again to LeVaughn for the marvelous artwork.

JoAnn Roberts
June 1994

Contents

Text

Preface to Third Edition.....	3	The Box cont'd.	
Bodyworks	7	Best Evening Look	30
Bodyhair	7	Best Skirt	30
Bleaching	7	The Figure 8	30
Shaving	7	Best Suit	30
Tweezing	7	Best Dress	31
Waxing	7	Best Evening Look	31
Depilatories	8	Best Skirt	31
Electrolysis	8	Weight & Texture	31
Hands & Nails	8	Value Basics	33
Hand Care	9	All Year, All Around Clothing.....	33
Nails	9	Typical Problems	33
Body Basics	11	Shoes	34
Know Your Body	11	Accessories	35
Figure-8	12	Accessorize to Scale	35
Box	12	Belts	35
Barrel	12	Handbags	35
Clothing Sizes	13	Gloves	36
Lingerie Basics	15	Jewelry	36
Bust Culture	15	Earrings	36
Types of Bras	16	Finger Rings	36
Breast Forms	16	Wrist, Ankle & Neck Chains	37
Cleavage	18	Bracelets	37
Filling Out Your Hips	20	Watches	37
Nip & Tuck	21	A Well-Kept Secret	37
Corsets, etc.	21	Glasses	37
Hiding The Genitals	22	Passing	38
Sizing	23	Wrapping Up	40
Slips & Camisoles	23	Illustrations	
Hosiery	24	Ideal Proportions	11
Pantyhose	24	Three major body shapes	12
Stockings	24	Current Sizing Charts	14
Lingerie Colors	25	Types of Brassieres	15
Your Outer Image	25	Making Cheap Breastforms	17
Being Well-Dressed	25	Creating Cleavage	19
Personal Style	26	Corset	21
Cut & Line	27	Waist Cincher	21
Scale	27	Braslette	21
Clothing Suggestions	27	Instant Sex Change	22
The Barrel	28	Slips	23
Best Suit	28	Panty & Brief Size Chart	23
Best Dress	28	Clothing Lines	27
Best Evening Look	28	Fabric Weight	32
Best Skirt	29	Fabric Texture	32
The Box	29	Shoes	34
Best Suit	29	RING SIZER	36
Best Dress	29	Glasses by Face Shape	38

Bodyworks

Just getting your face on is only part of the transformation process. The rest of your body requires just as much attention. Hair removal is very important as is the care of your hands. We'll spend a little time getting your body in "shape" before we get to clothing.

Bodyhair

There are several ways to deal with body hair. It can be bleached, shaved, tweezed, waxed or permanently removed. The technique you choose will depend on the type of hair and your skin's sensitivity. The hair on different parts of your body are not all the same and each type responds differently to the various processes.

Bleaching

This is a chemical process which lightens and softens the hair. New hair will grow in the original color, so if you don't want a two-tone look you will need to periodically bleach, approximately 2-3 weeks. Bleaching is useful for the arms and back of the hands. Bleaches are available at most pharmacies. **Pluses:** it's cheap and it's fast. **Minuses:** bleach may irritate your skin and it requires timing. A good bleach is Jolen Creme Bleach or Andrea Extra Strength For The Face.

Shaving

This is the simplest technique. There are some pitfalls, however. Shaving is good for arms, hands, legs and chest, but it starts to regrow immediately and stubble will be evident in 2-3 days. You may also experience ingrown hairs which can cause minor infections of hair follicles. If your heritage is from the Mediterranean area, you are especially susceptible to this. **Pluses:** fastest and cheapest. **Minuses:** nicks, cuts, ingrown hairs. **Best razor:** Gillette Sensor. **Best shaving cream:** Edge Gel

Tweezing

This is the mechanical removal of the hair by pulling it free from the follicle. Regrowth will appear at the surface anywhere from 1-3 weeks depending on your body chemistry. Tweezing is good for small areas, such as the back of the hands and eyebrows. A new device called Epilady, uses a moving coil spring to automatically pull out the hair. It is recommended for use on the legs, though it should work elsewhere. There are several similar devices on the market. **Pluses:** simple and cheap. **Minuses:** time consuming and may be painful. **Good tweezers:** Maybelline Expert Touch Tweezers

Waxing

This is also the pulling free of hair from the follicle, but on a much larger scale. Wax (pinewax or beeswax) is melted and spread over the area of the skin where the hair is to be removed. After a short time the wax will harden and when it is pulled off the skin it brings the hair with it. Regrowth time is the same as for tweezing. In addition to the same

problems as tweezing, there is the chance of getting burned if the wax is too hot. Waxing is also more irritating. Powdering the area before applying the wax will help. **Pluses:** gets skin really smooth. **Minuses:** Can hurt like hell, hair must be ¼ to ½ inch long. **Best bets:** Zip Wax Hair Remover or Sally Hansen Natural Cold Wax.

Depilatories

Depilation is a chemical process which dissolves the root of the hair. The chief advantage is that the hair is removed from below the skin. Regrowth time is about the same as for tweezing and waxing. Problems which can occur are rashes from the chemicals used. A depilatory is a quick (15-20 minutes) way to remove large amounts of hair. It is usable everywhere but on the face. Depilatories have little or no effect on facial hair, so do not waste your time. I prefer to put the cream on, wait, then use a terry washcloth in a shower to lightly abrade the hair loose from the follicle. Afterwards, lightly powder the skin and do not apply fragrances or deodorants containing solvents such as alcohol for at least 8-12 hours. **Pluses:** leaves skin smoother than shaving, but not as smooth as waxing. **Minuses:** can irritate the skin. **Best bets:** Neet Hair Remover and Nair.

Electrolysis

Permanent hair removal can only be achieved by electrolysis. The process uses an electric current to destroy the hair follicle and prevent regrowth. It is the only other process, beside shaving, that is recommended for facial hair removal. However, it is a long, tedious, and expensive process. Removal of a male beard could require upwards of 200 hours of treatment. It can also be painful if your skin is very sensitive. It depends on the skill of the operator, as well. Forget the home treatments seen in magazines. I can tell you from personal, expensive, experience that they do not work. In order to electrolyze a follicle, the operator inserts a very fine needle into the follicle and applies a short burst of electricity which kill the hair. Most problems which can occur are infection and scarring due to carelessness of the operator. Selecting the right Electrologist is the first step. Is the person licensed and insured? Some states do not require licenses for operators, but to get insurance they must be licensed. Has the operator worked on a male before? Male facial hair is quite different from female facial hair. An unlicensed operator may not be skilled enough to remove the hair permanently. Check the phone book and look for certification and licensing mentioned in ads, then call and ask about experience with males. If you are going to have electrolysis, do not tweeze, wax, or shave the hair for several weeks prior to treatment. **Pluses:** no regrowth. **Minuses:** very costly and time consuming. **Best bet:** get a referral from someone.

Hands & Nails

After your face, your hands draw the next most attention. Care and maintenance of the skin and nails is therefore important.

Hand Care

You can do all the things your male-self likes to do and still have nice hands. It just takes a little more care and effort. I like to work on cars and invariably I would cut myself or break a fingernail. So, now when I do these activities I wear work gloves. Whatever it is that you do, consider the likelihood of damage to your hands and protect them. This will also prevent dirt from getting under your nails. If your skin is rough or dry, use a hand cream morning and night. Remember, it is okay for a man to care about his skin.

Nails

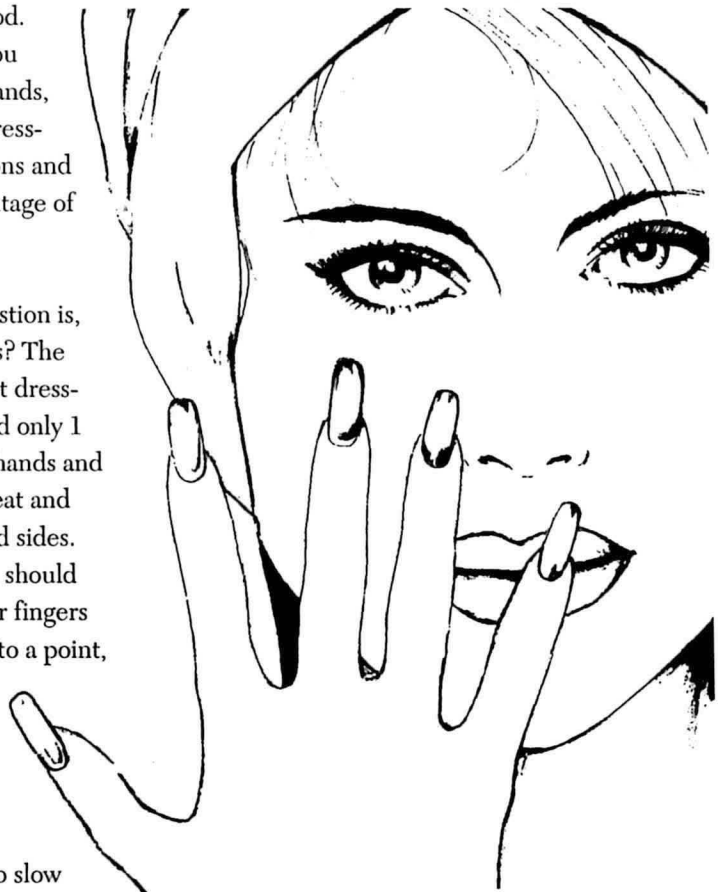
Your nails are the main focus of your hands. You have several options for fingernails. False nails are available in a wide variety of forms and colors. Press-on nails are molded plastic nails held on with double-sided adhesive. They really work and are good for an evening out. And no polish stains on your cuticle. Replacement adhesive pads are available. One disadvantage is size, however. You may need to buy two sets in order to get 10 nails that fit and look proper. There is no reason to use glue-on nails anymore. The instant glue used to hold glue-on nails can actually damage your real nails. I went through a whole year once of breaking the same nail because it had been damaged by using glue-on nails.

TIP

Some girls report problems with the press-on nails not staying in place. I recommend using double adhesive pads on each nail. I've never had a nail fall off with this method. One friend of mine uses rubber contact cement. If you have a problem finding nails large enough for your hands, consider growing just your thumbnails and use the press-ons for the other eight. You can pre-paint the press-ons and you just have to paint your thumbnails. One disadvantage of false nails is that they just don't feel natural.

The easiest nails to work with are your own. The question is, how long can you grow them before someone notices? The answer depends on you alone and your attitude about dressing. I wear my own nails long for a male and have had only 1 or 2 minor comments which I let pass. They are my hands and I do as I like. The important thing is to keep them neat and clean. I file mine straight across with slightly rounded sides. Keep the cuticle pushed back. The shape and length should compliment your fingers. Long nails for long, slender fingers and shorter nails for shorter fingers. Never file nails to a point, use a square or oval shape.

I should emphasize some things about growing your own nails. You really have to learn how to use your hands all over again or else you'll just keep breaking them off. If you decide to go with natural nails, try to slow



down your movements, especially grabbing things. I had a lot of problems with car door handles until I re-learned how to open the door. You may have difficulty with the simplest tasks at first, but you will get used to the length and learn to function again. I think it is worth the trouble. Lifting heavy items can also put a strain on your nails. If you're going to have long nails then you're going to have to keep them scrupulously clean.

You can have too much of a good thing when it comes to your nails. Too much filing can tear the nail causing breaks and splits. Never file you nails after a shower or bath, since they're very soft and tear easily then. Too much buffing can thin nails. File nails once a week and buff every two weeks.

Polish stains in your cuticles can be minimized if you follow my method here. Use good fresh polish. There are now one coat polishes which will do nicely. In any case, use only one coat. It dries faster. Keep away from your cuticles. Most of the staining, however, happens when you remove the polish. To remove the color, soak a cotton pad (not ball) in polish remover. Press the pad firmly down on the nail and hold it there for 30-45 seconds. Pull the pad forward off the nail. Almost all the polish should come off the nail. Fold the pad in half, re-wet and do another nail. After all your nails have been done this way go back with a cotton swab and fresh remover and go over each nail once more. Your hands should be reasonably clean. Never scrub the polish off. This will only make it run all over your hands and cause the cuticle stains you're trying to avoid. Speaking of cuticles, it's the skin that protects the nail's matrix or bed. Usually waves or bumps in your nail mean the bed, and probably the cuticle, are damaged. Never cut the cuticle back too far.

