

## DAISY MARC JACOBS

EAU SO INTENSE



# **COSMOPOLITAN**



The notes app – it has everything from my food shopping list to my weirdest, wildest thoughts.



It's a toss-up between
Asos (where I spend
a big chunk of my
wages – every day
is Treat Yo'Self Day)
and Rightmove, to see
all the houses I can't
afford (probably
because I keep
spending all my money
on Asos).



I love to track my reading on Goodreads – and browse for new book recommendations!

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What is the most used app on your phone?



Duolingo. I'm so whipped by that owl it's getting embarrassing (if you know, you know).



Citymapper. I've lived in London for more than six years and still look up every single journey. People who rely on their own mental map drive me bonkers. Travel efficiency is king.



The I am app. It sends me affirmations throughout the day, at just the right time – it's almost like it's reading my mind.



From the editor

pring is a time for fresh starts. For clean slates and hopes for a better, brighter future. A fresh start can be as simple as packing away those bobbled winter knits and unfurling a wardrobe that feels as optimistic as your summer plans. From puff sleeves (p41) to the other key trends dominating this season (p108), fashion can have a huge impact on your mood – just read our feature on colour therapy (p48) if you don't believe us.

It might mean rebooting your beauty bag, whether that's committing to a more sustainable shopping list (p102) or decoding your skin type once and for all to find a regime that's right for you (p20). But it can also be so much more.

For one writer, the fresh start her dating life needed was to finally freeze her eggs. As a growing unease bubbled up in her gut, she set out to discover the facts about future-proofing your fertility, giving her honest account on p84 (and answering some of your most pressing egg-freezing questions along the way).

For others, a fresh start is forced upon them; a life change they never thought they'd have to make. No one wants to pile on to a packed plane or make a perilous journey across the English Channel, but the brave women (p96) who risked their lives for a new beginning in the UK did just that.

Listening to what they have to say is even more vital during these terrifying times.

And finally, cover star Sydney Sweeney reveals all about that *Euphoria* season two finale and what comes next for Cassie. From *The White Lotus* to *The Voyeurs*, the future's looking bright for Sweeney, but on p72 the actress gets very real about the change that still needs to happen when it comes to equality in Hollywood.

Whatever change you're looking for this spring – whether it's something you want to embrace or something you want to let go of – don't rush it. At times, change can feel quite slow; it can feel like taking one step forwards and then three steps back. But remember: it's the getting moving to begin with that really matters.



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me on Twitter
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Parket In

When you see this logo anywhere, you can be guaranteed these products are Cosmopolitanteam-approved.





ello and welcome to this rundown of everything we could dig up about the party so exclusive, apparently even Kim Kardashian couldn't snag an invite until Kanye West finally got Anna Wintour's approval to bring her as his date. 'The Oscars of fashion' is a Vogue-hosted museum fundraiser. sure, but it's also a chance for around 600 of the world's most stylish people to one-up each other, make some trouble (hey, Dakota Johnson's and Bella Hadid's infamous selfies), or show off new partners. The likes of Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds, and Nick Jonas and Priyanka Chopra made their big couple debuts on the iconic Met steps. Here's all that goes into the first Monday in May.



#### The order of events

#### Too-damnearly-am

An entire day of glam begins. Most of the big names are a couple of blocks away at The Mark Hotel.

#### 5pm

Arrivals start in an Anna Wintour-dictated order, kicking off with Anna herself. Then the co-chairs (past names include Meryl Streep, Harry Styles,

#### Oprah Winfrey and Taylor Swift). Beyoncé and Rihanna tend to go last

because ofc.

8pm Guests are inside and heading to

#### their seats for dinner. There is definitely such a thing as a 'bad' table. Staffers allegedly placate ahead

of time the people who'll be in Siberia.

#### 10pm

A surprise musical guest! Lady Gaga, Madonna and Katy Perry have all performed.

#### Midnight

Outfit change, after-party.

No food that could get stuck in your teeth or make your breath smell gross can be served. Sorry about this, garlic.

No pictures inside. Not that this has stopped celebs from posting pics from the bathroom. (Btw, Vogue staffers, not security, have to enforce this. I'm picturing them telling Kylie Jenner to put away her phone, and it's not going well...!)

No spouses sitting together as couples. Just one more mandate of the world's most meticulous seating chart.

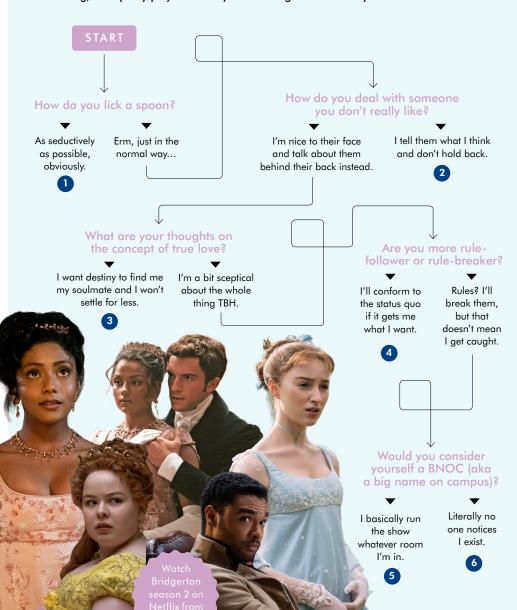
No personal publicists. Stars have to leave theirs at the door, so literally anything could happen inside.

But make it theme-y You know how Halloween is just an excuse to put on an OTT 'fit? This is that with couture. 2022's theme is In America: An Anthology of Fashion. Super vague, as always (see: 2016's Manus x Machina). But all the better to get creative with, my dear. Not too creative, though, because in many cases, Anna gets to decide which celebs are dressed by which designers.

# Which Bridgerton character are you?

Our beloved *Bridgerton* is back for season two. But are you more of a duke or a debutante?

The time has come to locate your crinoline and corset (what do you mean, they're not to hand?) and dive back into *Bridgerton*. Daphne's big bro Anthony (Jonathan Bailey) takes centre stage this time, with his plans to find a sensible match derailed by the brilliant Kate Sharma (Simone Ashley.) While Regé-Jean Page's Duke of Hastings sadly won't be returning, our Spotify playlist is ready and waiting for some sassy new orchestral covers.





#### THE DUKE

Simon Basset will always hold a special place in our hearts. Like him, you enjoy it when someone fancies you – and you aren't afraid to tease. Cutlery-based tongue action not essential.



#### KATE SHARMA

Kate's tongue is as sharp as the 19th century will allow. Like you, she enjoys a savage insult. Exhibit A: 'Your character is as deficient as your horsemanship.' Ouch.



#### **EDWINA SHARMA**

People might call you naive but, like new character Edwina, you're a big believer in true love – and you want the real deal in a partner.



#### DAPHNE BRIDGERTON

Daphne is pretty innocent, but she's happy to play the game when it comes to finding the right match. You know how to get what you want, and you'll jump through hoops if need be.



#### ANTHONY BRIDGERTON

The big brother of all the Bridgertons, Anthony (like you) wants to get his own way. Still, his intentions are mostly good – even when he's challenging best mate Simon to a deadly duel.



#### PENELOPE FEATHERINGTON

Penelope spent most of season one at the sidelines, but she has a big secret: she's Lady Whistledown. You don't always take the limelight, but everyone who gets to know you loves you.

# Bend It Like Beckham

Where are they today?

Our loyalty to this film is unmatched. So, as Bend It Like Beckham turns 20, let's catch up with where the cast are today

Words DANIELLA SCOTT



Remind me: Jess is the film's lead, football legend and utterer of the phrase 'bend it like Beckham'.

Iconic moment: The final, right at the end of the film, where she makes up with Jules and wins the game.

Where is she now? After roles in ER (above), Fortitude and 13 Reasons Why, Nagra has built a pretty solid career.

#### JULES PAXTON KEIRA KNIGHTLEY

Remind me: Jess's best friend and the one who introduces her to the football team, the Hounslow Harriers. She's also Jack Grealish's hair inspiration, obviously. Iconic moment: Any time that

**Iconic moment:** Any time that she puts on her best (worst) Hounslow accent. Sorry, Keira.

Where is she now?

Obviously, Knightley turned out to be a pretty big deal. Her most recent project was Christmas film Silent Night (above).

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES; SHUTTERSTOCK; MOVIESTILLS DB

Iconic moment: The scene where he speaks up about the racism he faced when trying to join cricket teams in England reminds us all why this film is as important today as it was back in 2002.

Where is he now? Kher's an award-winning actor with hundreds of projects to his name, from Sense8 to Hotel Mumbai (above).

JULIET
STEVENSON
Remind me: Jules's

Remind me: Jules's mum and local Karen-esque busybody. She wants her daughter to be less into football and more into kitten heels with bows on.

Iconic moment:

Paula's fairly blatant homophobia is a big thumbs down. But Stevenson's full stroppy tears in the car are a lesson in Oscar-worthy dramatic acting.

Where is she now? Stevenson played Lady Cassandra Eltham in Sky's Riviera and was in ITV's The Long Call (above). PINKY BHAMRA

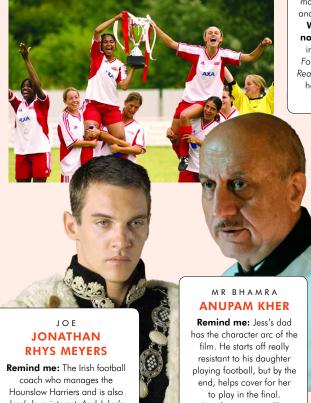
#### **ARCHIE PANJABI**

Remind me: Jess's sister and confidant, Pinky helps her hide the fact that she's playing for a football team. At least... for a bit.

Iconic moment: All her scenes. But especially when she calls someone a 'stupid flipping cow' for wearing the same colour as her.

Where is she now? Her career is huge these days; from The Fall to The Good Wife (above), she's a full-on star.

coach who manages the
Hounslow Harriers and is also
Jess's love interest. And Jules's
for a bit, but we'll overlook that.
Iconic moment: His dance
moves in the club when the
team are in Germany for the
tournament. Very neck-heavy.
Where is he now? Since
his coaching days, JRM is
best known for playing King
Henry VIII in steamy series
The Tudors (above).



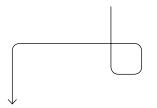


## Build your own female-driven

# crime drama

Because sometimes you want to imagine walking through London in a puffy dress thinking about getting revenge

Words EMMA BATY



#### Killing Eve. The Undoing. Big Little Lies. The Flight Attendant, Dead To Me.

All have proven that the most engaging TV genre is the 'dramatic mystery with a (very chic, usually rich) woman at the centre'. And with the fourth (and, sadly, final) season of Killing Eve coming to a close on iPlayer, we're about to feel a female-led crime drama-shaped hole in our lives. So thanks to Villanelle's return, we've been thinking long and hard about how we'd react to finding ourselves in the middle of our very own murder show (a highly realistic situation, obviously.) So that's our excuse for making this chart that will help you take your own ready-for-prime-time narrative to the next level. Circle one answer to each question, string them together and voilà – your plot line.



Okay, how involved in the actual crime do vou want to be?