TIP

If you are plagued by nails that split or crack before they get long, try a product called Barielle. It is a cream that you rub on your nails and it really does make them strong and long. Look for this product in better department stores and pharmacies. If you can't find Barielle, go to a Tack Shop where they supplies for horses. Look for Hoofmaker by a company called Straight Arrow. It's the same stuff and one helluva lot cheaper. Barielle is the fancy human-use product derived from the hoof treatment.

Eating and/or drinking gelatin will not make your nails stronger. That's an old wives tail. Gelatin is not a complete protein and is deficient in the sulfur-containing amino acids that give nails their strength. The best foods for nails are eggs, lean meat and fish. And, this isn't my opinion, it's the opinion of the *Mount Sinai School of Medicine Complete Book of Nutrition*. So I don't want any mail on this. Also, mineral deficiencies are not responsible for those white spots and cracks. White spots indicate pressure on the nail bed and cracks are likely due to dry nails. However, Biotin, one of the B vitamins, may have some effect on nail strength. Some studies showed that ingesting biotin helped, but the results were inconclusive and the FDA has not approved biotin as a nail promoter.

One thing I know *does* affect your nails, adversely, is estrogen. A major complaint by many Male-to-Female transsexuals on hormones is how easily their nails break.

Body Basics

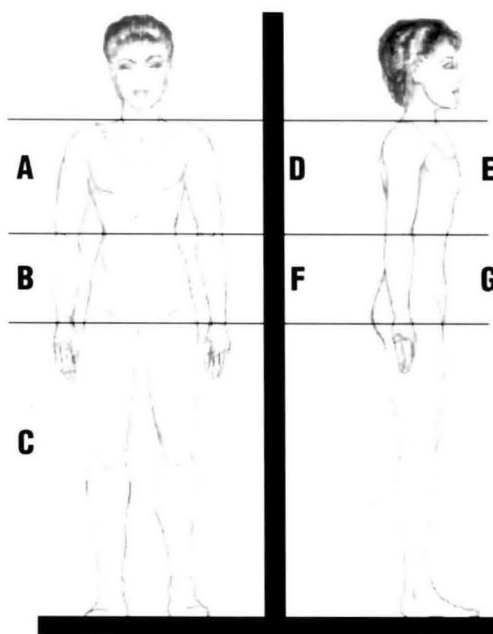
Take a good, hard, realistic look at your body and try to classify your shape. This will help later, knowing where your problem areas are and what needs correction. Put on your lingerie and, if possible, leotards and tights. Stand facing a full length mirror, or, better yet, take photographs and work from the photos. On the mirror, or photo, draw a line across the base of your neck, just touching your collarbones, another through your waistline, and a third just through your crotch area at the tops of your legs (see the illustration at right).

Examine the upper torso in relation to the lower torso. Ideally, they should be equal. If your upper torso is shorter than your lower torso you are *short waisted*. If the reverse is true, you are *long waisted*. Now compare the entire torso length to your leg length. Again, the ideal is equal lengths. If the torso is shorter, you are *leggy*. If the reverse, you are *short-legged*. Now turn to a profile view and imagine your body divided into quadrants. These are upper chest, upper back, waist-to-feet front and waist-to-feet back. If your bust and derriere take up about equal space in their respective quadrants, you are fairly well balanced. If not, then you will either have to camouflage the deficiency or add padding to achieve balance.

Just like natural females, you will find that crossdressers come in all sizes and shapes. Knowing how to classify your whole-body shape will help you pick the right style clothing. Always try to fit your clothes to your body. Never try to force your body into clothes that don't fit.

Know Your Body

There are many different ways to classify body shapes. I particularly like the model called Fashion HOAX, where the letters in "hoax" represent body shapes. I am not going to discuss the "A" or Pear shape since very few males attain this shape; it is almost exclusively female. So, I'll concentrate on the other three letters, H, O, and X, or as I call them, the Box, Barrel and Figure-8, since it more likely that you will be one of these shapes. Once you know your body shape, you can correlate your shape to the "line" of certain clothes. If the "line" of the clothes and the shape of your body match, you will look well-dressed.



The ideally proportioned female body. $A=B$ and $A+B=C$. If D & G occupy about equal space, and E & F occupy about equal space, your body is well-balanced.

The three major body shapes of crossdressers; Figure-8 (left), Box (center), & Barrel (right). These body lines are called Curvy, Sharp, and Soft.

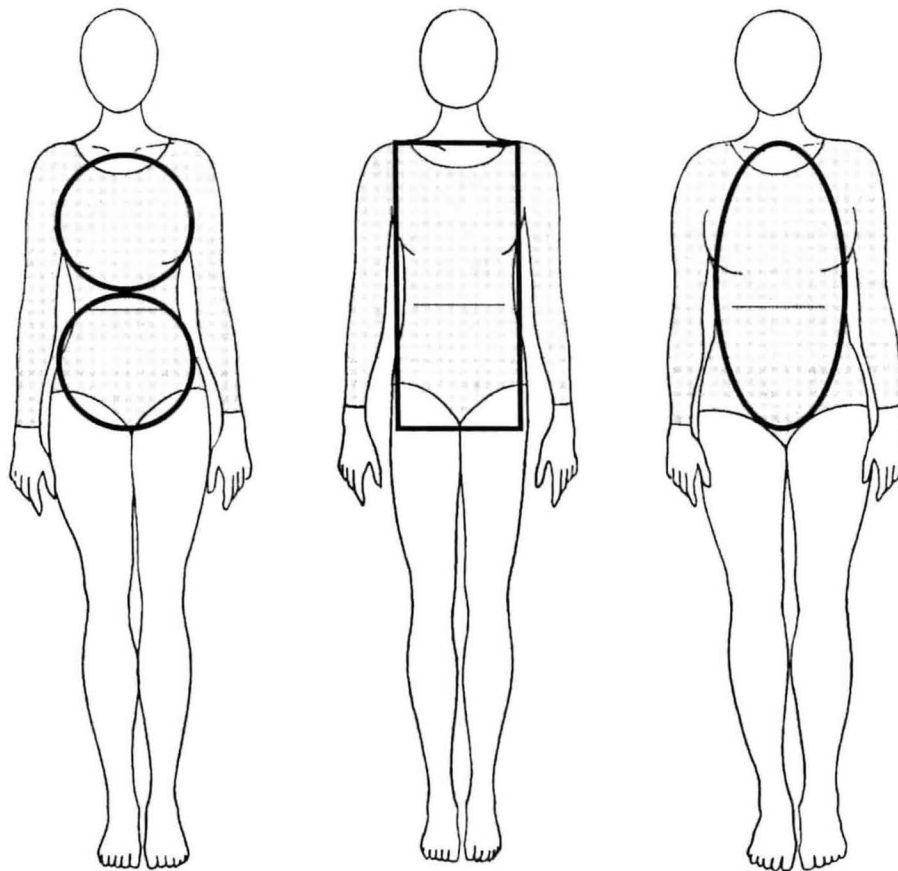


Figure-8 or Curvy (Thin or Full-figured)

This is the classic female form. Upper and lower torsos are equal in length and there is a visible indentation at the waistline. If you already look like this, you don't need much help! Some males will have this shape, but few will have the exaggerated difference between waist and hip measurements (typical for a female is a 10" difference). Examples of real Figure-8's: Elizabeth Taylor, Dolly Parton, and Zsa Zsa Gabor. Your body "line" is curved and you will look for clothes with a curved lines.

Box or Sharp (Thin or Full-figured)

This is where a lot of you will be classified. The box figure is just about equal in all directions. Your goal will be to create a waistline. Examples of real Boxes: Cher, Jackie Onassis, Cindy Crawford. Your body "line" is sharp and you will look for clothes with sharp lines.

Barrel or Soft (Full-figured)

The barrel shape is characterized by the upper torso being shorter but broader than the lower torso. In other words, broad shouldered and short-waisted. You probably don't have a waistline, but that can be corrected. You will also most likely wear a larger-sized top and a smaller-sized bottom. Examples of real Barrels: Tina Turner, Roseanne Arnold, Delta Burke. Your body "line" is soft and you will look for clothes with soft lines.

Clothing Sizes

Clothing manufacturers and retailers have finally realized that all women (including our kind of woman) do not wear sizes 6 to 10. As a matter of fact, the average woman wears a size 12. About 40% of American women wear a size 14 or larger. This is real bonus for us “big-boned” girls. Many up-to-date styles are now available for the full-figure. So, you don’t have to look dowdy or go on a starvation diet to look well-dressed. However, you must know what size and styles are best for you. As you shop, you will discover a fact that women have known forever: no two dresses, skirts, tops, etc., fit the same, even from the same manufacturer. Because of my broad shoulders, I usually need a size 14, but there are 12’s and 13’s in my closet that fit just fine. It takes a practiced eye to pick out the clothes that fit and that’s what this book is all about.

Don’t despair! I will try to save you time and money. On the next page are the current body measurements related to dress sizes. In 1986 the garment industry adopted new designations for women’s and half sizes. The measurements were also increased for a given size, and then increased again in 1991. Women’s sizes are now noted with a “W” and half sizes with a “WP”, for Women’s Petite. Notice there is a lot of overlap in bust, waist and hip measurements, especially between Misses and Women’s. But look at the measurement called Back Length to see where the real differences are found. Back Length is the distance from the base of the neck to the center of the waist. Compare the measurements for similar sizes in the charts. Note that while a 16WP has more generous measurements than a Misses 16, it is fully $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch shorter in the torso and not likely to fit us well.

What you need to do is measure your natural waist and back length (you may need a friend to help with this one) because these are the two body measurements that are difficult to alter. Sure, you can cinch in your waist with a corset, but just wait until you attend your first convention and try to wear it for eight hours, or try to eat dinner in it. Trust me, it’s better (and easier) to start with your natural waist and then “pad up” your hips and bust to the proper measurements. Once you know what size you ought to be (or want to be), then you can select the appropriate undergarments to help you achieve the figure you want. We’ll cover that after we’re done here with sizing.

Different dress styles in the same size will fit differently. A pull-on dress with elasticized waist will fit better than one with a back zipper and fitted waist. You may be able to wear a size smaller than usual in a simple chemise, while a slinky dinner dress in “your size” won’t fit at all. Also, the cheaper the price the tighter the fit. This is due to something dress designers call “ease.” Ease is the extra material added to a pattern to allow for slight variations in the size of the wearer. One way to cut the cost of a garment is to cut more pieces from a given piece of cloth by reducing the amount of ease and seam allowances. In the long run, though, it’s the consumer who loses because a too-tight seam is going to rip, and usually at the worst possible time.

Misses Sizes (inches) Average Height, 5'3" to 5'7"

SIZE	Medium		Large		X-Large		XX-Large		
	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24
Bust	34½	36½	38	39½	41	42½	44½	46½	48½
Waist	27	28	29½	31	32½	34½	36½	39	41
Hips	37½	38½	40	41½	43	45	47	49	51
Back Length	15¾	16	16¼	16½	16¾	17	17¼	17½	17¾

N.B.: Petite sizes are about 1" shorter in back length; Tall sizes are about 1" longer in back length.

Women's Sizes (inches) Average Height, 5'3" to 5'7"

SIZE	14W	16W	18W	20W	22W	24W	26W
Bust	39½	41½	43½	45½	47½	49½	51½
Waist	31½	33½	35½	37½	40	42½	45
Hips	42	43	46	48	50	52	54
Back Length	16¼	16½	16¾	17	17¼	17½	17¾

N.B.: Women's Petite sizes are about 1" shorter in back length.

Juniors Sizes (inches) Average Height, 5'3" to 5'7"

SIZE	Medium		Large		X-Large
	7	9	11	13	15
Bust	34½	35½	37	38½	40
Waist	26½	27½	29	30½	32
Hips	37	38	39½	41	42½

N.B.: Petite sizes are about 1" shorter in back length; Tall sizes are about 1" longer in back length.

Notes:

Most females are shorter than males. A 5'6" male is considered "short." He is in the 40th percentile, i.e. 60% of all males will be taller than he is. But that same 5'6" is the 80th percentile for a female, i.e., only 20% of all females will be taller than she is. If you are an "average" male, 5'10", you're going to be a "tall" woman. On average, a woman is about two inches shorter than a man.

A male is broad across his back because his shoulders are bigger than a female, but a female is broader across the chest because of her breasts. A female's breast is about 10-11 inches from her shoulder to nipple, while a male's nipple is about 12-13 inches from the shoulder. Hips are about 8 inches from the waist on a woman, but at least 10 inches on a man. You will have to adjust your padding to compensate for these differences.

Lingerie Basics

You're going to use lingerie to adjust your figure. You want to end up with measurements close to one of the sizes in the table ay left. You start with your natural waist measurement and adjust the bust and hips to match. First, a few guidelines:

Waistline — Your waist is the most difficult part of your body to adjust. If you want a smaller waist, go on a diet and exercise. To a certain extent, you can “train” your waist by wearing a corset frequently, but you run a risk of hurting yourself if you overdo it.

Bust — Most crossdressers go overboard with their bustline. I'd guess 90% are wearing boobs too big for their frame. Trust me, smaller is better.

Hips — Most men have hips the same size or smaller than their waist. The typical woman has hips 10 to 12 inches larger than her waist, so you need to pad out your hips.

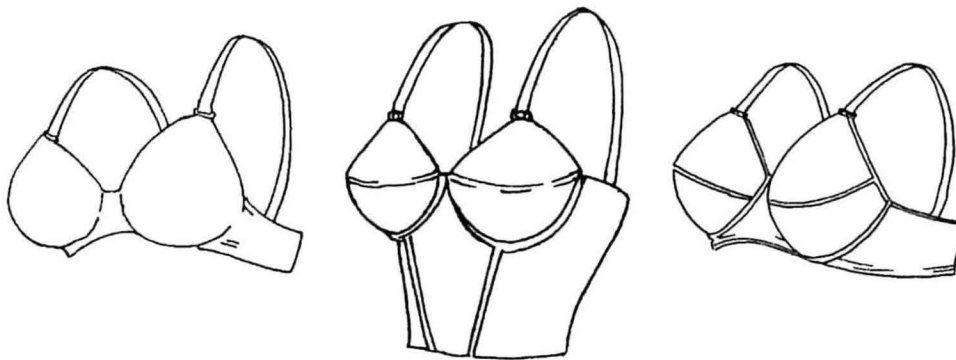
Bust Culture

Bras come with two measurements, a chest size (number) and a cup size (letter), such as 36C. In order to select the correct bra, women must take these two measurements, the first at a level under the arms but above the bust, and the second across the fullest part of the bust. The first is the numerical bra size and the difference between the two measurements determine the cup size. You only need to make the first measurement since you can decide what cup size you like and stuff the cup accordingly. Rather than measure up high on your chest, measure just at or below the nipples and use this as the numerical size.

Choose a cup size to go with your frame. If you are tall and slender, select at least a B cup. If you are stockier, select a C or D cup. The idea is to balance your figure. Of course, if big breasts turn you on, then wear them, but be prepared for stares and unwanted attention.

For the last few years, I've been buying my bras from Victoria's Secret. They're great, especially when they go on sale. I also happen to like styles that hook in the front and they carry quite a selection of those. The front-hook bras are easier to wear. Look for a bra with a soft, stretchy cup, underwires (so your breastforms don't fall out) and elastic adjustable straps. These characteristics will give you the best fit and the elastic straps will allow the forms to bounce a little enhancing the realism.

TIP



Types of Brassieres:

Left—Soft Cup

Center—Longline

Right—Underwire

All styles shown are back-hook.

Types of Bras

Bras come in a myriad of styles, closures, cups, etc. (See illustrations on the previous page.) Once you determine your size, the final selection is a matter of personal choice. There are some guidelines that will be helpful, however.

Full-busted women usually wear an underwire bra. This type of bra has a metal or plastic support built into the bottom of the cup to support the breast. I recommend this type of bra because it provides support for your breastforms. There is a variation of this type called an overwire. I have a strapless longline overwire which is perfect for strapless dresses or spaghetti straps. The overwire guarantees that your breastform will not fall out.

Another characteristic to look for is elastic straps. This will add a natural bounce as you walk. If you have problems with bra straps sliding off your shoulders, try a "Tee" back bra. The straps are connected in a "T" or "Y" shape in the back and can't slip off your shoulders.

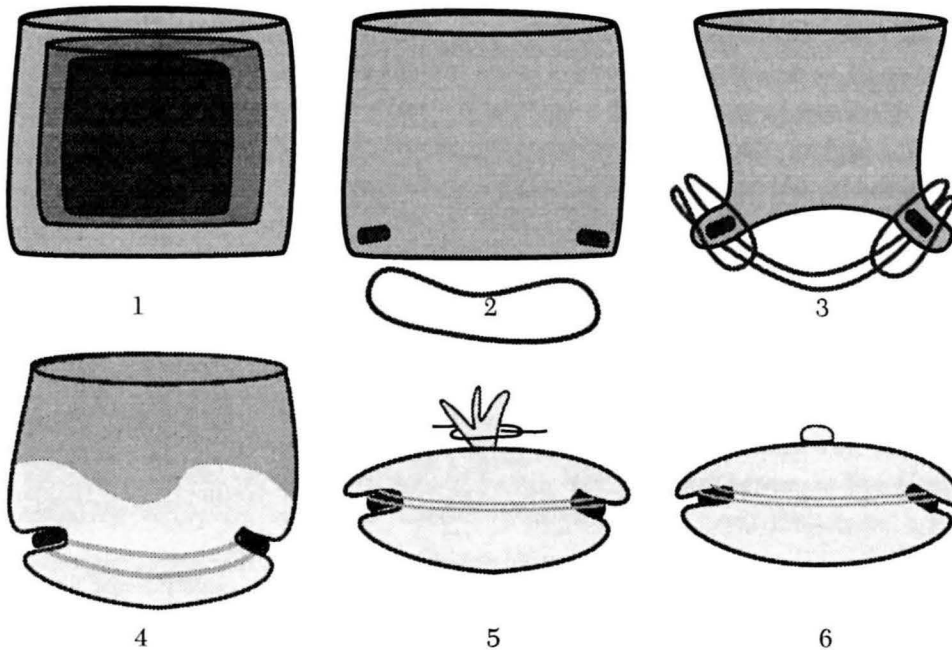
Breast Forms

Now that you know what size bra to wear, how do you fill those cups? Breastforms are available ranging from homemade to foam-rubber falsies to silicone filled mastectomy forms. Prices range from a few cents to several hundred dollars. Mastectomy forms are available in most large department store catalogs and from speciality shops catering to crossdressers. (See the listings in the CDS *Who's Who & Resource Guide*.) Some enterprising crossdressers are making their own forms and selling them at the various events. These usually feel really great but they don't look so hot. Nevertheless, you can't beat the price at less than \$100.

The Mirage breastform (sold by NS Products, PO Box 260342, Glendale, CA 91225) and the Melody breastform (sold by Melody Products, PO Box 1088, Yorba Linda, CA 92686) are the "Cadillacs" of mastectomy forms. Those who own either kind swear they're the greatest. Both forms are made to look and feel as realistic as possible. I think the Melody has a slight edge in the "feel" department, but the Mirage can be glued to the body and worn without a bra. Talk about bounce. On the downside, both Mirage and Melody are very expensive. Mirage starts at around \$600 and a pair that are custom fitted and colored can run you the price of a good used car. Melody forms are all one price regardless of size, but still pricey at \$700 plus.

TIP

I suggest you buy the mastectomy forms in the beginning. These will cost you about \$250 for a decent set. If you feel that you can't afford even that amount, then try making your own. The simplest breastform is an old stocking or a leg cut from pantyhose filled with uncooked rice or birdseed. Fill the foot of the stocking with your filler until you get the desired size. You can check the size by resting the filled foot on a flat surface and note how much the foot stretches. Twist the nylon to secure the filler and fold the open end over the "boob." Keep folding (four or five times) until you have about two inches of stocking left and tie a tight knot up close the ball that has formed. Knot a few times and you have a



Make your own breastforms.

1. Nest three baggies.
2. Inset an eraser in each inside corner. Get a rubber band.
3. Make a "noose" with the rubber band and loop it over and around the erasers.
4. Turn the bags inside out (rubber band is now inside) and fill with water or freezer gel.
5. Twist bags closed and tie off the "neck" with fishing line or waxed dental floss.
6. Twist neck tightly and fold over. Tie off again, then wrap with the line or floss and tie again. This makes the nipple.

nipple. Trim of the excess stocking. Repeat for a second form. Measure the filler the same way for both sides so you end up with two forms the same size.

My favorite "el cheapo" forms are made from quart-size plastic sandwich bags. You will also need some rubber bands, dental floss, and four pencil erasers. The forms can be filled with tap water, or, better yet, Blue Ice, the gel you put into the freezer to keep your picnic food cold. The Blue Ice can be found at almost any hardware store and it's cheap.

The illustrations at right will help explain the procedure. Peel six bags off the roll and turn them inside out. Nest three inside each other. This will afford some protection against leaks. Take two pencil erasers or any other small round, blunt objects and place one into each corner of the inside bag. Loop a short rubber band around the outside of the bags, trapping the eraser in the corner. The rubber bands should be short, about 2 to 3 inches long. Repeat with the other corner. Then turn the bags right side out. The rubber bands pull the corners inward and cause two things to happen; the bag takes on a more natural breast shape, and when filled with water it will "give" and seem more natural to the touch. Fill the bag with 1 to 1½ cups of warm (less air dissolved in it) tap water or freezer gel. Exactly how much you use will depend on how big a breastform you want. Use a measuring cup, so that the second breast will be the same size. Carefully twist the bag closed, making sure no air is trapped inside. Tie the bag closed with the dental floss at the base of the twist. Wrap the floss around once or twice and tie again. Tightly twist the top, fold it over and tie it again. This makes a small rounded bump that can simulate a nipple. Cut off the excess bag. Repeat the process with the other bags. The freezer gel is better than water since it won't evaporate. The process takes about a half hour. I have a set of these made with the gel that have traveled to Europe and back in my luggage with no leaks.

If your bra has elastic straps they will bounce like real breasts, since most body tissue is water. I made pockets from skin colored tights to hold the forms. The pockets serve two purposes. I noticed in a photo taken with a flash that the plastic bags showed right through my clothes. The pockets eliminate the reflection from the plastic and they eliminate the odd noises caused by the plastic bags rubbing against the bra cups.

To set the record straight, I got the basic idea for these forms from Nikki Bee (Serenity, Fla.) and improved on it a little. A friend of mine was very nervous about using plastic sandwich bags, so she substituted a doubled pair of latex surgical gloves with the fingers tied off and the glove turned inside out. (Now why didn't I think of that?) They work just fine too, if you can find the gloves. I've also heard of using condoms, but I don't recommend it; they're too fragile. Balloons are also very fragile and noisy as well. Try some water balloons and you'll see what I mean.