Because it seems like these shows can only take place in one of three locations, you choose:

Where do you want your 'I'm thinking really hard about this crime' scene to take place?

> What plot device will the writers use to up the drama for you?

What big secret has been plaguing you and might get out now that you're under investigation?

Which incredible piece of clothing will define your aesthetic?

> This is crucial. What's your hair situation?

#### OPTION 1

For dramatic purposes, I'll be extreeemely guilty.

New York City. Or California, so I can drive my car along the Pacific Coast Highway.

On the beach. With intense music, of course.

My partner and I are very close to a divorce.

A car crash that has nothina to do with the actual murder

Coats – and I want them to be my whole personality.

> It's a knotted mess, because Lam going \*through\* it.

#### OPTION 2

I am innocent! And just as confused as everyone else.

London, obviously.

A park – which is mysteriously empty...

My spouse has a baby I didn't know about.

I've been estranged from my family for years. Years.

Boots! So I can strut everywhere in slow motion.

My hair is, shockingly, perfectly styled.

# MALUMA

Words EMMA BATY

do you do right after I have a meditation room, where I can get focused and concentrate on needs introducing. myself. In this world, The 28-year-old in this industry, you give a lot of energy – and been making music sometimes you don't give a lot to yourself. bedroom in Miami, looking through the the ocean.

### to you?

I feel the most at home favourite place in the world – Medellín. I have I feel disconnected from

I love being surrounded by animals. The other found a place to go ride. I need that connection. They don't judge. They just want to be with you

If she doesn't want to learn, it's not for me. But

# Your book club just got interesting

Want a read that you can't stop talking about? These page-turners have lots to discuss. Get the snacks ready...

We get it. Book clubs have a reputation for being boring. You end up gossiping about people you know rather than the book itself. But with celeb book clubs going nowhere, maybe it's time you started your own? Especially as these new and upcoming releases have so much to talk about within the pages...



If you want to discuss... INFLUENCERS AND **INSTAGRAM** 

#### IDOL

by Louise O'Neill

#### What's it about?

Samantha Miller is a 'guru' and 'idol' to her millions of followers - she encourages speaking 'your truth' as a way to heal the past. But when her essay about a sexual experience she had as a teenager with her best friend Lisa (despite both women being straight) goes viral, Samantha is accused of assault. It seems that night - the one she thought she recalled so well - was viewed differently by Lisa. And, over the course of the book, Samantha (and the truth about her) slowly unravels.

#### Book club talking points:

We've reached a time where we get so much advice from influencers - from our mental health to our fitness and diets. But should we always trust what we see on social media? Available 12 May



If you want to discuss... THE MORALS OF **PARENTHOOD** 

#### THE HERD

by Emily Edwards

#### What's it about?

In a small town in England, the decision on whether or not to vaccinate your children is a hot (and divisive) topic. But for Elizabeth, whose child has an illness that means she can't be vaccinated, the debate is incredibly personal - she has to rely on herd immunity to keep her daughter safe. Little does she know that a friend of hers is lying about her own child's vaccination status... and this lie erupts and erodes the entire community.

#### Book club talking points:

You could discuss whether vaccines should be made mandatory by law... but it might prove too thorny. If so, discuss the pressures piled on parents and whether you think it's changed since you were children. Available now



If you want to discuss... WELLNESS CULTURE AND THERAPY

#### **TELL ME YOUR LIES**

by Kate Ruby

#### What's it about?

When party animal Rachel spirals out of control, her mum goes searching for help and hires Amber, a renowned therapist, to heal her. But Amber's intentions aren't what they seem... and as Rachel begins to separate herself further and further from her family, the reader is left wondering who to believe – has Amber brainwashed Rachel? Or is her seemingly kind and caring family hiding something much darker?

#### Book club talking points:

Is it possible to keep a huge secret? Or do you think it will always come out in the end, no matter the lengths taken to keep it? And if it is possible – how do you think that impacts relationships? Available 12 May



If you want to discuss... THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC

#### THE DOLORIAD

by Missouri Williams

#### What's it about?

This dark dystopian tale follows an incestuous family who are clinging to existence after an environmental cataclysm. The family is ruled by 'The Matriarch', who wants to start humanity over again, but her children and their children aren't so sure. Nevertheless, they survive by tending to the poisoned earth – until one of the daughters is sent away to another group as a marriage offering. When she returns, the other children seize their chance to escape...

#### Book club talking points:

It's a strange and dark novel that implores us to look deep inside ourselves, but do you think there are also slivers of hope to cling to? Did it make you rethink any of your own morals after the pandemic especially?

Available now



# glow

BS-FREE BEAUTY THAT WORKS FOR YOU

Everything you need to know about exfoliating your face

Hint: you're doing it wrong!

Words RUBY BUDDEMEYER

# My gut loves it

As do 9 out of 10 customers. Why? Because one shot of Symprove contains billions of good bacteria that reach the gut alive.





ou know that gritty exfoliator you've been using since secondary school? The one you scrub on your face until it feels tingly and slightly raw? Yeah, there's a really good chance it's destroying your skin. The truth is, even though exfoliators are 100% necessary, the wrong ones can do more damage than good. Harsh kinds can create micro-tears in your skin, weakening its protective barrier and rolling out a red carpet for bacteria, causing breakouts.

So, permission to bin your old go-to is granted. The exfoliator made with chemicals,

but not scary ones. I'm talking about gentle acids that dissolve the sticky substance that binds pore-clogging dead skin cells together, leaving you with Zendaya-like glowy skin. Basically, goals on goals on goals.

#### A little more about these chemicals

There are two main types of skin-smoothing acids: alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs) and beta hydroxy acids (BHAs). It's pretty easy to figure out which is right for your skin. AHAs (like mandelic, glycolic, tartaric and lactic acids) exfoliate while also hydrating, making them ideal for sensitive.

dry or redness-prone skin. BHAs (the most popular one is salicylic acid) dissolve dead skin cells on the surface of your face and also deep-clean your pores, breaking down any oil lodged inside. (Translation: they're great for preventing spots and treating blackheads and whiteheads.) But keep in mind that even gentle chemical exfoliants can irritate or dry out your skin if they're used too often or in too-high concentrations. So always start out slow and low (use 1% salicylic acid for one month to make sure your skin can handle it before upgrading to 2%, for example).

#### The absolute best exfoliator for...



## oily

Two per cent salicylic acid cuts through oil and dead skin cells, leaving behind a clear and dewy complexion with noticeably smaller pores. This one's a Cosmo beauty team favourite (and we try everything, so you know it's legit).

> Paula's Choice Skin Perfecting 2% BHA Liquid, £31

## skin

Lactic acid – one of the gentlest AHAs – is your hero. It works to brighten, tone and smooth even super-sensitive types. If your face is easily irritated, try using this formula once a week. eventually building up to every three to four days.

Ren Ready Steady Glow Daily AHA Tonic, £27



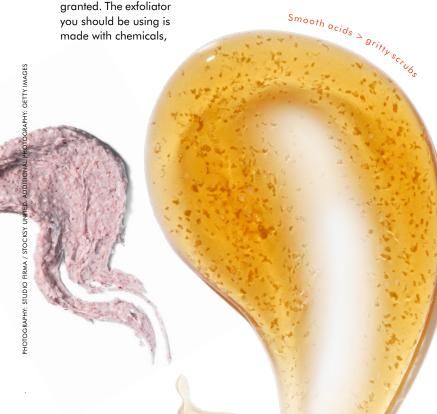
You need a triple threat: glycolic acid, salicylic acid and apple cider vinegar. The formula targets dead skin cells, acne, blackheads and dark marks from old breakouts every time you use it. Honestly, just put a ring on this thing.

Boscia Resurfacing Treatment Toner, £25

#### 4 dry skin

Hydrating aloe vera and glycolic acid is your go-to exfoliating combo. Why? Well, it does its job without leaving your face feeling stripped or irritated. Bonus: The Ordinary's A+ formula will keep your skin (and bank balance) happy.

The Ordinary Glycolic Acid 7% Toning Solution, £6.80



Each month, our beauty team tests the newest products to see what reigns supreme. Here, **Hanna Ibraheem** searches for the most impressive lash-stretching and curling formulas

**JONES ROAD** 

#### Maybelline Colossal Curl Bounce Mascara, £10.99

Maybelline knows how to do good lashes – its Sky High Mascara went viral on TikTok. Its latest innovation, Curl Bounce, which is also blowing up on social media, has a slightly curved wand that hugs lashes and doesn't cause clumps. While it didn't give my very straight lashes an intense curl, it did make them super long. If you like a fluttery finish, this is the one for you.

#### Urban Decay Lash Freak Mascara, £22

MAYBELLINE

Okay, at first, I was a little intimidated by the snazzy neon asymmetric brush. But once I got the hang of this mascara, it became a make-up bag staple. I load the formula on before using the rounded tip to whisk away any excess formula (an important step to avoid clumps). For extra drama, I press the curved edge into my lash roots for added lift. Guess you could say I'm now a certified (lash) freak, seven days a week.

#### Jones Road The Mascara, £24

Lengthening mascaras tend to sit on the more dramatic side of formulas, but if you're in the market for something slightly more natural-looking, consider this one instead. Created by legendary make-up artist Bobbi Brown, the curved wand grabs even the tiniest lashes and swoops them upwards into a subtle curl while keeping them soft and delicate, meaning there's none of that uncomfortable crunchy finish.

#### EDITOR'S PICK

#### Milk Makeup Rise Mascara, £24

As a long-time fan of Milk mascaras, I don't think my expectations have been so high since I sat down in my local Cineworld for the final Harry Potter movie. Thankfully, this did not disappoint. Developed with four types of vegan waxes, it lengthened and lifted my straight lashes but, even better, as the formula is so lightweight, my lashes didn't droop or lose their curl throughout the day - something that I've always struggled with.

COSMOPOLITAN
LOVES
2022





#### R.e.m. beauty flourishing volumizing mascara, £15

Ariana Grande's signature eye look was enough to make me want to snap up her galactic-looking mascara. The wand is separated into three sections for impressive lash lift-off (lol, sorry), but Ari has paid attention to the ingredients, too. Inside the silver tube is a blend of 100% naturally derived bamboo powder and fruit extracts for a nourishing formula that won't clump. Now, if I could just perfect her eyeliner technique...

#### Mac already has a few lash heavyweights under its belt, but its new MacStack mascara comes with the chance for customisation. Choose between two brush options: the mega brush for instant volume (best for longer lashes) or the micro brush for greater precision (ideal for shorter lashes). Hinted in the name, the formula layers on with

ease and stretches

your lashes without

a hint of clumping

or crumbling.

£26 each

#### LASH LAWS

Make-up artist Adeola Gboyega has worked with some of the biggest brands in beauty, from Bobbi Brown to Pat McGrath Labs. Here are her best mascara tips

#### **USE ENOUGH**

It might seem obvious but, according to Gboyega, many of us aren't using enough formula to begin with. 'One of my pet peeves is when I see people not applying their mascara properly,' she says. 'They only get the tips of their lashes instead of fully coating [them].' Looks like we have to really layer the stuff on, folks.