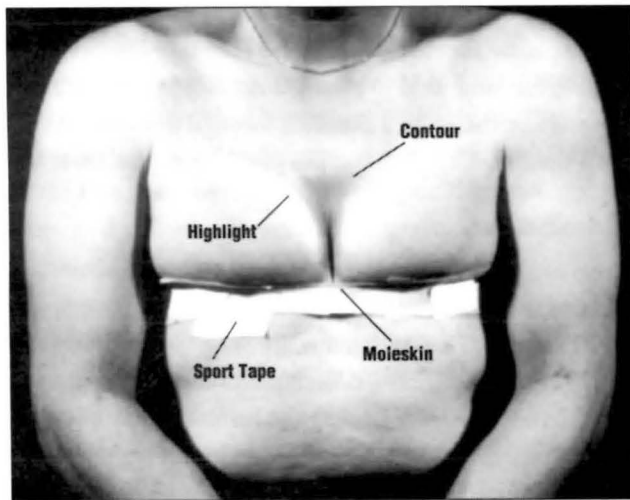
Cleavage

One year, when Hallowe'en fell in the middle of the week, I went with two other crossdressers to a local straight club that was having a costume party. We attracted quite a bit of attention, especially from young women. The question we were most often asked was, "How did you get that cleavage?" In every case the interrogator was a genetic female. I was quite surprised at their interest in cleavage and how important it seemed to them. I know it is important to us as well. In fact, it is so important to some crossdressers that they begin to take female hormones in the hopes of developing their own breasts

I don't recommend that crossdressers take hormones to develop breasts, and consequently cleavage. First, you will be disappointed with whatever breast tissue you do develop; it's never enough. And second, it's very, very dangerous. You are ten-times more likely to develop a thrombo-embolism or phlebitis if you are taking female hormones. The decision to take female hormones is a very private and personal one, but one that should be made under the care and guidance of a physician. Enough preaching; back to the cleavage.

The technique I describe here is suitable for just about anyone. I learned it from my very good friend Denise Mason. Many people have told me that the drawings in the original A&I weren't clear enough. I don't think I can write the instructions any better but I can show you photos of the process. You will need Sport Tape and Dr. Scholl's Moleskin. These are the basic steps:

- Apply a thin, sheer coat of foundation to the chest area to even out the color.
- Clean the nipple area with alcohol to remove any body oils or powder. Apply two-inch long strips of one-inch wide Sport Tape just under each nipple. The Sport Tape helps to spread out the pressure of the next tape, moleskin.
- Prepare a piece of moleskin by cutting it 1½ inches wide and about 8 - 18 inches long. Denise warms the moleskin over a lightbulb. The heat makes the adhesive stickier.
- Fold the moleskin in half and at the fold cut a "V" then peel off the backing.



- Pull the chest skin together with one hand, creating a cleft in the center, and hold it in place while you apply the moleskin over the sport tape. Start in the center and work out toward each side. This takes some practice to do one-handed. It's a lot easier if a friend or partner can help. You may need to apply more tape from the side of the breast toward the center of the chest in a diagonal to keep everything in place.

Creating Cleavage 1: Place Sport Tape under each nipple. Pull chest together and hold in place with moleskin tape.

- Apply contour in the skin cleft to increase the illusion of depth. Put highlights on the tops of the breasts in an arc to create the illusion of fullness. Blend both the highlight and contour. Reapply if necessary, then powder and seal with alcohol.

Creating Cleavage 2: Add your favorite bra and breastforms. Push-up pads may help too.

- Cover it all with your favorite bra and breastforms. Make sure none of the tape shows above the bra. You can even add push-up pads to increase the effect.

Breast lifts can create awesome cleavage. The "L" is made from 1/8 inch polystyrene plastic found in any hobby store. The glue is medical grade silicone adhesive.

I'm never one to be satisfied with the status quo and while the above technique has worked for me many times, it sometimes didn't work and at

least once it tore about two inches of skin off my chest. So, I kept looking for better ways to create the same effect. I'd stand in front of the mirror and push my chest for some awesome cleavage and try to figure out how to make it all stay there. It finally dawned on me

that it was my fingers on the sides of my breasts and not under them that was doing all the work. So, I made a pair of “L’s” out of some plastic sheet I had and glued them to the sides of my breasts with silicone medical adhesive, the kind used to attach colostomy bags. I put two small holes in the ends under my breasts and threaded a shoelace through the holes. I could now adjust the amount of cleavage I wanted. The photo on the previous page shows where the “L’s” are glued.

One last comment about breasts. As in real estate, the three most important things about breasts are location, location, location. I have seen many crossdressers who do a very nice job on their makeup and then their breasts are either down at the waist or up under their chin. The bust should fall about the middle of the upper arm. Also, a man’s nipples are spaced wider than a woman’s, so don’t make the mistake of placing the forms directly over your own nipples. Move them slightly closer together. Make sure that one breast isn’t higher than the other. The point is to look at yourself when dressing. I mean really look critically. Does everything look natural? If not, make the adjustment now before you venture out. The last thing you need is to have some cretin gawk at your boobs hanging down around your waist or stuffed up under your chin.

Filling Out Your Hips

Most men have hips too narrow in relation to their waist for a proper fit in female clothing. In this case, you need to “fatten” your hips. The latter is accomplished with padding. Similarly the only fix for a flat or droopy derriere is also padding. Special panty girdles are made with pockets to hold special pads. The best known of these are available from Fredericks of Hollywood, but the panty is cheap and the pads look lumpy.

TIP

Here’s two ways to make your own hip pads. I picked these tricks up from professional female impersonators. With either method, you wear the pads under a pair of pantyhose. The first way involves buying foam seat-pads, like the kind that you tie to a wooden chair. Lay the pad up against your hip and with a marking pen draw a shield on the pad with the point at the bottom. Repeat for the other side. Now trim the pads with a scissors and taper the edges. Use a second layer of foam if you need more padding. Glue the layers together with craft glue. The second method is easier. Look for a pair of big oven mitts. Cut off the thumbs and sew the openings closed. Fill with pillow stuffing from a craft store. Sew the end closed and you have hip pads. Sew two pairs together to get a larger pad.

If neither of these tricks appeal to you, or you’re just all thumbs when it comes to artsy-crafty stuff, well there’s still hope. At least two companies make “hip-slips.” These are slips with several layers of petticoat material attached underneath that fluff out the hip area. Try LD Fashions, PO Box 50873, Chicago, IL 60650. Tell ’em I sent ya.

Nip & Tuck

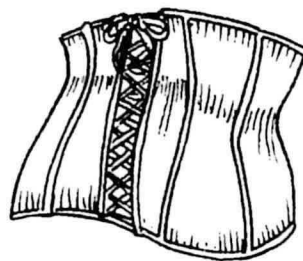
Corsets, Waist Cinchers & All-In-Ones

I can see the glaze come over your eyes at the mention of a corset. This particular garment probably has the highest sexual attraction for men and women, both. It is also the one item that is going to give you the most problems if you want to wear one. Corsets and cinchers are designed for women; unless you have one custom made it just ain't gonna fit right. The location of the waist in relation to the hips is in the wrong place. Given a woman the same height as you, in general, her legs are longer, her torso shorter and her waist is higher. I'm not saying you can't ever wear one of these (I own two.), just that is going to fit differently. The same is true for waist cinchers unless it is custom made (which can be done).

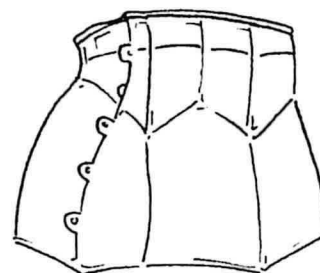
Cinchers are generally not as rugged as a corset, nor as long. Corset and cincher should be sized about 4 to 6 inches smaller than your natural waist. If you want to be able to sit, eat and breathe, 2 to 4 inches smaller. Also, all that tissue you're compressing has to go somewhere. Some of it goes in, some goes up, but a lot of it will go down, below the waist (talk about a spare tire). A good steel-boned corset will cost over \$150, (more if it's custom made) so you better really want one.

Braselles and Body Briefers are based on bust size. Fit is just as difficult as a corset. These garments will vary in length and your best bet is to get the longest possible. Look for the "waist-down" measurement. This is the length from your natural waistline to the bottom of the garment. Generally, these are not as stiff and rigid as a corset or a waist cincher, so they won't pull you in as much. These garments are graded as to the degree of control (moderate or firm) depending on the amount of spandex in the fabric

A relatively new garment is the power-slip. This is either a full or half slip made with an extra-heavy Lycra or spandex. Many of the full slips have underwired bra cups and a built in panty. Nevertheless, unless you already have a shape to start with, these won't really carve you a new figure.



A lace-up corset should be 4-6 inches smaller than your natural waist. Expect to pay over \$150 for a good one.



A waist cincher is not as strong as a corset and won't pull your waist in a lot. They are also a lot less expensive, usually about \$25 to \$35.



All-in-ones: Body Briefer (above left) is made of power-net or spandex and provides firm control.

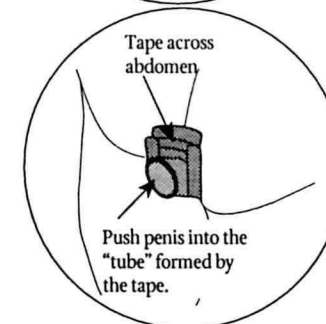
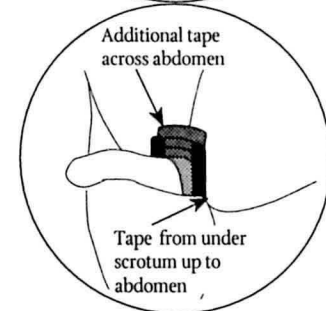
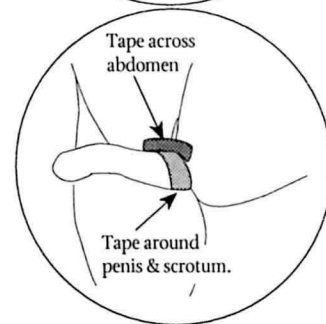
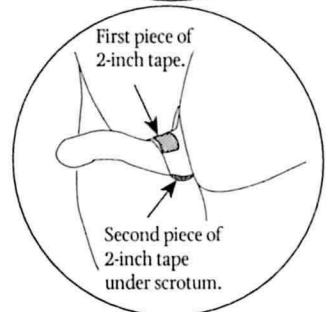
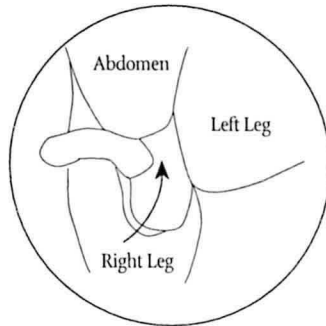
The Brasellette (below left) has both spandex and wire boning to mold the figure.



Neither will shape you like a corset does, but they are much less expensive, \$35 to \$65.

The JoAnn Roberts' "patented" Instant Sex Change.

1. Testes pushed up into body.
2. Scrotum held around penis with plastic medical tape.
3. A second, longer piece of tape forms a tube around penis.
4. Crease above penis closed off with more tape.
5. Penis pushed up into tube, and tube folded inward.
6. Add panty girdle or brief to hold everything inside. Even Lycra pantyhose will do it.
7. Instant Sex Change!



Hiding The Genitals

One of the more difficult aspects of crossdressing is trying to figure out what to do with your genitals. This will depend a lot on the degree of comfort you desire, the style of clothing and whether or not you will need to use a toilet.

The most common way to hide the genitals is to wear a gaff. A gaff is a triangular piece of cloth or Lycra that is tied tightly around the hips with a cord and pulled back between the legs. The genitals are tucked between the legs and the gaff holds everything in place. To do this it must be tight. While I have never used one I am told that it can be quite uncomfortable. A tight panty girdle serves much the same purpose. Fashion Fantasy, 9013A Centreville Rd., Manassas, VA 22110, makes a great gaff that won't ride up your butt. It is very comfortable to wear, has a wide waist band that won't roll over, and it's available in several colors. Call 'em for the latest price.

Once again, I did my own research and it seems to me that the main problems are the testicles and scrotum. If these can be effectively hidden, then the penis can be pushed back between the legs and held by a brief or panty. Here is the method I developed. It takes longer to describe than to do it and I call it the Instant Sex Change. With this method you can wear tight spandex leggings or even a bathing suit.

- I use plastic vented surgical tape 1-inch wide. This will not tear the skin when removed. Remove most of your pubic hair from the testicles and above the penis. Peel off two 2-inch and one 6-inch strip of surgical tape and place them near at hand. Push your penis back between your legs so that the scrotum is expanded with the testes.
- **Carefully** push the testes up into the groin and pull the loose scrotum skin forward. (Note: Some of you will not be able to do this. It has to do with a set of muscles that must be stretched to allow the testes past. All I can tell you is try.) You should have two loose folds of skin. Release the penis and fold these

skin flaps, one over the other, on top of the penis. Place a 2-inch piece of tape over the flaps. Place the other 2-inch piece lengthwise along the base on the penis.

- Your testes should stay up inside your body now. Go around the entire fold and penis with the longer piece of tape. The result is a sheath of skin around the penis. If you stop here, you can push the penis back between your legs to wear a gaff or a tight panty to keep everything in place.
- If you want the ultimate smooth line for a swimsuit or a high cut costume, you need to add some additional tape. You will notice a small crease is formed just above the penis. The testes can pop out from this crease, so we have to close it off. You do that by placing several layers of the medical tape over the crease. I also add two more pieces starting from under the base of the penis, coming up over the sides.
- Final step. You should now have a tube formed by the skin of the scrotum covered with tape. Gently push the penis up into the tube. You will learn by practice just how tight to wrap the penis with the tape for the penis to stay up inside the tube. Once you've done that, fold the tube inward and put on a gaff or a panty girdle. You will have a smooth line through the crotch.

Sizing

Panties and briefs are sized differently from dresses (it figures). They come in a number size based on hip measurement, as shown below in the chart. Women's panties are much too narrow through the crotch for us to wear unless you use the aforementioned tuck and tape method. I recommend a strong panty girdle rather than skimpy nylon panties.

Panty and Brief Sizes (inches) Average Height, 5'3" to 5'7"

SIZE	5	6	7	8	9	10
Hips	36-37	38-39	40-41	42-43	44-45	46-47

Slips & Camisoles

Full slips and camisoles are sized by bust measurement, while half-slips go by waist size (or panty size) and length. This is a no-brainer for choice. Consider slips with slits if your clothing has slits or kick pleats. Please try to coordinate your slip color with your outer clothing and make sure it doesn't show. Nothing looks more sloppy (on a woman or a crossdresser) than to have your white slip showing from under your black skirt.



Slips: A full-slip (right) is sized either by dress-size or by bust. A half-slip (left) is sized by waist and length. Generally, the shortest slips are 19" from the waist and 23" is average. A chemise is a full-slip with a very short skirt. A Camisole is just the top half of a full-slip.

Hosiery

Pantyhose

Just about everyone will be wearing pantyhose even though stockings are definitely sexier. Pantyhose usually have a size chart on the package that uses height and weight, but remember that this chart is for women who carry more weight in their hips and legs than men do. Some experimentation is required to find the “right” size. If I were to go by the weight on the chart, I’d be wearing Extra-Large, but Medium fits me fine which is what I’d get from the chart if I use height. Fit will also vary with manufacturer. I have a friend who swears that only Donna Karan pantyhose fit her correctly. I get all my pantyhose from Victoria’s Secret and the L’Eggs Outlet catalog.

Of course, I’m eccentric when it comes to pantyhose. I wear two pairs. All the time. The first pair are in a neutral color, like Nude, and are sheer to the waist with lots of spandex for support. I like L’Eggs Sheer Energy pantyhose for this pair. These serve as my “foundation” garment for my legs. They firm and smooth the calf muscles and also hide any hair that’s grown since I last shaved my legs. The first pair also get a hole cut into the cotton crotch panel so I use the bathroom without removing everything. The second pair of hose are colored to coordinate with whatever I’m wearing and usually have a french-cut panty built in. For this pair, I buy the Victoria’s Secret hose since they have a great color selection and the hose are very sheer. If you can’t shave your legs, you can use a variation of the two-pair scheme. Make the first pair flesh-colored tights instead of pantyhose. This will hide the hair on your legs. Then the second pair coordinate to match your outfit.

TIP

Getting into a pair of pantyhose the first time can be an experience and result in rips and runs. Make sure your finger nails and toe nails do not have any jagged edges to cause snags and runs. If your nails are a wreck, wear white cotton gloves to put on the pantyhose. Sit on a chair or the edge of the bed. Gather both legs of the pantyhose down to the ankles and slip over both feet. Gradually work the legs up to your knees a little at a time, working each leg alternately. Once you get to your knees, stand and pull up from the waistband until it is at your waist. Sometimes it will help if you dampen your hands and drag your palms up your legs. The extra friction will smooth out the hose. If you do the two-pair trick described above, putting on the second pair is a snap.

There’s a new kind of yarn being used in pantyhose called microfiber. It’s Lycra filaments wound with nylon and it is silky smooth. These hose tend to run on the opaque side and they are very run-resistant. But, when they do run, look out. No little holes here.

Stockings

Stockings and garter-belts go in and out of style, although we faux-girls have probably never given them up. Some department stores still carry a selection of stockings and garter-belts, but it gets harder and harder to find them. Proper stocking fit will involve specifying a size and length, where possible. A little experimentation in size selection will be involved since the kind of yarn and the knit style will affect fit. Start with your female shoe size and

work up by half-size steps. I wear a size 10 shoe and take an 11-Long stocking. (If you don't know your shoe size we'll deal with that later.) Also, start with a Tall or Long since your legs are almost certainly heavier than a female's. Some stockings come in a nylon-spandex blend which stretches quite a bit and thus these are sized in Small, Medium, and Large. Start with Medium if you're under 5'8", otherwise buy Large. I buy Hanes *Silk Reflection* stockings by the bag through the L'EGGS Outlet. They're great. Many TV boutiques, like Vernon's and Lee's Mardi Gras, carry an extensive selection of stockings, including hard-to-find seamed stockings. They also carry garter-belts which you buy by waist-size. Forget the garter-belts that are one-size-fits-all, or sized Small, Medium, Large, because they won't hold up your stockings. They're more for play.

Lingerie Colors

As a minimum you should have two complete sets of lingerie, one set in black and one set in beige or nude (not white). You will need the beige under light clothing. White will show through almost everything, including white clothes. Other color choices can be purchased after you have the basics. I find it very sexy to wear all one color underneath everything.

Lingerie Notes

Those are the basics for the selection and fit of lingerie. It will pay off in the long run to buy smart and buy right. It is not pleasant to be out for the evening and have your underwear pinching and binding.

Skip the Fredericks Of Hollywood catalog. Most of their items are going to be too small for you and the quality is such that it just won't hold up. Much of their lingerie is for show, not everyday wear and tear. Buy from a reputable TV boutique or check out any one of a number of mail order catalogs from a department store. And if you are big, don't despair. The fashion world has discovered that large women like to feel sexy too, and size is generally not a problem today. So get out those catalogs and start steaming up your glasses.

Your Outer Image

Being Well-Dressed

This is a major step in the process of crossing gender lines. Everything you've achieved up to now could be ruined by ill-fitting or poorly chosen clothes. Just as "Clothes Make the Man," they make the woman as well. I do not care if people who see JoAnn realize that I am a male in women's clothing, but I do care that they think I am well-dressed. The better I look the more likely I will be treated respectfully, even if they do realize I am a cross-dresser. If I look like a tramp, I'll be treated like one. Sometimes that's the effect you'll want. But in most social situations, you want to look smart, not tart. Knowing how to dress well is an acquired skill. It means understanding your body and how different clothes will look when hung on that body. It also means spending your money wisely.

Just what is meant by well-dressed? Well, it used to mean you spent a lot of money on your clothes, i.e., high-priced, designer fashions. That is not true today. With a little bit of planning and some judicious shopping, you can all be well-dressed. Well-dressed today means attention to your total image, including makeup, hair, clothing cut, color, designs, fabric and accessories. All of these must balance each other and your personality. If your clothes don't fit your personality, you will look and feel uncomfortable. Therefore, you will not be well-dressed. You must find your personal style.

Personal Style

Most fashion experts agree there are four personal styles, although some have different names for these styles: Dramatic, Classic, Romantic, and Casual.

Dramatic • High fashion. We tend to think dramatic clothes can only be worn by tall thin people. Not so. Dramatic is a feeling. Are you ambitious? Do you like fast cars? Would you like to be the powerful woman executive who travels the world? That's Dramatic style.

Classic • Tailored and structured, timeless. Conservative, but never go out of style, like a blue blazer and grey slacks. If you like the career look of an executive, administrator, or manager, that's Classic style.

Romantic • Ruffles, lace, and frills, ultra-feminine. This is a very difficult look to achieve well, even for genetic women. Romantic is only acceptable for special occasions. Romantic is never appropriate for a work environment.

Casual • No nonsense dressing. Jeans and tee tops. Slacks and loose fitting blouses.

You can switch between personal styles, just don't mix them in the same outfit. You don't have to be trapped in dressing one way all the time. I often say I'm part drag queen because I like to dress very flamboyant on occasion, but generally I am a Dramatic person, as if you couldn't guess.

When buying clothes look at the quality of workmanship in the garment. Are the edges trimmed and basted? Is the garment lined? Are hems and seams straight and tight? These are all signs of quality. You should look the best that you can. It doesn't pay to buy cheap, even for clothes you won't wear that often. Cheap clothes are cut tighter and are more likely to rip. Here are some standards:

- Blouse: sleeve comes to wrist, buttons close with 1 inch of fabric on each side of bust, 2 inches of fabric on each side for blousing.
- Skirt/slacks: 1-inch of extra fabric at hips, you should be able to put two fingers in the waistband while wearing it, hang straight from buttocks, pleats and pockets stay closed.
- Jacket: Shoulder 1 inch wider than your shoulder bone, ¼ to ½-inch of blouse shows from sleeve, no pulling or gaping across the back.

Cut & Line

In order to appear well-dressed, you need to match the clothes to your body. You first figure out your body line from back on page 12 and then you shop for clothes that follow that line. Try to imagine Dolly Parton (a Figure 8) in a very sharp-lined and fitted business suit. Doesn't work, does it?



Clothes have "lines" too. At left is a suit with sharp lines for the Box shape. At center is a suit with curved lines for the Figure 8. At right is a suit with soft lines for the barrel shape.

Just as there are body "lines," clothes are cut with a predominant line in mind. See the illustrations above for examples. There are actually several different variations of these lines, both for bodies and clothes, but I have simplified them here. Once you catch on to the concept, you can experiment with different lines.

Scale

Scale is the proportion of one object to another. In this case, the first object is you, the other is your clothes. Therefore, keep clothes to scale. If your clothes are not scaled to your body you will look badly dressed. The better the quality of clothing you buy, the better the fit (generally) and the better the scale. Almost all women's clothes are designed as a size 8 and then scaled up or down as needed. An eighth-inch error in a seam at a size 8 can mean over an inch error at size 14. Most of us need average or overscale clothes to look well-dressed. Sometimes overscale clothing can work to your advantage. Think you'll never fit in a size 10? Maybe you will, if it's designed overscale. Going the other direction, a very tall size 14 might be able to wear a Petite 14 as a minidress, after letting out the sleeves.

Clothing Suggestions

On the next several pages, I'm going to suggest different styles of clothing based on body type. We'll look at suits, skirts, dresses, and evening wear.

Of course, it would take an encyclopedia to list and show every style of dress and its variations. That's well beyond the scope of this book. You should start buying some of the fashion magazines. Two I would suggest are *Allure* and *Glamour*.

The Barrel (soft lines)

The best *suit* for a barrel shape —

Simplicity, structure, vertical lines are for you. **Shop for** • a cardigan-style jacket • strong shoulder line • easy fit at bust, armpits • hip length • a slim-lined skirt darker than or matched to jacket • eased fit in the waist, tummy, hips • mid-knee length • flat-finish fabrics that hold shape well: gabardines; silk broadcloth; lightweight wool; soft poplin; lined jersey with spandex • solid colors or subtle patterns.