#### **BRUSH UP YOUR TECHNIQUE**

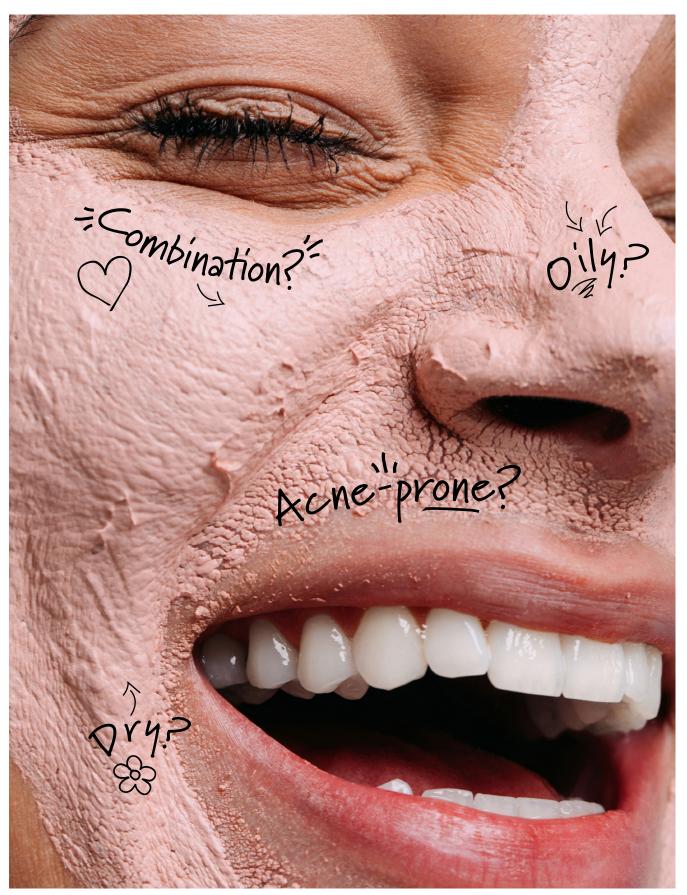
'To get the most from your mascara, it is so important to place your wand at the root of your lashes,' explains Gboyega. 'I always recommend using the wand in a zigzag motion, ensuring that you are working up from the root of your lashes all the way to the tip.' And yes, that open-mouth mascara face is basically inevitable.

#### **KNOW YOUR ANGLES**

Gboyega says that a mirror is essential and its position can make a huge difference. She recommends placing it directly in front of you, or even slightly below, 'so you can tilt your head backwards slightly and look down as you apply your mascara'. She adds, 'This way you can really see the root of your lashes and ensure you coat [them] properly for maximum volume.'

# YOUR TYPE ON PAPER

Dry? Combination? Acne-prone? Consider the next few pages your everything-guide to complexion decoding



# Alright, I'll level with you,

I've worked in the beauty industry for nearly 10 years, but I still get a bit confused about the whole 'skin type' thing. I have an oily T-zone, reoccurring breakouts along my jawline (hi, hormones) and every now and then, my cheeks get Sahara-dry. I figured I can't be alone in my struggle, so why not seek out the experts (aka, dermatologists) to decode the riddle that is skin types? Here, we break down exactly what, how and why it can be helpful to shop for tailored products.



#### OILY SKIN

#### WHAT'S THE DEAL?

Visible pores, shiny skin and blackheads. These are all key indicators of oily skin, according to consultant dermatologist Dr Anjali Mahto. 'Having had oil-prone skin for most of my adult life, I can certainly relate,' says Dr Mahto. 'For anyone suffering from bumpy texture and pores the size of planets, I'm right here with you.'

#### **NEVER SKIP:**

Retinoids are your BFF. 'They have multiple benefits, such as oil reduction and fighting acne,' says consultant dermatologist for Skin + Me, Dr Ben Esdaile. 'Other useful actives for oily skin include salicylic acid (BHAs). Many of these actives can be drying, so using a good moisturiser can help fight this.' Of course, SPF is a must if you're using acids or retinoids.

#### STAY CLEAR OF:

'Oily skin can be prone to blemishes, so using products that further block pores can worsen breakouts,' says Dr Esdaile.

'Heavier moisturisers that contain ingredients such as paraffin, petroleum jelly and beeswax should be avoided.'

#### THE ESSENTIALS



 Murad AHA/BHA/Retinoid Daily Clarifying Peel, £33
 The Ordinary Salicylic Acid
 Anhydrous Solution, £5.20
 The Inkey List Omega Water Cream Moisturiser, £9.99
 Shiseido Urban Environment Age Defense SPF30, £34

#### DRY SKIN

#### WHAT'S THE DEAL?

'Dry skin has a tendency towards redness, scaly patches and the feeling of tightness,' says Dr Mahto. This is because it produces less oil (aka, sebum) compared with most other skin types, explains Dr Esdaile. 'Dry skin is not able to retain moisture and leads to a rough and sometimes flaky surface.'

#### **NEVER SKIP:**

The single most important thing to remember when treating dry skin? Restore. Your. Skin. Barrier. Get that right and you'll prevent a whole load of moisture loss. 'Look out for ingredients such as hyaluronic acid, shea butter, ceramides and glycerin,' says Dr Esdaile. All of which work to hydrate and strengthen the skin barrier, allowing it to hold in moisture.

#### STAY CLEAR OF:

Dr Mahto recommends 'avoiding long, hot showers, as they can strip the skin of moisture'. Instead, opt for warm water and keep things speedy. 'Use gentle soaps and washes, and avoid any excessive exfoliation, which could further irritate skin.'

#### THE ESSENTIALS



1. Aveeno Calm+Restore Nourishing Oat Cleanser, £7.99 2. Caudalie Vinosource-Hydra S.O.S Thirst-Quenching Serum, £30 3. Scientia Ceramide Skin Rescue Moisture Balm, £28 4. Ultra Violette Supreme Screen Hydrating Facial Skinscreen SPF50+, £34

#### COMBINATION SKIN

#### WHAT'S THE DEAL?

As the name suggests, when it comes to combination skin, some areas of the complexion might be prone to dryness, while other areas are oily. 'The classic distribution is oily over the face's T-zone and dry skin around the cheeks, says Dr Esdaile.

#### **NEVER SKIP:**

Keeping each part of the skin happy can be tricky when there are different needs to cater for. 'It's still important to hydrate combination skin, using a moisturiser with ingredients such as hyaluronic acid,' says Dr Esdaile. 'For congested areas, gentle exfoliants with low doses of BHAs, such as salicylic acid, can be really helpful.'

#### STAY CLEAR OF:

Balance is everything. You don't want overlyrich formulas, nor harsh decongesting ingredients. Go for milder concentrations instead. 'Stay away from dehydrating products (soaps and detergents) to avoid irritating the skin barrier,' says Dr Esdaile.

#### THE ESSENTIALS



1. Biossance Squalane + Copper Peptide Rapid Plumping Serum, £52 2. Versed Just Breathe Clarifying Serum, £18

3. Omorovicza Cushioning Day Cream, £130 4. La Roche-Posay Anthelios UVMune 400 Invisible Fluid SPF50, £18

#### SENSITIVE SKIN

#### WHAT'S THE DEAL?

One of the trickiest skin types to treat, but by no means impossible. Dr Mahto explains that there's no fixed dermatological definition for sensitivity, 'it depends on how each individual reports their skin's sensations'. That said, 'Sensitive skin types are often characterised by facial redness, burning, itching and dryness.'

#### **NEVER SKIP:**

'When it comes to actives, azelaic acid and niacinamide are often tolerated better than products such as retinoids and acids,' says Dr Esdaile. Of course, protecting your sensitive skin is oh-so important. Dr Mahto recommends using 'sunscreen with zinc or

titanium (mineral-based SPFs), rather than those with chemical filters, which have the potential to drive sensitivity'.

#### STAY CLEAR OF:

Sensitivity can be unpredictable, so try to identify any triggers and then avoid them. 'Fragrances can be a common culprit of irritation,' explains Dr Mahto, so stick to scent-free formulas. 'Avoid harsh soaps, toners, astringents and exfoliants.'

#### THE ESSENTIALS



1. Avène Tolérance Extremely Gentle Cleanser, £12 2. Ren Clean Skincare Evercalm Redness Relief Serum, £45 3. La Roche-Posav Toleriane Dermallergo Soothing Cream, £18.50 4. Pai British Summer Time SPF30, £29

#### **ACNE-PRONE SKIN**

#### WHAT'S THE DEAL?

'Acne-prone skin tends to get regular breakouts and they're often persistent,' says Dr Esdaile. But remember, you're not alone. According to Dr Mahto, it accounts for more than 3.5 million GP appointments in the UK per year - and it's not just teens. Acne can affect up to 20% of women

over 25 for the first time.

#### **NEVER SKIP:**

'Ideally your products should be labelled non-comedogenic,' says Dr Mahto, which basically means they won't clog up your pores. 'While it's not a guarantee that the formula won't break you out, it's better than a product that's not labelled at all.' She also recommends looking for salicylic

acid, glycolic acid, zinc, tea tree oil, benzoylperoxide, niacinamide and retinol.

#### STAY CLEAR OF:

'Stay away from facial oils and thick, creamy textures in products,' recommends Dr Mahto. Opt for lighter formulations instead. 'Care should also be taken with rich or waxy hair products - they can induce forehead acne,' says Dr Esdaile.

#### THE ESSENTIALS



1. Malin + Goetz Salicylic Gel, £19 2. Dr. Jart+ Teatreement Toner, £20 3. Skin + Me Personalised Acne Treatment, £24.99 per month 4. Biossance Sauglane + Zinc Sheer Mineral Sunscreen SPF30, £23

# : SAMI ROBERTS, EASY NAIL ART; MANICURE BY HANG NGUYEN AT NAILING HOLLYWOOD, SOFT AND SHEER HUES; MANICURE BY JEWELLERY BY MOON GYPSY JEWELRY; SUBTLE SPARKLE; MANICURE BY BETINA GOLDSTEIN AT THE WALL GROUP USING CHANEL WORDS: S MIMI D; JE

## Manicures are getting a minimalist makeover

Basic doesn't always mean bad, okay? And these low-key nail trends prove less is more



**SOFT AND SHEER HUES** > How to convince the world you have the nicest natural nails: a ridge-filling base coat, a layer of neutral colour and a glossy-as-hell top coat. It's basically no-make-up make-up for your fingers.

#### **EASY NAIL ART**

Can you do the whole minimalist thing without giving up nail art? The answer: absolutely yes. Just use nail tape and a neutral polish in a shade similar to your skintone to recreate this chic negative-space, half-moon design.



#### **◆ SUBTLE SPARKLE**

Don't worry, glitter lovers. There's still room for you in this pared-down space. A pearlescent polish with flecks of microfine shimmer (like Suggu's) will give your mani a hint of glam while still being low-key minimalist.