Don't buy • flimsy fabrics: lightweight knit; slinky jersey; bulky fabrics: tweed, ribbed knit • a tight fit: • flap or patch pockets • peplum or bolero jacket • a jacket that hits you mid-hip • gigantic patterns: be splashy in a scarf or blouse, not the suit.



The best *dress* for a barrel shape —

A dress with built-in structure, as opposed to a formless tent, is most flattering. **Shop for** • a tailored dress • strong shoulders • soft fabrics that tailor well: gabardines; lightweight wool flannel; lined jersey; crisp linen; poplin; silk broadcloth • length to mid-knee or just below: show great legs! • a wrap front • solid colors or tiny patterns: houndstooth, pindots, chalk stripes • dark; rich color • matching or darker belt. **Other good choices** • two-piece dress in a soft fabric, if it has structured shoulders • nice bonus: angled slash pockets. **Don't buy** • baggy, shapeless dress • clingy knits, hefty tweeds, corduroy • patch or flap pockets • double-breasted styling • starkest white; pastels • two-color dress unless the bottom half is black or navy.



The best *evening* look for a barrel shape —

You'll look great in simple shapes done in luxurious fabrics, like a satin jacket and crepe sheath. **Shop for** • a jacket in silk, polyester or rayon satin or crepe • dark-tone crepe sheath or slim skirt • length to mid-knee or just above • hose toned to skirt and shoes. **Other good choices** • gently full, softly structured blouse in soft fabric that holds shape: stiff-finish chiffon, organza, georgette, taffeta • fluid skirt in soft fabric: silk, crepes, lined chiffon (if your top isn't chiffon), georgette, mousseline. **Don't buy** • a baggy or too-tight fit • a skirt in a heavy or clingy fabric: velvet, brocade, jersey • strapless, halter, spaghetti-strap • poufs, tiers, flounces in a skirt or dress • wide, billowing pants.





The best skirt for a barrel shape —

Shop for • skirt with ease and soft lines, that floats around you, not against you • tiny gathers at the waist: they create ease, prevent clutch at the waist, tummy, rear • narrow-falling line • length just reaching bottom curve of calf • flowing fabric: silk or high-quality polyester crepe de chine; challis; mane rayon; wool crepe • dark solids or subtle patterns • dark, sheer hosiery, toned to skirt. **Other good choices** • a slim, shorter skirt if worn with a below-the-hip top • knee-length trouser-cut slim skirt • gored skirt if not too flared • bias-cut skirt if it doesn't cling. **Don't buy** • a tight fit • poufs, tiers, flounces, ruffles • pegged skirt or sarong • light colors, splashy patterns • shiny, bulky, or stiff fabrics.



The Box (sharp lines)

The best suit for a box shape —

Shop for • a jacket with curved shape at the waist, hips • a strong shoulder line • mid-hip length • a skirt with soft fullness at the waist and hips • top-of-the-knee length • unmatched skirt/jacket: contrasting colors, mixed and/or bold patterns; any colors • gutsy fabrics: tweeds, checks, bulky knits, high-nap wovens like corduroy, velvet. **Other good choices** • peplum jacket • wrap jacket that flares from the waist when belted • draped, side-closure jacket • wide double-breasted jacket • flaring skirt • moderately exaggerated details lapels, big pocket flaps, bold topstitching • box-pleat skirt. **Don't buy** • below-hip or boxy jacket • tight straight skirt • drop shoulders • narrow skirt • flimsy fabric.



The best dress for a box shape —

Fabric is key: Look for dense textures and/or sturdy weaves to “pad” your curves. **Shop for** • strong shoulders • fullness below the waist, whether via belting or built-in pleats, gathers, tiers, “stand-away” fabric • sturdy weaves, high density textures: corduroy knits, gabardine, wool flannel, poplin • soft fit above the waist • mid-knee length • light or bright colors; contrasting top/bottom; bold pattern. **Other good choices** • trapeze dress • broad necklines: boatneck, wide shawl collar, lapels. **Don't buy** • sleekest, body-conscious dresses • a tight fit • contrasting belt • flimsy, clingy fabrics • longest hemlines • cutaway sleeves • halter neckline.

The best evening look for a box shape —

Shop for • allover shirring • structure in the torso, bustline, hips • optional: a little hip padding • mid-knee maximum length • strapless, one-shoulder, off-the-shoulder styles • pliable fabric shirred, gathered or ruched over a stiffer one like chiffon or crepe over satin; stretch knits that crush into shirring; puckered knits • any color; best if not black. **Other good choices** • any “best” in this guide, in luxurious evening fabrics: satin, chiffon, sequins • frills and flounces • dramatic shoulder emphasis: tiered collars; decorative ornamentation. **Don’t buy** • a slim tunic that mimics your shape • clingy fabrics or knits • skimpy camisole or thin-strap top or dress.



The best skirt for a box shape —

Styles that emphasize waist and hips are for you. **Shop for** • a side-tucked sarong, gather-and-wrap adds “padding” around waist and hips • top-of-the-knee length • supple fabric • boldest colors, patterns • option: tying sarong instead of tucking. **Other good choices** • all-around waist gathers, if at least knee length • high-release box pleats • two- or three-pleat trouser skirt • yoked or gored skirt • bulky-knit pull-on • fringe, tiers, ruffles, shirring. **Don’t buy** • flimsy, clingy fabrics • long hemlines in narrow cuts • slim wraps, lean knits • stitched-down knife pleats • high waist unless it’s soft fabric that crushes into folds.



The Figure 8 (curved lines)

The best suit for a Figure 8 shape —

Shop for • a jacket with shape that follows yours, tapering at the waist • a slightly padded shoulder line • hip length or just below • a slim skirt, matched or unmatched • top-of-the-knee length • soft fabrics: wool, gabardine, challis, silk, wool crepe, cotton jersey, fine-gauge knits. **Don’t buy** • narrow, mid-calf skirt • oversize jacket • frilly styles • full skirts • flounces • gathers.





The best dress for a Figure 8 shape —

Fabric is key: Look for dense textures and/or sturdy weaves to “pad” your curves. **Shop for** • strong shoulders • fullness below the waist, whether via belting or built-in pleats, gathers, tiers, “stand-away” fabric • sturdy weaves, high density textures: corduroy knits, gabardine, wool flannel, poplin • soft fit above the waist • mid-knee length • light or bright colors; contrasting top/bottom; bold pattern. **Other good choices** • trapeze dress • broad necklines: boatneck, wide shawl collar, lapels. **Don’t buy** • sleekest, body-conscious dresses • a tight fit • contrasting belt • flimsy, clingy fabrics • longest hemlines • cutaway sleeves, halter neckline.



The best evening look for a Figure 8 shape —

Shop for • halter • strapless • off-the-shoulder • body skimming • decorative detailing around the neck or above the waist • length just above knee to ankle • soft fabrics: thin knits, silk crepe de chine, charmeuse, lined chiffon, sequins, silk crepe, lace. **Other good choices** • any “best” in this guide, in luxurious fabrics: velvet, microfiber, satin • sequined jacket • narrow chiffon pants • wool or silk crepe chemise. **Don’t buy** • overwhelming fabric • brocade • stiff ruffles • florals • flounces, tiers, or poufs.



The best skirt for a Figure 8 shape —

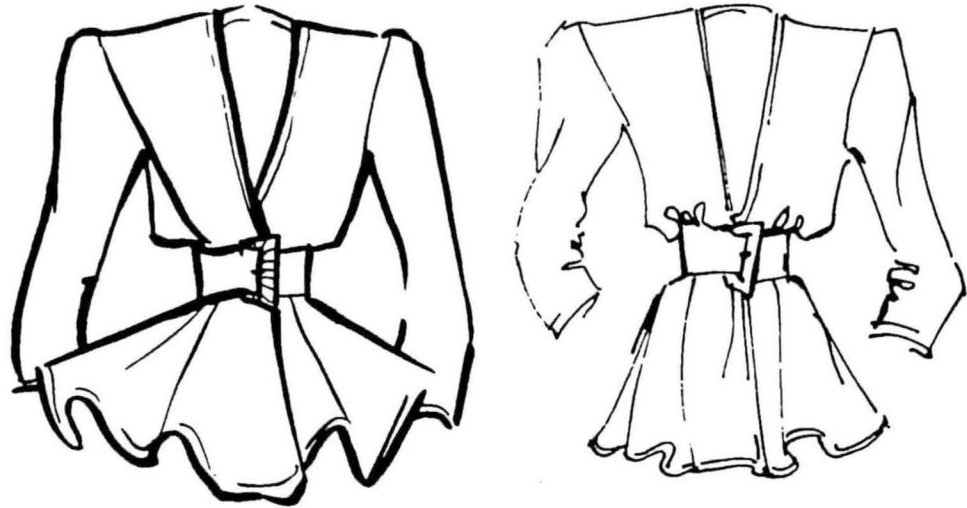
Shop for • fluid, narrow • minimal gathers • bias cut • length to top of knee • solid color • flowing fabric: jersey, silk, rayon, crepe de chine, challis. **Other good choices** • wrap skirt • knife pleats • trouser-cut • flattest knit pull-ons • slim above knee. **Don’t buy** • skirts that look wider than they are long • circle skirt • tiered • bordered skirts • high-waisted • stiff or bulky fabrics • tweed • cabled knit.

Weight & Texture

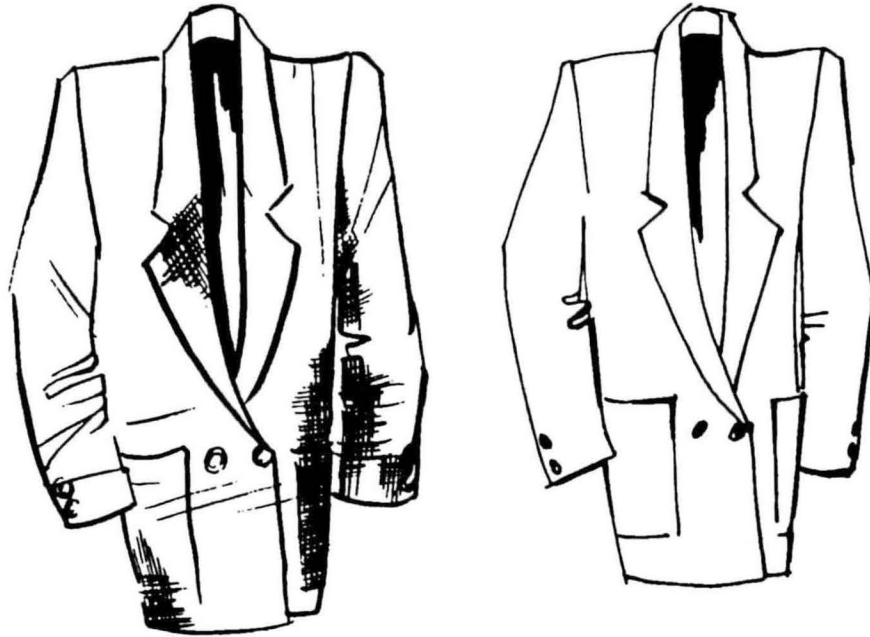
In addition to the cut or line of the clothes, they have weight and texture contributed by the fabric. Boxy and Figure-8 bodies should minimize the weight and texture of fabrics. The Barrel body can handle more of both. It’s difficult to create sharp straight lines with heavy, nubby fabrics, so Boxes should stick with wool gabardine, linen, silk, or charmeuse. Figure-8 bodies should look for soft fabrics that drape well like silk, wool crepe, jersey, challis, and rayon.

Curved barrel bodies can wear more texture because these fabrics fall naturally into soft lines. A curved body can wear almost any texture as long as the weight of the fabric compensates for the texture.

Fabric weight matters. The jacket at the far right looks smaller because the fabric is a lighter weight.



Texture matters, too. The jacket at near right looks bulkier because the fabric has more texture to it.