#### Four neutrals we love



Essie Nail Polish in Ballet Slippers, £7.99



Kure Bazaar Nail Polish in Nomade, £15



Nailberry Oxygenated Nail Lacquer in Au Naturel, £15



Sugau Nail Colour Polish in 129, £18



@betina goldstein

@thehangedit

BECAUSE LIFE'S ALL ABOUT THE 5-9



The best UK-based hen party ideas

Hen parties can be tricky business. Pt

everyone /-

from hot-tub hang-outs to themed brunch

Words

AMANDA STATHAM DUSTY BAXTER-WRIGHT



#### **GO GLAMPING**

Take over a whole campsite for a festival-style hen, or go one better with pre-pitched tepees. Fun extras can include adult party bags, in-tent massages, breakfast hampers and catering to give things that special touch.

#### LIP-SYNC IN A **RUPAUL'S DRAG RACE THEMED ELEGANZA**

PLEASE PLACE

SHOES HERE

Bing, bang, bong, this is the one if you all love Drag Race. A dance instructor takes you through some RuPaul classics, then you get to take to the runway and battle it out. Will you sashay away or shantay you stay? From £38 per person with Red Cactus Events.



#### **PLAN A** TREASURE HUNT

Split your hen party into groups and compete to see which team can complete riddles around your chosen city the fastest, while trawling all the wine, cocktail and champagne bars. What could possibly go wrong?

#### **FLOAT AROUND** IN HOT TUBS

Skuna's 'Hot Tub Boat' could be the best invention since Netflix. Not only do you all get to sit in a hot tub heated to 38°C, but you also get to float around Canary Wharf in London with your drinks on ice. From £225 for up to seven people.

#### **RENT A PARTY HOUSE**

You'd be amazed at some of the places you can book, sleeping well over 20 people. Make sure you keep your eyes peeled for heated swimming pools, tennis courts, gamesrooms and pool tables. Yes, please.

#### **GO PAINTING**

If you have a creative crew, this may hit the spot. The Paint Club will sort out a venue (or travel to a location of your choice within 80 miles of Sussex) and teach you all how to paint (materials provided) while also supplying cocktails. Friends, booze and a great (unless you hit the Prosecco too hard) picture to take home. Prices dependent on group size.





#### BE AT ONE WITH NATURE

Whether welly wanging (yes, it's a thing) in Yorkshire or white-water rafting in Scotland, take an adventurous bride out of her comfort zone. We can already see the Instagram pics.

#### HAVE A BAKE-OFF

Does the bride love baking? Delightful Tea Bake School can take up to 10 hens in its studio, or will travel around the country to a venue of your choice. Whether you want to learn to make macarons or perfect your cake decorating, this school has got it covered. From £45 per person.

#### GO FOR AFTERNOON TEA

If you don't fancy the classics such as Claridge's or Fortnum & Mason, why not mix it up with an Alice In Wonderland themed tea in Brighton, or a Wizard Afternoon Tea in Edinburgh\*? We're feeling hungry already. Prices vary.





#### **GET A PARTY BOAT**

Whether you go for the 38-passenger boat, Skylark, from Liverpool's famous Royal Albert Dock or a party boat along London's Thames, you can take in all the sights while sipping on a cocktail before heading for dinner somewhere nearby. Luxury.



### HEN PARTY GAMES

you need to know



#### TRUE OR FALSE

Everyone in the bridal party writes down one true story about the bride and one that's made up before putting them into a pot. The bride then pulls the stories out one at a time and must convince the room that whatever the paper says is factual. The group must guess if she's telling the truth.



#### MHO AM IS

Each member of the party writes down five facts about themselves (anything from 'I have a freckle on the bottom of my foot' to 'The bride and I once got trapped in a portaloo together') and puts them in a pile. The bride must go through each one and figure out who it's about. How well does the bride really know her hens?



#### HEN-THEMED TUMBLING TOWER

At the beginning of the game, divide the Jenga pieces among the party and ask everyone to write a rule on each piece of wood. This can be anything from 'Tell us a funny story about you and the bride' to 'If you use anyone's first name for the length of the game, you have to drink'. Build the tower and see what rules you pull out!



#### MOST EMBARRASSING MEMORY

Every member of the bridal party writes down an embarrassing story about the bride in less than six words and puts it into a hat. The bride must then read out each of the six-word stories and try to work out who wrote what, while also explaining what actually happened. Good luck with that!

# The BRIDGERTON

# filming locations you can visit in <u>real</u> life

As season two lands on Netflix, add these places to your 'must-see' list

Words AMANDA STATHAM



## The Duke's

Simon Basset from season one's home has the wow factor with its fountains, courtyard and sheer size. In real life, it's Wilton House in Salisbury, owned by the Earl and Countess of Pembroke, dating back to 1544. It's open for day visits if you want to snoop – and you might recognise it from other classy period dramas such as Emma, The Crown, Pride & Prejudice and, er, Tomb Raider.





#### The gentlemen's club

Anthony Bridgerton often socialised with the Duke of Hastings at his 'club', filmed at Lancaster House and The Reform Club (above) - a real-life Pall Mall members' club (previous patrons include Winston Churchill and writer E M Forster) founded in 1836. It's also famous for being the starting point of Phileas Fogg's adventure in Jules Verne's novel Around The World In Eighty Days.



#### Modiste dress shop

The city of Bath served as a filming location for most of the street scenes, which isn't surprising as it's home to some of the best Regency architecture in the country, particularly its curved Royal Crescent. It's also where the Modiste dress shop, where everyone buys their made-to-measure ballgowns, was filmed, specifically at The Abbey Deli, a cute cafe in the city centre.

#### The Featheringtons' house

The gaudily fabulous Featherington residence was filmed in a variety of locations, including No 1 Royal Crescent, a museum in Bath. Another is Hatfield House in Hertfordshire (pictured below), featuring a massive park, restaurant,

shops (selling jewellery, arts and crafts) and experiences, too, like hot air ballooning. You can also take tours of the super-posh mansion, including the Chinese bedroom, a chamber with a canopied bed and silk wallpaper.



#### Charlotte's home

In real life, Charlotte's opulent home is actually the former residence of King Henry VIII: Hampton Court Palace (above). Located in Richmond on the banks of the Thames, southwest London, the palace's incredible 60-acre garden and the spectacular baroque stately home are a great setting for a weekend stroll.



**COSMOPO LITAN** 



# COSMOPOLITAN DIGITAL EDITION



**AVAILABLE ON THESE DEVICES:** 

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OR VISIT ANY OF THESE STORES





# relax



## who brings their lunch

to work

Words SARAH WELDON 10.57am is a perfectly acceptable time to eat lunch, right?

> CHOOSE ONE BASE

> > Quinoa

Pasta

Rice

Any hearty green (kale, spinach, rocket, etc)

THROW IN TWO OF THESE

Precooked chicken sausage

Teeny mozzarella balls

Your favourite large veggie, such as courgette or beef tomatoes

Roasted sweet potato

Whatever fruit is in season

Feta cheese

ADD TWO OR THREE

**FUN THINGS** 

Capers

Shredded Parma ham

Pesto

artichoke hearts

Lemon juice

Hummus

Salad dressing

Hot sauce

Olive oil

PICK A GARNISH

**FOUR WAYS** TO MAKE TRANSPORTING LE GOODS **EASY** 



A chic foodcontainer set to rule them all. We're thinking something by Lékué or Black + Blum.



Replace your plastic wrap with some reusable beeswax or vegan wax food wraps.



Is it a lunch box or is it a handbag? Well, there's the trick. Brands such as Herschel make stylish lunch boxes that look like handbags.



Reusable silicone bags are ideal for carrying pretty much any combo.

Pasta





Thanks to some groundbreaking

research carried out by our team

of experts (well, me), you can kiss the

£10-desk-salad lifestyle goodbye.

I'm not exaggerating, as you will see

from the formula on the right. Pick

your fave ingredients from each

bucket to create the lunch of your

workday dreams - they taste great in

a bowl and will survive for up to a

week in the fridge. Pre-cook your

base on a Sunday and throw in your

extras across the week for simplicity

and variety. Let me get you started

with what I'm eating tomorrow.





Capers, pesto



# Chickpeas:

# now whatever you want them to be

'Ugh, I have no food.' – not you, not today



These magic recipes, brought to you by Jessica Seinfeld's Vegan, At Times (£20, Simon & Schuster), will help you turn a boring can of beans into a solid snack – or a whole actual meal. And while, yes, you will need a few other things to make this protein-packed legume taste fun, you probably already have/can easily get them. Welcome, friends, to Team Garbanzo (that's the fancy name for chickpeas by the way).

### **Everything** chickpeas

(Makes enough to fill a mug)

#### THE INGREDIENTS

- 400g can of chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- Extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp 'Everything' seasoning\*
- Pinch of rock salt

#### THE RECIPE

- 1. Pour your chickpeas on to a tea towel and pat them dry.
- 2. In a medium frying pan, warm enough oil over a medium-high heat to cover the base. Then shake the chickpeas off the towel and into the pan. Cook, stirring often, until they're golden brown and crispy.
- 3. Put those babies into a bowl lined with paper towels. Toss with Everything seasoning and some salt.
- 4. Eat them while they're warm and toasty.
- \*ICYMI, this is a mix of sesame, poppy seeds, garlic powder, onion powder and salt. Available online or DIY.

#### Spaghetti with olive oil, garlic and chickpeas

(Makes 4 to 6 servings, depending on how hungry you are)

#### THE INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 tsp rock salt, plus more for pasta water and to taste
- •450g pasta (eg, spaghetti)
- 6 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1/4 tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- 400g can of chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- · 1kg baby spinach
- 1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper, plus more for serving
- Nutritional yeast, for serving (optional/delicous)

#### THE RECIPE

- 1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil, salt it and cook the pasta according to the package directions.
- 2. Drain your spaghetti, reserving 250ml of pasta water for later.
- 3. Wipe the pot dry, return it to the stove over a medium heat and add 4 tbsp of oil, the garlic and the crushed red pepper flakes. Stir for about 30 secs do not let it turn brown.
- 4. Add the liquid gold (aka pasta water) and the chickpeas. Let it simmer for 1 min.
- 5. Add the pasta back to the pot and stir to coat. Remove from the heat. Add the





spinach, more salt and the black pepper, and stir until the spinach wilts.

- 6. Drizzle on the remaining 2 thsp of oil and stir once more. Maybe add more salt? Completely up to you.
- 7. Serve the pasta topped with black pepper and a sprinkle of nutritional yeast, if you're fancy like that.

00

Well, someone's an overachiever, aren't they?



#### Green hummus

(Makes a cereal bowl's worth)

#### THE INGREDIENTS

- 400g chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 225g flat-leaf parsley or coriander
- 2 spring onions, white and light-green parts, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 garlic clove
- 60ml extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- ½ tsp rock salt, plus more to taste
- $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp cayenne pepper
- 1/8 tsp freshly ground black pepper

#### THE RECIPE

- 1. In a food processor (or the blender you use to make margaritas), combine the chickpeas, parsley or coriander, spring onions, garlic, oil, lemon juice, salt, cayenne pepper and black pepper.
- Puree until nice and creamy. If it's too thick, add a splash of H<sub>2</sub>O. If it needs more salt, add some.
- For best results, use clementines, apples, red bell peppers, cucumbers, carrots or radishes for dunking.



Vegan, At Times is out now. For more vegan recipe ideas, head to cosmopolitan.com/uk/ vegancookbooks



## The secret to mirror selfies is

#### not using a mirror

How did we not clock this sneaky little trick until now?!

Words
ROSEMARY WOJTKOWSKI









Honestly, it was always sort of too impressive when influencers had neither a smudge or a sink edge in their mirror selfies. But it wasn't until Kara Del Toro (that's her to your left) revealed this hack on TikTok that we realised, uh, basically everything truly is a lie. Unlike many social media tricks, though, this one is actually attainable for us regular types. Behold, a step-by-step guide to making your next 'mirror selfie' practically perfect in every way.





Secure both a prop phone (aka your real one) and an actual camera with a self-timer. Or you can just ask your bestie to take a pic of you.

#### STEP 2

Find a spot that looks like you're standing in front of a mirror. Avoid outdoor spaces to lean into the deception.

#### STEP 3

If it's just you: set up your camera on a tripod (the professionalism!) or on an inanimate object (maybe a stack of books on a coffee table?) directly in front of you at eye level. If your friend is around, have them hold up their phone at your eye level.

#### QUICK Q: how many of these pics involved actual mirrors?\*

#### STEP 4

Pose like you're looking into a mirror (or looking into your phone looking into a mirror), holding your phone with a convincingly steady grip. Stay away from weird angles at all costs.

#### STEP 5

Snap your sneaky pic – and voila! You have a shiny new selfie without having to bust out the glass cleaner.

#### STEP 6

Drop your pic on every single social platform.



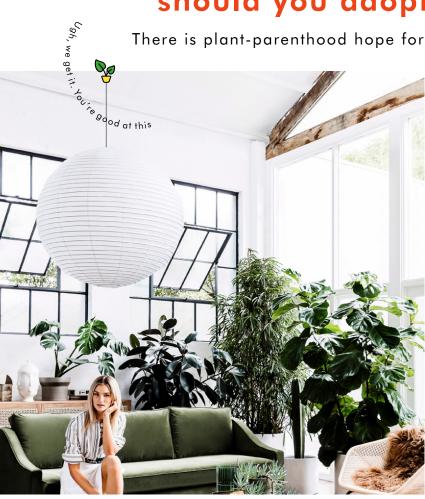


## VORDS: CARINA HSIEH. PHOTOGRAPHY: ® LIVING4MEDIA / BAUER SYNDICATION. ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES

#### Which plant child

#### should you adopt?

There is plant-parenthood hope for us all



#### Your Uber's here. Where are you?

- A In the shower.
- B Changing (again), with one eye on my phone.
- C Ready to go. I literally just got the notification.
- D Gathering my group to meet me out front while sweet-talking the driver.

#### You're most likely to spend your time off on...

- A Nothing. I'm using it all for my big 2023 getaway, seeing as it rolls over each year. Wait, what do you mean it doesn't roll over?
- B Sporadic mental health days. Planning is work.
- C Just one long weekend with the gals. I like my job!
- D A pre-planned multicountry tour through Asia.

#### How much sunlight do you get in your place?

- A Um... none.
- B I have windows, so?
- C More than enough, according to Google.
- D Exposure in the south and east corners.

#### Your friend asks you to dog-sit for the weekend. How do you prepare?

- A I don't. She's dropping off the dog, I think?
- B I mean, there's no chocolate or metal nails lying around, so I think I'm good.
- C I stocked up on puppy pads, even though he's allegedly house-trained.
- D I ordered dog-proofing accessories and vegan chew toys before she finalised her travel plans.

#### Real quick: where's your phone right now?

- A ldk or I'd be on it.
- B If I grope ground a one-metre radius, it will probably turn up.
- C On the table.
- D Tucked neatly into my tote bag's designated phone pocket (I paid extra for the organiser).



You're not a cactus person. Those require dirt and light and, therefore, are too hard. Spend enough time researching realistic-looking fakes and it counts because so much thought went into it.

#### **MOSTLY Bs** snake

plant Bare minimum, come through! The snake

plant is foolproof, helps with air quality (allegedly, but mostly it's cute) and can grow impressively tall quickly. You'll appreciate the instant gratification.

You've got it together... most of the time. so you can handle a little more than a set-it-and-foraet-it potted thing. And if shit comes up (as it always does for you), this guy will stay green – even in darker conditions.

MOSTLY Ds gird-of paradisa

A very needy plant for a dedicated and organised parent to anything that lives. This new project might mean you need to cancel your 15-year Sims subscription, but you could probs handle both to be honest.







# You CAN tuck that giant top into that tiny skirt

All the wily tricks the influencers are using and not telling you about (rude)

Words
RACHEL TORGERSON



that they've somehow crammed massive jumpers into bodycon-level bottoms without any of the bunching and bulging that we mere mortals get. The truth is that they – just like you're about to – have left traditional tucking measures behind in favour of this magic...





secret

belt





1. Throw on your jumper and silk skirt. 2. Cinch your knit with a belt at your natural waist. 3. Leaving some fabric tucked into the belt, loosen the top to your desired length. 4. Make sure the jumper conceals the belt (and the fabric is still tucked into it), and live your best damn life with no awkward lumps or cable-knit patterns popping through the silk.

**Jumper** and **skirt**, vince.com. **Belt**, frame-store.com. **Earrings**, sylviatoledano.com











#### You can absolutely tuck trousers into sandals, btw

1. You'll need lace-up ones like these or a pair with buckles that don't have a thick attachment on the back of the shoe. 2. Buckle or lace your heels over your trousers, then play with the hems until you get them to the proper length, which usually looks like a cute bell-bottom (look it up for an example) or a faked bungee hem. Either way, so fashun!

> Trousers, Babaton at aritzia.com. Heels, Louise et Cie at vincecamuto.com

- 1. Wear a sports bra underneath the (long-ish) shirt you'd like to shorten 2. Slip the hem of your top into the base of the bra.
- 3. Keep stuffing it up there, adjusting it to your desired length.
- 4. Brag to everyone about how well-tucked your shirt is. Oh, bonus: you can also create a crop top like this.

T-shirt, everlane.com. Skirt, mango.com. Bandana worn as belt, mannermarket.com. Earrings, jeanniekim.com



twisty

tail







1. Think about how nice it would be to tuck an oversized sweatshirt into your skirt 2. Gather your top at each side and twist it into two cute tails. 3. Stuff those little guys into the sides of the skirt. 4. Admire your handiwork and get ready to receive all the compliments.

Sweatshirt, holidaythelabel.com. Skirt, agjeans.com. Belt, frame-store.com. Earrings, shopmachete.com



#### Hi, have you heard of CO OUR therapy?

There's a reason you reach for that red shirt in your wardrobe – and a reason you don't

Words LAUREN ADHAV

ou don't need me to tell you that an outfit can be a whole mood, and that clothes can be a powerful form of self-expression. But what's even cooler is that the colours we wear can secretly work some magic on our emotional state. Our minds subconsciously know this, too. And that's the reason why we often gravitate towards specific shades at specific times. Like last week, when you were feeling stuck and (seemingly randomly) picked out that vivid lime-hued top? Yeah, that might've been because your brain was craving a subtle serotonin hit from being around green and its oh-so-fresh, rejuvenating vibes.

Spooky, I know! But it's also science: when mini receptors on your eyeballs take in a colour, they shoot a signal to your brain that can trigger an emotional response. This is why wearing a bright shade can enhance your mood

 kind of like how sitting next to the light of a sun lamp during dark winter mornings can help to alleviate some people's symptoms of seasonal affective disorder.

What each tone makes you feel depends on where it sits on the rainbow spectrum (look to the right for a cheat sheet). Most of this comes from historical associations that originated way back - I'm talking centuries ago – and are still super embedded in society today, says Dawnn Karen, a fashion psychologist at New York City's Fashion Institute of Technology. (And I really do mean centuries ago: folks in ancient Egypt and Greece were already using various coloured stones, crystals and dyes in their healing rituals.)

Modern marketing and advertising firms have wielded the power of colour, too, using it to prompt certain responses or compel purchases (and now you know why car insurance



#### Wow, these hues can do A LOT for you

**WEAR IT FOR:** passionate vibes

Hat, £55, shophoney at Depop

WEAR IT FOR: lively energy

Shoes, £32, Next

WEAR IT FOR: happy, joyful feels

Trousers, £69.99, Iris Apfel x H&M

WEAR IT FOR: a hopeful mood

Trainers, £35, Monki

WEAR IT FOR: a sense of calm

Cardigan, £98, House of Sunny

**WEAR IT FOR:** all the creativity

Bag, £69, JW Pei

WEAR IT FOR: self-assurance

Hoodie, £28, River Island

#### BROWN

WEAR IT FOR: a warm aura

Bralette, £17, Gilly Hicks



logos are typically blue, evoking confidence and stability). Workplaces are in on it as well, painting their offices, say, violet to foster feelings of creativity.

But all of this isn't just a sneaky way for businesses to sway your feelings. Colour therapy is having a big moment right now because designers – and the people who wear their clothes – have realised that anyone can get in on the action by intentionally choosing what tones to wear. (Tbh, this couldn't be better timed, as summer is the season to go all out on brights and lord knows that we could all do with some mood-boosting these days.)

Lingerie designer Chloé Julian kept this in mind while creating her line Videris: she decided to narrow in on nine colours and their meanings. Julian hopes her rosy-pink bras and underwear can prompt feelings



Feeling blue? Walk away from your neutrals in colour

of self-acceptance, while her purple ones will spark imagination and spirituality. 'It's about taking a small moment for yourself each morning to be like, "How do I want to feel?" And then picking out something to put on that supports that feeling,' says Julian. should consider colour therapy as a simple method for temporarily improving your state of mind. The impact it can have on your mood – and the moods of those around you - is undeniable, says Karen.

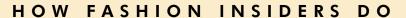
Case in point: during the pandemic, Karen had a doctor who was treating Covid patients. To help lift her spirits during a devastating time, Karen suggested she started wearing vellow clothes. And the result? The doctor and her patients reported feeling happier.

All of which is to say that you may as well give colour therapy a try. At best, you'll be

#### Anyone can get in on the action by choosing what tones to wear

Other designers, such as Roxanne Assoulin and Tanya Taylor, have released colour therapy collections of beaded bracelets and T-shirts respectively.

Obviously, wearing specific colours isn't a replacement for actual mental health treatment. Instead, you more in tune with your emotions; at worst, you'll look amazing in that hot-pink dress. Not a bad scenario at all, right? So, what are you waiting for? Go forth and start wearing your true colours.



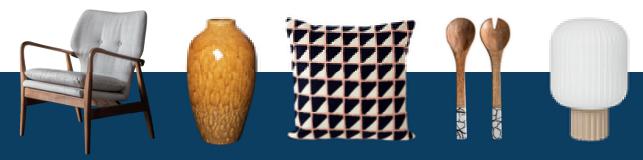
## TRANSITIONAL







Refresh your home for spring with contemporary furniture and on-trend accessories from the House Beautiful Marketplace. Curated by the style experts at House Beautiful magazine, you can shop an array of the latest interior styles, perfect for making your dream home a reality.