Value Basics

The following is a list of a basic fashionable wardrobe. These are items that have a timelessness to them. They will never go out of style. They can be easily updated with a change of accessories.

- Black Jacket
- Above the knee skirt
- Classic Trousers
- Tailored shirt
- Notch collar white silk blouse
- Simple rayon tee shirt
- High quality black suede pumps
- Black leather boots - knee high
- Traditional 5 pocket jeans that fit
- Black moc-croc belt, 2 inches wide
- Simple gold button earrings
- Trench Coat

None of these may be inexpensive, but don't let that put you off. Consider the dollars per wearing value. For example, I purchased a wide leather belt for \$50. It bothered me to spend that much for a belt... at first. Since I bought it, I've worn it with just about everything I own from a leather suit to a rayon dress. The cost per wearing of the belt, right now, is down to about \$0.25/wearing. The more I wear it, the less it costs me to own it because I am getting value from it. On the other hand, I spent big bucks on a sequined gown that I'll get to wear maybe twice a year. Bad investment? Maybe, but I already have the basics and wanted to splurge a little on myself.

TIP

All Year, All Around Clothing

There are certain colors and fabrics that are always wearable, any time of the year. These basic colors are black, white, beige, navy and red. The best all-year-round fabrics are jersey, lightweight wool crepe, crepe de chine, gabardine, and fine cottons. A basic starting wardrobe consists of at least the following:

- 1 suit
- 2 basic dresses
- 1 cardigan
- 2 basic skirts
- 2 pairs of shoes
- 3 to 6 blouses

Keep these in one or two of the solid colors noted above. You can expand your wardrobe with addition styles, colors and items as you expand your outside activities.

Typical Problems

The following is a collection of hints for body parts which I consider typical problems for crossdressers:

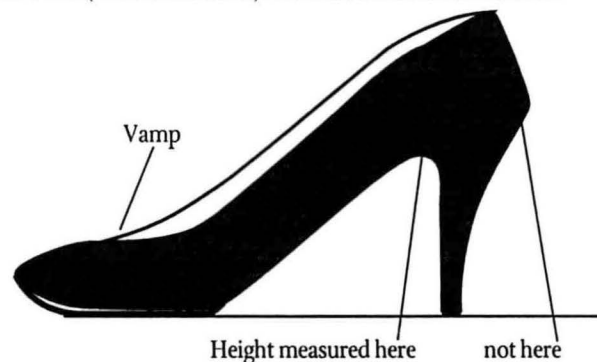
- Lines in neck or large Adam's apple — Wear scarves or high collars.
- Long or thick neck — Peter Pan, jewel necklines, hair low on neck, high neckline.

- Broad wide shoulders — Unconstructed shirts & jackets, dropped or raglan shoulders, narrow lapels, halter necklines, low necklines.
- Heavy arms — Raglan, kimono, Dolman sleeves, very long sleeves without cuffs.
- Large bust (i.e., broad chest) — Dark colors on top, v-necks, raglan or Dolman sleeves.
- Thick waist — Chemise, drop waist dresses, Chanel style jackets, blouson style dresses, narrow belts same color as outfit (if at all).
- Tummy protrudes: Tunics and chemises, A-line skirts, hard finish fabrics.

Shoes

Finding the right size shoe can be an expensive proposition if you have to buy without trying. First of all your foot is longer and wider than a woman's, so right off you have to compensate for length and width. My rule of thumb is to add at least one full size to your man's shoe size, and more likely 1½ sizes. You will also need a wide or double wide (WW). So a man's 8½ becomes a 9½ wide or 10 Wide. Heel height affects fit as well. The lower the heel, the bigger the size you need. Heel heights are generally classed as follows; flats – no heel to about ¼ inch; low – ½ to 1 inch, mid – 1½ to 2 inches, high – 2½ and up, Stiletto – long slender heel 4 inches and up.

Heel height is measured from the bottom of the heel to the point where the heel first intersects the sole, i.e., the front of the heel (see illustration). So a heel listed as 2 inches might actually lift you 2½ or 3 inches, depending on the final size. If you are tall (over 5'9") then you have to trade-off heel height for the amount of attention you want to attract. No matter what, tall girls attract attention and you could well end up over 6 feet tall in spikes.



There are several other things to consider when buying shoes. Since your feet are larger than the average female you want to choose a vamp style (the top of the shoe that covers your toes) that will visually slenderize your foot. Look for styles that have a pointed or arched vamp. A rounded vamp will make your foot look dumpy.

Designs to stay away from: shoes with a strap across the instep, it shortens the leg and breaks the vertical line; the same for ankle straps. Some classic shapes to look for are: Chanel sling-back pump and strap sandal. In general, the less shoe there is, the better your

legs look. For open toed shoes, only the first and second toes should show in the opening. Heavy heels make legs look heavy. The skinnier, the better (for looks, not for safety). The final consideration is material. Man made materials are very common in inexpensive shoes, but the synthetic material doesn't breath like leather, it doesn't stretch like leather and it won't last like leather. Spend a few extra dollars and do your feet a favor.

Black is the most versatile color, but it can be too heavy for some outfits. Consider other colors like burgundy, tan and red. Pick beige rather than white and never, never buy white patent. It always looks cheap, no matter what you pay!

I am often asked where to buy shoes, especially in larger sizes. Most shoe stores in the malls carry up to size 10. Some catalogs, like Sears or Penney carry up to 11. A shop specializing in Tall Women's shoes may go up to 12 or 13. To get the right fit the first time means you need to try the shoes on and for that the best place is a TV boutique. They will have shoes up to 13 or more. Check the CDS *Who's Who & Resource Guide* for several reputable sources of shoes in larger sizes. Prices will range from \$50 to \$100 dollars depending on style and material for nice shoes with 2 to 3 inch heels.

Accessories

Accessorize to Scale

The important thing to remember about accessories is scale. Keep everything within the same relative proportions as your physical size. Don't wear teeny pearl earrings if you are 5'10" and size 18. Large women wear large earrings, large bracelets and rings and carry large purses. The scale of your accessories won't help you pass, but it won't draw any extraordinary attention to yourself. The right accessories complete an outfit and the wrong accessories will kill it. Some guidelines are: Boxy body — wear geometric shapes that are angular and constructed, like square and diamond shapes; Barrel body — wear geometric shapes that are soft and unconstructed, like oval and elliptical shapes; Figure-8 body — wear curved but constructed shapes like circles and ovals.

Belts

Most often a dress will come with a belt and if it is your correct dress size it should fit you unless you're cheating. At the very least, have one black patent belt. Black patent goes with everything. For large sizes check out a Lane Bryant or similar big woman's store. Good choices are a one inch wide leather belt in a basic color and a two inch wide leather belt embossed to look like alligator or crocodile.

TIP

Handbags

It is no longer required to coordinate your purse or handbag with your shoes and gloves. A clutch bag in black leather or black patent is a good choice for evening. A shoulder bag is good if you feel awkward about what to do with your hands. You will find that one hand

just naturally rests on the bag. Stay with basic colors again at first, then add variety as your wardrobe expands. Very good but inexpensive handbags can be found at most discount clothing stores. A reasonable bag should cost you between \$25 and \$50.

Gloves

Glove sizes are measured by the circumference of the widest part of the hand, in inches. For women, the widest part is usually around the second knuckle. For you, it will probably be around the palm. Only the largest of women's gloves will fit the smallest of a man's hand. Try one of the stretch styles like Isotoner®. It may even be advisable to wear gloves if your hands are very large or just not very feminine. Remember to keep the style and color appropriate to your outfit and the season.

Jewelry

Earrings

It is acceptable in many social circles for a man to have one pierced ear, but having both ears pierced still raises some eyebrows. Both of my ears are pierced, but then I'm self-employed in an artistic field where such affectations are tolerated. Your situation is probably different. My good friend Alison Laing had both ears pierced for a long time and I never noticed until she told me. Her secret was a pair of clear nylon plugs. The plugs kept the holes in her earlobes open and camouflaged them at the same time. The plugs are made from clear fishing line or the clear plastic used to attach price tags to clothes. Cut a short length, about $\frac{3}{8}$ inch long, and hold it with a tweezer. Use a match, lighter or other heat source to soften one end and press this against a flat surface. Heat the other end so it forms a ball. It should look like this: ●— . The ball end goes in back, the flat in front. Add a dab of clear lip balm or a touch of tinted acne cream and they're hidden. If you can get away with pierced ears using this technique, great. Otherwise, stick with clip earrings. There are many nice varieties of clip earrings as they're back in vogue. If you see a pair of pierced earrings that you just must have, most craft stores sell clips to convert pierced earrings. These run about a dollar a set.

TIP

At a minimum, you should own three pairs of earrings: one very plain gold-toned pair; one jet black pair; and one rhinestone pair. Rhinestone earrings are *always* reserved for evening wear and a good pair will cost from \$20 to \$40 or more. Try bazaars and flea markets for bargain buys in rhinestones.

Finger Rings

Ring sizes are the same for both men and women. However, most women's rings are no larger than a size 9, which is probably too small for the average crossdresser. You can still wear these rings by cutting through the bottom of the shank and spreading the ring. Many department stores sell costume jewelry rings for around \$20. You can even get a zircon "diamond" engagement ring for this price. I have one and it looks great. Remember to buy rings to scale.



part of the hand, in inches.
Ankle. For you, it will probably
be the smallest of a man's
It is advisable to wear gloves
to keep the style and

perced ear, but having both
perced, but then I'm self-
fitted. Your situation is
s pierced for a long time and
r nylon plugs. The plugs kept
ame time. The plugs are
price tags to clothes. Cut a
se a match, lighter or other
ace. Heat the other end so it
n back, the flat in front. Add
y're hidden. If you can get
stick with clip earrings.
n vogue. If you see a pair of
clips to convert pierced

ry plain gold-toned pair; one
e *always* reserved for
e. Try bazaars and flea

most women's rings are no
e crossdresser. You can still
nd spreading the ring. Many
ou can even get a zircon

5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Wrist, Ankle & Neck Chains

The same problem of size prevails with pre-made chains. Neck, wrist and ankle chains manufactured for women will just be too small for you unless you are very petite. A woman's wrist chain is about 7 inches long, an ankle chain 8 inches long and a small neck chain about 14 inches. By contrast, a man's wrist bracelet is about 8 to 8½ inches long. The solution is to have your chains made. Several times I have seen vendors selling chains by the inch. Measure your wrist or ankle and add between ¼ to ⅓ of an inch to this measurement. Have the chain made to this length before the clasp is added. The smallest neck chain should be about 18 to 20 inches long. Of course, these are usually cheap gold plate which will eventually wear off, so these are not for daily wear. Of course, you can have fine 14kt gold chains made to length too, but be prepared to spend some serious money.

Bracelets

The problem of finding bracelets in the right size for us seems almost insoluble. I have never found a suitable bracelet in a large enough size.

Watches

As with the wrist chains, a lady's watch band will be too small. Some replacement bands come in extra long lengths which will fit a small to average male wrist. A recent style dress-band is a two part mesh with an adjustable clasp which just might fit even a large male wrist. Expect to pay \$30-\$60 for a really good watch.

A Well-Kept Secret

There is a source of women's jewelry that provides large size rings (up to size 11), and sells extenders for bracelets and chains. The company is Lady Remington. Yep, the same Remington that makes the shavers. Lady Remington is a complete line of jewelry with rings, watches, bracelets, earrings (clip and pierced), and necklaces. Oh, yeah, they make men's jewelry too. You can see the Lady Remington jewelry and other accessories on the CDS video *Accessorizing Your Wardrobe*. Check your local phone book for a Lady Remington representative in your area. If you can't find one, call my friend Laurie who is a rep at 1-800-726-3324, Ext. 2035 and ask her to send you information about the line.

TIP

Glasses

As we get older our eyesight changes and many of us will need eyeglasses. I've had to wear glasses since I was a kid, so I'm used to it. I also wear contact lenses when I'm dressed, but sometimes I wear feminine glasses. As with all else in this book, picking the right eyewear can go a long way in enhancing your appearance. Selection should be based on knowing

what shapes are best suited for your face. The following guide will assist you in selecting the right frames for your face.