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## STRETCH YOUR BODY AND YOUR MIND The Big Calorie Debate Calories on menus are coming... but are they a good idea? Turn the page, as two writers share $M_{ain}\,D_{ishes}$ $^{78}$ $^{\circ}$ $T_{artare\ with\ Avocado}$ 3 Gluten free COSMOPOLITAN . 53

From 6 April you'll notice a change when you go out to eat. Large restaurants, cafes and takeaways (those with 250-plus employees) will have to display their calorie content, as the government plans to 'crack down on obesity'.

According to a Public Health England survey, 80% of people are pleased with the idea and Diabetes UK found 60% of people would be more likely to eat somewhere with labelling. But it's not clear-cut; eating disorder charities such as Beat

have said the move could be triggering for some, and low calorie doesn't always mean nutritious. Being healthy is about more than numbers next to a piece of garlic bread. Here, two writers discuss the pros and cons of a nuanced topic...

**'FOR THOSE** WITH EATING DISORDERS, THE ALREADY OVERWHELMING STRESS OF **GOING TO A** RESTAURANT WILL BE MADE **EVEN WORSE'** 



At the time of writing, I'm lazing on the sofa, having just eaten a big wedge of chocolate cake. The sickly sweet taste acts as a reminder of how content I am. I'm not worried about whether I've had too much sugar, fat or too many calories. I'm grateful that I can savour a piece of cake without guilt and panic. Because I haven't always been able to.

As a teenager, vulnerable because of problems at home and school, I descended into a dark place when it came to my relationship with food. Standing on bathroom scales and seeing a number much higher than the weights of celebrities reported in the media at the time, I clung to the hope that if I got small enough, my life would get better. I soon knew the calories of every food item, categorising them as things I could eat and things I wouldn't touch (chocolate cake being one). I lost weight, my periods stopped, my hair thinned. I existed in a state of near-permanent lethargy and cried in the car while my family ate a pub lunch. I hoped one day I'd feel satisfied it was all worth it, but that day never came.

After one frustrating GP appointment - he told me that I simply needed to eat more – I never sought more professional help and wasn't diagnosed officially. Armed only with a will to get through my A-levels and move away for uni, recovery was a slow climb to a better place. Over a period of a few years, I got better and, a decade later, I now enjoy a positive relationship with food. I eat what I want, when I want. I actively ignore calorie counts and recommended portion sizes because I know what healthy looks like for me. I fuel my body with nutritious and colourful food - thick fruit smoothies and piled-high salads which makes me feel great. But so

do big spoonfuls of peanut butter and takeaway pizzas.

I'm extremely wary of calorie counts becoming mandatory on menus this month. The government claims the change will 'help the public to make healthier choices when eating out', but I fear that using calories as a measure of a healthy diet is missing the big picture. In my most extreme period of counting calories, I could barely leave the house. Now, I run around the park, I do yoga most days, I look in the mirror and appreciate the body that carries me energetically through life. To imply that a calorie-controlled diet is automatically healthier just isn't true.

I worry that for people living with eating disorders, the already overwhelming stress of going to a restaurant will be made even worse. For those who, like me, have a history of disordered eating, the numbers on menus may be an unwelcome quest at the table, forcing us to think about calorie restrictions when we've worked hard to override that impulse. There's also the risk that people will make decisions based on calories alone: skipping a full, nutritious meal in favour of a cookie and a glass of wine as they're the same amount and one feels more enjoyable. Menus without calories will be available on request - which does acknowledge that the figures aren't needed or helpful for all - but having to ask to be spared of them

isn't an ideal solution, in my opinion.

I'm not suggesting everyone should ignore calories. If they help you feel informed about your food choices, that's totally fair. But what isn't fair is calories being thrust, unsolicited, upon everyone who eats out, even if it risks their health and wellbeing. As for me? I'll be scanning past the calories on menus and ordering food that I know will make me feel good.

'ANYTHING THAT GIVES US MORE KNOWLEDGE AND HELPS DECISION

Growing up, my diet was pure beige: pizzas, instant mash and vanilla milkshakes – until I got to university... when it shifted to pizzas, instant mash and Strongbow. To say I was uneducated about food and what a balanced diet looks like would be something of a gigantic understatement. It's only in the past few years that I've consciously started to think about what I'm putting in my body – and it's made a noticeable impact on both my physical and emotional wellbeing. With this in mind, being able to have everything up front on a menu so I can decide what works for me that day, rather than it being hidden, leaving me quessing, is a welcome addition.

In the past, I've massively overeaten and got into a rut with ordering endless takeaways and doing minimal (read: zero) exercise. My mental health took a tumble – I'm an emotional eater with a 'treat yourself' mentality after a bad day, but when you're depressed, every day is a bad day. And what I was putting in my mouth wasn't helping me at all. I noticed that too much sugar in particular really caused my mood swings to ramp up and my energy levels to slump.

Then there's the accompanying decline in my physical health. My body felt bloated and various warning signs flared up, indicating that I wasn't looking after myself. Everyone's relationship with their body is different but, for me, this change in how I looked and felt really dented my confidence. Which, in turn, sent my mental health on an even bigger spiral.

Once, during an especially bad spell, where I'd stopped taking care of myself, I remember having a breakdown (for many reasons) and my mum sitting at the end of the bed that I hadn't left in four days, saying that as well as getting professional help, I needed to relearn some of the basics - including how to sleep and eat. She advised me to think of my body like

a car and if I didn't fuel it correctly, it wouldn't be able to run efficiently.

That was five years ago and I've taken her advice to heart, implanting it more seriously since the start of the pandemic. I've swotted up on nutrition, exercise regularly and keep healthy eating (and minimal alcohol) at the core of everything I do. I feel so much better for it. I know calories are just one small part of what makes up a balanced diet and that we shouldn't be ruled by them, but when you're out and about, living a busy lifestyle, they're an easy thing to glance at for a rough idea of what a healthier choice might be. I tend to like to check the calorie content before going to places, so this makes it easier. On my food education journey, I've been surprised at the calorie content of some items, too (even salads can be packed with saturated fat, depending on the dressing). Before, there were days where I'd think that I was eating well and it turns out I absolutely wasn't.

Obesity is a serious issue in my family; my dad recently suffered a stroke, a few years after having a heart attack. Doctors told him that losing weight will reduce the chances of him falling ill again and I like to hope – albeit probably naively, as I know there's more to it - that seeing the calories in black and white while ordering a takeaway or grabbing a pub lunch might encourage him to make better choices. Currently, my stomach drops whenever my phone rings, anticipating further bad news, and I wish more than anything that he'd make lifestyle changes. Of course, he has to want to do that and the frustrating thing about this menu decision is that it puts so much onus on the individual to make healthier choices themselves, rather than addressing the root cause: that unhealthy, fast food is often the cheapest and easiest option. But with nowhere to hide, perhaps restaurants

will look at reducing some of the fat and sugar content in their meals. Calorie labelling has been in the US since 2018 and while existing items on menus didn't change, new dishes introduced did have less calories, on average.

I know that this is a hugely complex, sensitive matter. The government needs to look into providing more accessible exercise locations, mental health support and reducing the stigma attached to obesity, treating this as a holistic matter, rather than just sticking calories on menus and thinking 'done!' - but it's a step in the right direction. Anything that makes us more knowledgeable about – and have better control over – what we put into our bodies should be seen as a good thing.

else's health, you can contact Beat, the UK's eating disorder charity, on 0808 801 0677 or beateatingdisorders.org.uk



#### How weight training changed my attitude to fitness forever

It's the shouting that baffles me. Why would I ever willingly put myself in a situation where I'm told off? Yet, for so long, this seemed to be the only way to strength train. Go to a very loud class and be told to 'go hard or go home'. I went to a few. I never went back. I tried the weights room at my gym, but there it was less about the shouting and more about the grunting - where musclemen (who, hey, I'm not slagging off, we all have our hobbies) would take over the space, leaving me feeling intimidated because I didn't know what I was doing.

Yet, I really wanted to lift weights. It keeps your bones healthy and is good for your heart, metabolism, posture and sleep (and loads more). Plus, I wanted to do something regularly where I could see improvement. My existing mix of yoga, spinning and boxing was so inconsistent that I often felt like a beginner, despite going to classes for years. That was when I found Lift Studio London, which

has created a women-only space where the emphasis is on training for joy. I signed up to two sessions a week for three months and it ended up transforming the way I felt about exerise and my body. Here's why.

Alongside the intimidating gym dudes, I was also afraid of going into the weights room in case I injured myself. As the Lift classes are small, there's always a trainer nearby to keep an eye on my form, which helps. But this isn't the case for everyone, which is why Mimi and Danni advise (if you can't afford a PT session to learn the basics) carefully watching YouTube videos, starting light and with fewer reps, basically going as slow as possible. 'I used to think of lifting as meditation,' says Danni. Just tuning in and being as conscious of my body as possible.' While Mimi adds, 'You're more likely to injure yourself in a Bodypump class (where it's all about speed) than if you practise slowly on your own.' As for those men? 'They're mostly thinking about themselves, just pop your headphones in and tune them out."

About five years ago, purely as a way to lose weight. I was angry at myself for not being as lithe as the other runners. This – say Mimi and Danni, who set up Lift Studio

change their bodies, and

► When I did that half

Want to start lifting

weights? Head to

cosmopolitan.com/

uk/start-weighttraining for advice from Alice Liveing

I tried to goblet squat with the bar (weighing 12kg) I can now squat at 47kg.
I'd also never have dared to attempt a deadlift and began with 25kg, then progressed to 70kg (I still

## Life in

#### attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

Heather Cox, 26, a teaching assistant from south London, shares the ups and downs of being an adult with ADHD

itting in the staff meeting, I click my pen repeatedly. I know the others are staring at me, but I can't help it. Click. Click. If I stop, I won't be able to concentrate on what the headteacher is saying - I'll only be able to think about the prickly energy racing through my body, urging my fingers and feet to move.

When the meeting ends, I jump out of my seat, finally able to

release the pent-up energy. 'I could run a marathon now,' I think. But instead, I try to pace myself as I walk towards the cafeteria for lunch.

I've always been a fidgeter. An easily distracted daydreamer. In my own school days, I lost count of how many teachers told my parents, 'Heather spends too much time looking out of the window.' When I became a teaching assistant and started

to see these traits in some of the kids, I realised I might have ADHD.

Growing up, my symptoms were missed. The lateness,

the inability to sit still it was all just 'part of my personality'. Which, until my early twenties, I believed to be true.

I started reading up, and scoured everything on the NHS website

to back up what I was going to say to my GP.

It took six months to get a diagnosis, but I now understand how my brain works and know how to manage traits that could get in my way. Anyone with ADHD will tell you it's easy to get caught up in your thoughts and lose track of time, so writing lists or setting alarms make a big difference.

I'm not on medication for ADHD; I'm trying to manage my symptoms by making changes to my lifestyle. I might change my mind in the future, but for now I'm doing okay. There are still things I struggle to control, such as my hyperactivity, which makes me crave change. It's one of the reasons I dye my hair or give myself an impromptu fringe (which I then later regret). I also find myself talking over others in conversations, which people sometimes misinterpretasrudeness. Luckily, I have a lot of understanding friends who know this isn't the case, but I worry that when I meet new people they'll just think I'm an arsehole, which I'm not.

Although I'm still learning how to handle it, I'm rather fond of the ways ADHD has actually brightened up my life - or at least my hair.



about ADHD, because I knew it would be hard to get diagnosed. I even found old school reports - where teachers had noted my inability to concentrate - to ensure I had the necessary facts



#### Write it down

Listing what I need to do has been a game-changer. It acts as a point of reference if I get distracted, and the rush of dopamine I get when I tick something off is motivating af.

#### Find time to wind down

My brain works on overdrive, especially if I've had a fidgety day. Making sure I take time out of social situations and have a good night's sleep allows me to recharge.

#### **Curating social feeds**

At times I feel isolated, so following others with ADHD has helped me accept who I am. My favourite is @adhd alien - her cartoons have made me realise that I'm not alone.

You don't feel ready to give

up on cheese, we hear you.

So try vegetarian. Repeat

after us: 'Hold the ham on

my eggs Benedict, please."

Seeing as fish can be friends

and food, you're probably better

off living the pescatarian life

for now. You can always try

going full-on veggie later.

Focus on quality over quantity.

Animals that lived happy,

healthy, cage-free lives

on sustainable farms are

better for all of us.

Go forth and conquer with nut

milks, cashew cheese, jackfruit

'pulled pork' nachos and plant-

based ready meals. Vegan

aisle, here you come!

### Try before you train...

#### tennis shoes

On or off the court, these are the tennis shoes the Cosmo team are coveting





#### Asics Women's Court FF 2 Clay, £155

Because of their sock-like design, it felt like a warm-up just trying to put them on (even after sizing up), but once I got on the court, all prior struggles were forgotten. The fit felt comfortable and no matter what direction I went in, or at what speed I charged towards the ball, their grip kept me firmly on my feet. The compliments on their sleek look were a nice bonus, too.

Courtney, fashion assistant



#### New Balance FuelCell 996v4.5, £105

Despite being an avid player, I've never had a dedicated pair of tennis shoes. My regular trainers for running and HIIT workouts are fine, right? Yes and no. When I played in these, I understood the importance of decent bounce, a good grip for changing direction and a nice cushion to be kind to your knees. They're lightweight, comfortable and supportive, too. Dusty, acting entertainment editor



#### Gola Classics Women's Grandslam **Trident Trainers, £80**

I usually opt for a classic court-style trainer, so I was reeled in by this comfy pair. The chic colour palette is way more fun than the classic white while still feeling like a wardrobe staple for an everyday look. In a bid to be more sustainable, the upper part of the shoe is made from 80% recycled PU, which makes me love them more.

Sophie, head of social



#### Superga 2750 Cotu Classic, £57

I'm obsessed. A Kate Middleton favourite, these shoes are simple, elegant and incredibly comfy to wear all day long, despite the lack of arch support. They're flattering paired with mom jeans and midi skirts and would look stylish with shorts and mini dresses, too – a perfect spring/summer staple. Made from cotton and rubber, they're 100% biodegradable and really easy to wash. **Zoe**, acting executive editor (digital)



#### Reebok x Prince Club C Revenge Shoes, £85

Filled with tennis heritage, the Reebok x Prince collab is pure retro joy. While this vibrant yellow pair might not be the usual colour I'd go for, with the right outfit they'd be a \*look\*. Comfort-wise, they're a dream, and the top shell is nice and bendable, if you do decide to hit the court after all.

Emily, acting junior writer and editorial assistant

## Don't bet on it

The odd flutter becoming a hard-to-quit habit?

GambleAware can help

It starts off innocently as a few pounds here and there. And then it becomes more frequent. £10 turns into £100, which quickly increases to £200. But it's okay, it's just a little fun and you're in total control. You know what you're doing and could stop immediately if you wanted to, right? Sadly, for many women across the UK, controlling their gambling can prove too difficult.

Traditionally, gambling has been seen as a more male issue – popping into the bookies and gambling on a horse race or football game, or grabbing a scratch card at the corner shop is viewed by many as a harmless hobby. But as online gambling is becoming a popular pastime, there is a concern that uncontrollable gambling is becoming a rising, yet overlooked, problem – especially for women.

New research by charity GambleAware shows that up to one million women could be at risk of their gambling habits having a detrimental effect on their day-to-day lives. And the perceived stigma around it means two in five of those experiencing severe harm may refrain from seeking help or treatment.

There could be a host of reasons why women start playing online gambling games, traffic for which increases by almost a third between December and March, compared to the rest of the year. The lure of financial gain is one factor – especially considering the impact of the global pandemic. Furlough, reduced hours and redundancy have had a crippling effect on many – through no fault of their own. Plus, the ease of accessing gambling sites on a smartphone can make them hard to resist.



#### YOU'RE NOT ALONE

'It was a way of escaping real life and filling a void. It was never really about the money,' explains Tracy, who sought help when gambling began to have an negative impact on her life. And she's not the only one, as Jemima, who became a mum at a young age, says she saw online gambling as a form of escapism. 'It was time to close off from the world around me and I could do it anywhere – standing in a supermarket queue or waiting for my son to come out of school,' she reveals. 'When I did eventually seek support from somebody who had struggled with the same issues, I felt inspired to get my life back.'

## Remember that gambling problems don't happen through personal choice

But how do you know how to spot the signs? Maybe you're losing track of what's going on around you whenever you gamble. In this case, it's important to set a time limit. Chances are that the longer you spend playing, the more money you'll



lose. It's vital to take frequent breaks, too; mostly because it's easy to get carried away, and time spent continuously gambling can cause you to lose track of perspective. Plus, if you start to notice that your mood changes whenever you aren't doing it, you're finding the thought of it all-consuming or you're wondering when your next chance to get online will be, it could be time to reassess your relationship with gambling and seek help.

'Those who gamble sometimes face a unique stigma,' says Jemima. 'It's helpful to see more and more women coming forward to share their stories, and I hope it will empower others to do the same.'

#### **SEEKING HELP**

It's true that gambling behaviours manifest differently in women compared to men, as Liz Karter MBE, an addiction counsellor, explains. 'The easy availability of online gambling leads many women to websites that appear innocent and socially acceptable,' she states. 'The games on those sites seem safe and familiar, especially as they are so similar to the free digital ones we're all used to.'

Of course, not all gambling leads to harm and some people can enjoy it and walk away. But, as Liz explains, it's vital that we're aware of the early warning signs. 'Look out for losing track of time, incurring increasing debts, a tendency to hide the habit from the people around you or gambling to forget problems,' she says.

And even if it's something that doesn't apply to you directly, it could be impacting the life of a close friend or family member. That's why it's important to be aware of the signs; that way you can offer support to somebody affected, who's maybe too scared to seek help themselves, or perhaps doesn't recognise that anything is wrong. In those cases, it's about empathising and learning to understand what they're going through. Withhold judgement and try to refrain from blaming either them or yourself, especially if they may have lied to you because of it, or if you feel hurt or betrayed by their actions.

Remember that gambling problems don't happen through personal choice. It's also important to realise that not everybody will even recognise that they have an issue – it's common to convince yourself that everything is under control, even if it's not.

Ensure your loved one knows that your concern is coming from a place of care, and that you want nothing but the best for them. Choose your words wisely, and try to remain positive instead of being critical or confrontational. You can be someone's way out when they don't think there are any left.

The National Gambling Helpline is available 24/7 on 0808 8020 133 or visit begambleaware.org for free, confidential advice and support

#### KNOM THE

signs of gambling getting out of hand

1

#### LOSING TRACK OF TIME

This is a common thing to be aware of, especially if you find the hours you're spending playing are passing by particularly quickly, or if you're counting down to the next time you can get online.

2

#### SPENDING TOO MUCH

Gambling websites, bookies and apps are businesses: they exist to make profit, so only spend what you can afford to lose.

3

#### **KEEPING IT A SECRET**

Gambling can negatively impact your life, and keeping it secret may lead to feelings of shame. It could also cause an increase in stress and anxiety levels.



#### **FEELING IRRITABLE**

Noticing a mood shift when you actively try to stop (maybe you become irritable or more restless than normal) is a common sign to look out for.

5

#### **CHASING LOSSES**

Much like losing track of money, you might also find yourself constantly trying to 'win back' what you've lost by gambling even more.

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Drama and theatre studies teacher Otis Gardner talks High School Musical and mental wellbeing

In the last of our series about teachers' lives - both in and out of the classroom – we speak to 27-year-old Otis Gardner, a drama and theatre studies teacher from Manchester, about how he uses yoga to encourage his students to prioritise their mental health and wellbeing.

#### Why did you decide to go into teaching?

'Growing up, I had some challenging times and school was often my only bit of stability. So, I wanted to help make a difference to students who perhaps don't have the best home life – to help them along the right path.'

#### What appeals about teaching drama?

'I was a bit of a Troy Bolton [Zac Efron's character in High School Musical] at school. I enjoyed PE but also

really loved drama because it taught me to be present, to speak out and to think creatively. That's what I want to instil in my students.'

#### What was it like to teach a class for the first time?

'It was an adrenaline rush. I felt I could really own that space and start to think about who I wanted to be as a teacher. That teacher persona is definitely something you develop over time, bringing

#### What's your typical school day like?

your best qualities

to the job.'

'I wake up at 5am so that I can go to the gym for an hour before work. I get into school at about 7.15am and lessons start at 8.20am. I teach up to six classes a day. School finishes

> at 3pm but much of my job is extracurricular, so I'll usually run an afterschool club, then catch up on

emails. I leave by 5pm unless we're rehearsing for a play.'

#### How do you unwind outside of school?

'I do a lot of yoga and meditation. I enjoy a

range of different styles but Bikram [hot yoga] is my favourite. It's a chance to get away from my phone, switch off and totally reset.'

#### Does your hobby help in the classroom?

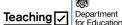
'Yoga teaches you to acknowledge how you're feeling and that's something I try to pass on to my students. You have a lot of social pressure on you at secondary school, so it's really important that we talk to them about mental health - and I can use what I've learnt from yoga to start that conversation."

#### What do you love about your job?

Q & A

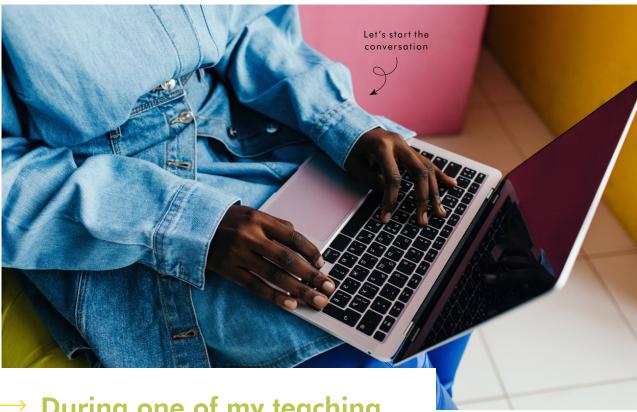
'You can make a real difference to young people's lives and help them achieve their potential. You get students who won't make eye contact at the start of the year, then suddenly, their hand is up and they're answering in class. That progress is so rewarding to see.'