Facial Structure & Frame Shape

Oval Face: If face is full, lengthen it. If face is thin, refer to Rectangle. Any style frame looks good on an oval face except extreme geometric shapes.



Round Face: With a full face, you need to add length to make it look more slim. Square is the best frame for a round face to provide balance. Make the frame slightly wider than your face and your face will appear slimmer.



Rectangular Face: The idea here is to shorten the face and add width, also soften the edges if more square. Keep frame within the borders of your face to add width. Triangular, round or square frames will all shorten and soften the rectangular face.

Passing

Let's talk a bit about "passing." I'm going to assume you are among those crossdressers who want to appear in public socially, i.e. you want to "pass" as a woman. Allow me to first disabuse you of the idea that you will pass as a female. No matter what you do, even if you have reassignment surgery, you are a male if you were born with XY chromosomes and you will *never* be a female. You can, however, pass yourself off as a *woman* with practice. I make the above statements after much thought and public experience. You see, "Woman" is an artificial construction of current society. The definition of "woman" is impossible to pin down, and it changes with time. So, if you work at it, you can make other people believe that you are a woman by the current definition.

Much of "passing" is related to your physical image. Women come in as wide a variety as men, so if you have applied your makeup well and wear appropriate clothes, you will most likely pass for female. However, there is an emotional/psychological side as well. Once you



have achieved an acceptable (to the rest of the world) outer image, you must build an inner image of yourself as a woman. You must believe that you will pass. If you do not believe, then you will send subtle signals to those who get a little too close that something is not quite right. Confidence comes gradually, and by placing yourself in controlled situations you will achieve your goal of passing.

I remember when I decided I had to walk through the local shopping mall, in the daytime. In retrospect, it was a foolish stunt, but at the time I was determined to go through with it. My timing was all wrong. It was Christmas break for the local schools and the mall was full of teenagers. I made the rounds of the stores window

shopping, and I was very, very nervous. Just as I was leaving, I walked by a jewelry booth where 3 or 4 teenage girls were talking. I thought one of them "read" me and whispered something to the others. I continued walking and as I rounded the corner, there was a security guard coming toward me. I thought, "I'm in *real* trouble now." I kept going at a steady pace and the guard walked right by me without a second glance. However, he was headed toward those teenage girls, so I wasn't out of the woods yet. I expected to hear "Hey You!" at any moment. It never came and I quickly left the mall. By the time I reached my car, I was sweating so profusely that my makeup was in danger of running off my face. For a public appearance, it was not a controlled situation.

By controlled situations I mean one where you have little chance of getting hassled by the general public. Start by finding if there is a group that meets in your area. Most large cities have several national and local organizations. Some advertise in the local gay news, others in transgender publications such as *The Transvestian* or *LadyLike*. There are weekend events all around the country. At last count, there were 22 such recurring events. These are excellent opportunities for the novice to practice and get feedback in a controlled situation. An alternative is a gay bar or club. There are two very nice gay clubs near me that have excellent restaurants attached, and I have gone to them for dinner several times. Call first to be sure you will be welcomed. Don't be intimidated being crossdressed in a gay men's bar. If anyone comes on to you and you are not interested, politely say so and thank them for the attention. That will usually be the end of it. This will be good practice for you when you decide you are ready to venture into the world of straight people.

An acquaintance of mine once remarked, "Dressing to pass is work!" This is very true. You

must be much more aware of your appearance and actions, especially during daytime. Your choice of clothing should be appropriate for the time of day and season. A low-back evening gown at 4th & Main at noon is going to get a lot of attention. Makeup for daytime must be softer and more subtle. What works for evening could look like a circus clown in broad (no pun intended) daylight.

Once you think you've got the look right and have gotten some feedback from other people, it is time to ease into real-world excursions, slowly. Try going for a ride in the car. Maybe, go to a park when it is not too crowded. Eventually, you might work up enough courage to go to a restaurant. Just be sure to pick one that has soft lighting. It will help a great deal if you are not alone. If you have a friend of either sex that you can trust, see if they will go along with you. One idea is to find another crossdresser and take turns escorting each other as a male/female couple.

Remember, try to always be in control of the situation. Carry your real ID with you at all times, and, if out alone, take the phone number of someone you can trust just in case. This is supposed to be fun, right!? Don't take any foolish or unnecessary chances, like I did, until you are ready for the harsh light of day.

Wrapping Up

One thing that you cannot get by reading a book is a sense of style, and that is partly because styles change and a book, once written, is static. Style is more a philosophy than anything else. It will reflect in the way you dress and it says a lot about you as a person. Discreet observation of women you find attractive and scanning the fashion magazines will help to develop your personal style. Remember those things that catch your eye and try to incorporate them into your own personal style.

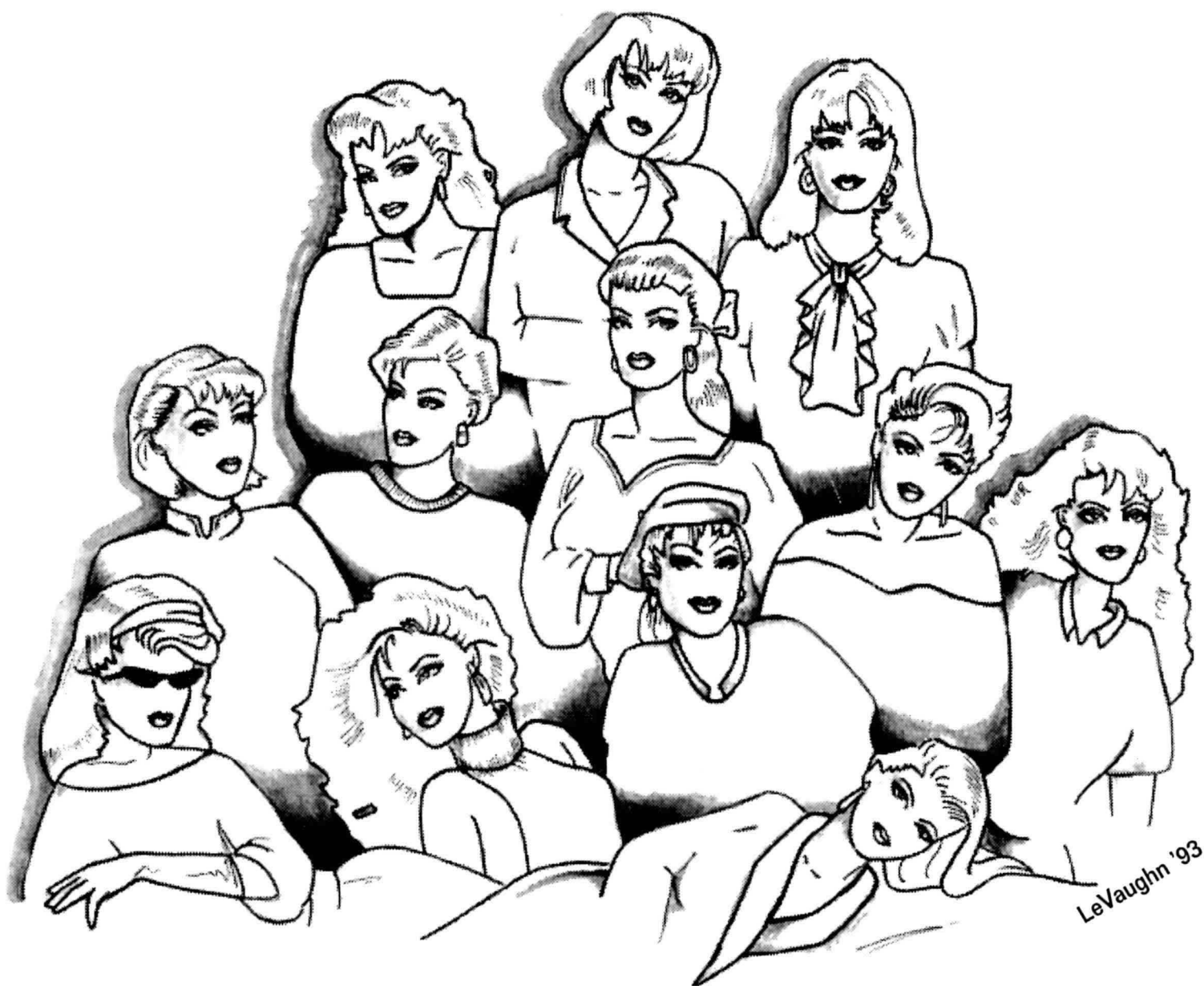
There was some stuff left over after recompiling the two older books into the two new volumes, and instead of trying to cram it in here, I'm going to do a Volume 3, *Behaving As A Woman*, that will include information on developing feminine mannerisms, as well as grace and poise. Watch for a future announcement of availability. Much of the material in here on fashion and style will be on video by the Fall of 1994.

If you have any corrections to or suggestions about either Volume 1 or Volume 2, please write. I love to get mail.

Now, go have some fun.

Big. Tall. Short. Small.

We've got something for everyone.



In addition to Art & Illusion... • Speaking As A Woman • The Cross & The Crossdresser • Transsexual's Survival Guide, Volumes I & II • Coping With Crossdressing • Who's Who & Resource Guide • Couple's Video • Straight Dope on Hormones video • Cosmetic Surgery Options video • Basic Makeup video • and much more from...

Creative Design Services
PO Box 491, Lionville, PA 19353-0491
Call 610-321-0858 for Credit Card orders

About The Author

JoAnn Roberts is a crossdresser, writer and publisher. She has been active in the community since 1983, when she first spoke to a class of graduate students at the University of Pennsylvania. This event led to more class lectures and she regularly speaks about crossdressing at a dozen colleges and universities each year.

In 1985, JoAnn started Creative Design Services and wrote her first book, *Art & Illusion: A Guide to Crossdressing*. She followed this with the *A&I Companion*, both of which are best-sellers. Soon after A&I was published, JoAnn appeared on the Donahue Show.

Emboldened by the success of A&I and the recognition that came with being on television, JoAnn and four friends — Alison Laing, Angela Gardner, Trudy Henry & Melanie Bryan — founded the Renaissance Education Association, Inc., the largest open-membership based support group on the East Coast. Humbly beginning with 13 people, Renaissance now has over 500 members in four chapters and supports three affiliated groups.

Wanting to do something a little more serious, JoAnn wrote *Coping With Crossdressing*, a handbook for couples in committed relationships struggling with crossdressing. She was also asked to contribute to a college textbook, *Becoming A Sexual Person, Second Edition*, edited by Dr. Robert Francouer, and published by Macmillian in 1991. Continuing in the serious vein, she published a collection of her editorials and essays written for various publications in a book titled *Sacred Cows Make the Best Hamburger*. If you want to know what JoAnn believes in, read that book.

JoAnn has served a member of the boards of Renaissance, the International Foundation for Gender Education (twice), and the American Educational Gender Information Service (AEGIS). She is also a member of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex (Quad-S) and the Sex Information & Education Council of the U.S (SIECUS). She has twice been nominated for Eastern Region Secretary for Quad-S.

JoAnn's philosophy and writing have influenced many people, including some outside the transgender community. JoAnn's *Bill of Gender Rights* is the foundation for the document now known as the *International Bill of Gender Rights* as published by the International Conference on Transgender Law & Employment Policy. An extensive quote from JoAnn appears in Prof. Marjorie Garber's book *Vested Interests* and she contributed to Vern and Bonnie Bullough's *Cross Dressing, Sex and Gender*.

"My goal," says JoAnn, "is to empower people to take control of their lives and stop being victims of an ignorant, unfeeling society. Information is power and when you have the information you need, you have the power to make informed choices. Freedom to choose, is the most precious right we have. If we don't exercise that right, we'll lose it."



Published by Creative Design Services, PO Box 491, Lionville, PA 19353-0491