If you're interested in learning more about a career in teaching and the training options available, search 'Get Into Teaching'





## earn RTER, NOT HARDER The silent workplace bias The glass ceiling. The glass cliff. There are so many barriers for women in the world of work, but for women of colour, there are even more. Here's how to spot and overcome them... Words YASMINA FLOYER COSMOPOLITAN · 63



→ During one of my teaching placements when I was in my early twenties, a few colleagues taunted me during lunchtimes by waving food in my face.

The reason they found this hilarious, you see, was because I was observing Ramadan, which meant that I didn't eat or drink during daylight hours. I was hungry, thirsty and exhausted, yet these staff members never tired of tormenting me. Others watched on, but nobody spoke up – it was 'just banter'. If I got upset, 'I couldn't take a joke'. In the end, I spent my lunchtimes walking into town, regardless of what the winter weather threw at me. This experience left me feeling uncomfortable in my own place of work – and, sadly, this isn't unique to me. Racial stereotypes, unconscious bias and white cultural expectations are

impacting people across the country. In September 2021, gender equality charity The Fawcett Society conducted research alongside UK race and equality think tank Runnymede Trust to explore the barriers faced by women of colour in the workplace. Across the public and private sectors, women of colour are almost non-existent in positions of power, yet they're over-represented in entry-level positions. Women make up just 6% of FTSE 100 CEOs - and none of them are women of colour. Not to mention that people from ethnic minorities must send 60% more job applications to receive a positive response from an employer than white British candidates. This trend is seen in career progression, too, with

31%\* of Black and minority ethnic (BME) women reporting that they've either been unfairly passed over for a promotion or denied one altogether.

Some people might think that plenty of progress has already been made to help women succeed - the introduction of equal-opportunities legislation and a steady improvement in maternity pay - but it isn't enough. Yes, we all face gender-based oppression, but there are sub-groups of women who face multiple systemic issues. That is, where our gender intersects with race, faith, sexuality, age, ability and class - leaving us at an added disadvantage. And, without discussing intersectionality and problems faced by Black and brown women, the dialogue around inclusivity and diversity falls short. So what can be done? Well, we can begin by looking at four of the main issues that face women of colour in the workplace to start the conversation – and then we must keep it going...

#### UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

We all have biases. I instantly like anyone who reminds me of my brothers and dislike anyone who says that they don't like books. 'Unconscious bias is holding ideas about groups or individuals with a shared characteristic – such as race, gender or sexuality – without knowing it,' explains Melanie Eusebe, co-founder of the Black British Awards. There are many types of unconscious bias and because they take place subconsciously, we're all susceptible to forming them. There's ageism and gender bias, but affinity bias is also a big problem. It causes us to favour those with whom we feel a connection due to similarities we see between us, such as a shared hometown, accent or university. In the workplace, when companies refer to hiring candidates who will be a 'cultural fit', there's a threat that affinity bias may come into play. This bias can take place as early as the application process and Nicky, 30, witnessed it firsthand. 'I've experienced microaggressions even at interviews,' the property professional says. 'I have a British-sounding name so when employers see my CV, strong skill set and the companies I've worked for, you can tell they're shocked that I'm a Black woman when I show up.'

#### What can be done?

Companies must face up to the issue. The Fawcett Society suggests 'employers should reject non-diverse shortlists, draft job specifications in a more inclusive way, have diverse interview panels and remove any unnecessary data, including name and race, from shortlists.' Aspects such as gender and race are deemed protected characteristics - it's illegal to discriminate against an individual based on this. If you think you've been unfairly discriminated against, contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau or Acas, an independent body that offers free,

impartial advice on employment rights.

#### RACIAL STEREOTYPES

We all know what stereotypes are - they're everything from assuming all girls play with dolls to thinking all men are obsessed with football. It might be easy to think they're harmless, but they happen to people of colour all the time - and can seriously affect how we act, which in the workplace can impact opportunities (and our day-to-day happiness).

I once had a colleague say that she was surprised my husband is white, as she'd assumed I'd have an 'arranged marriage to someone from your own background'. The assumptions made me feel isolated in an already small department. I felt

I had to prove myself to be brilliant at all times. I worried about being seen as even more of an outsider if I ever expressed a need for some support. For Black women in white-dominated workplaces, stereotypes can lead to them having to behave in a way that's unnatural to their personalities, with the 'loud Black woman' stereotype causing them to act extroverted - even when they're not. During her review, Jocelyn, 24, who works in corporate governance, was asked by a woman on her team if she was 'okay' because she was 'quiet'

– and that wasn't what she expected. 'I was a professional, hard-working member of the team, yet this comment came up again and again, with my final report deeming me to be a "shy person" (I'm not shy),' Jocelyn explains.

#### What can be done?

It's exhausting trying to be something you're not all the time. 'Lean into your introversion. understand your attributes and really try to embrace what makes you special. If we're allowed to communicate, create, meet, present, connect and lead in the way that's most comfortable for us, everyone wins,' advises Jeri Bingham, host of HushLoudly, a podcast dedicated to amplifying the voices of introverts. For more advice on how to navigate this form of stereotyping, Rene Germain's article Why We Need To Embrace Introverted Black Women In The Workplace is online at cosmopolitan.com/uk/ worklife/careers. And if you're facing other forms of racial stereotyping at work, reach out to your HR department to see if the issue can be resolved as a workplace dispute. Further advice can be found at gov.uk.





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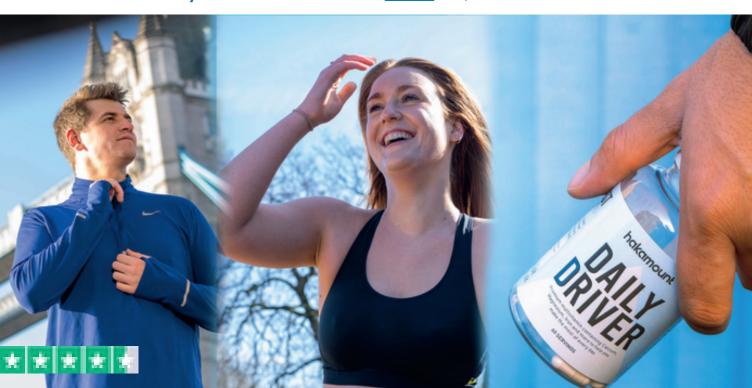


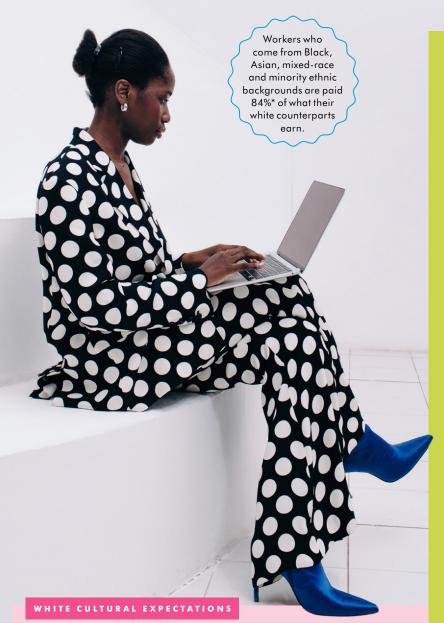


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Dressing professionally in the workplace is an expectation, yet what is deemed 'professional' creates grey areas in which microaggressions can thrive. In her workplace, Nicky routinely faces invasive questions about the texture of her hair. 'I'm seen as different or strange,' she tells me. 'I feel like I have to fit in with European standards. I'd never feel comfortable

wearing my natural hair. I wear a wig because it fits with looking "presentable" to my white counterparts.' Inclusive strategist Hanan Challouki founded Inclusified to work with companies to help them adopt a more inclusive mindset. For women who wear a hijab in the workplace, the risk of faith-based discrimination is

amplified even more. 'I've been called all types of things,' Hanan tells me. 'One colleague referred to me as the "freak" and, in another company, my hijab was called "the elephant in the room". I often felt like the outsider – and not because of my hijab, but because people made such a big deal out of it.'

#### IMPOSTER SYNDROME

There's a lot of chat surrounding imposter syndrome and it can seem like almost everyone has experienced it to one degree or another, but it can affect women from ethnically diverse backgrounds in different ways from their white female counterparts. For women of colour, a pervasive feeling that you're an imposter isn't necessarily something that comes from within – it can stem from deeper societal issues, external factors (eq, racial bias) and systemic oppression. The silencing of people of colour at work can perpetuate imposter syndrome, too. 'Imposter syndrome goes hand in hand with gaslighting and our colonial past. Being considered as inferior and the idea that we should be thankful to be in the UK is a message we receive overtly and covertly, and impacts how we are treated,' explains clinical psychologist Dr Sabinah Janally.

#### What can be done?

It's down to those in positions of power to diversify workplaces and provide training on unconscious bias. This is a key step in tackling the external elements that fuel imposter thinking and discriminate against people of colour. Plus, if as women of colour we also have an understanding of these external factors, it allows us to gain confidence working within them. Career coach Sunita Harley suggests focusing on your strengths is a good way to do this. 'Think about which skill or task is making you feel like an imposter, then ask a friend to remind you about all the wonderful skills that you have.'

#### What can be done?

Hanan suggests finding allies at work. 'It's tricky, because these are not "our" issues, but we have to solve them. Find colleagues who saw the discrimination, and who can support you when you're ready to address it.'

#### IS IT TIME TO

## cash in on crypto?

We decoded what you need to know





#### It's not weird at all

to be very intrigued by the idea of becoming a Bitcoin billionaire even if you're unclear on how, er, any of it actually works. It is confusing. But as it's also not going away any time soon, here's the lowdown on everything crypto.

#### The crypto overlord is a computer.

First, this kind of cash comes in the form of intangible digital units (aka you can't

in circulation (for example, there will only ever be 21 million bitcoins). In other cases, such as Ethereum, there's no max on how many coins can be created by a currency's 'bank'. Almost all crypto exchanges use their own version of something called blockchain software, which records who's buying and who's selling in a super-hardto-hack way.

FYI, cryptocurrency's value isn't based on anything 'real'

physically touch them) often called tokens or coins. Unlike traditional paper money, they're not issued by a central bank. But kind of like traditional paper money, there are lots of different currencies out there, says Primavera De Filippi, a faculty associate at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University. In some cases, there's a set, limited amount of a cryptocurrency

#### You can't use it like IRL money.

I'm going to bet five bitcoins that your local coffee shop does not accept crypto. But even if you did try to pay for your soya flat white with digital currency, it could take up to an hour to go through because the computers using blockchain have to work really effing hard to process payments, according to financial expert Humphrey Yang. Oh, and you'd have to pay not-cheap processing fees, too. As newer forms of

cryptocurrencies and updates to existing ones roll out, you might start to see speedier transaction times.

#### Once you've bought it, leave it alone.

Like people who buy stock in buzzy new companies, many crypto investors snap up coins to (hopefully) make money over the (very) long term. The rewards could be major, but - but! - take note: crypto is 'extremely volatile', says De Filippi, mostly because its value isn't based on anything, well, real. At least, not 'real' in the way stock values are based on how IRL businesses perform. The value of a cryptocurrency is based solely on what people are willing to pay for it, in the hopes it'll become huge. So basically, don't invest any money that you're not prepared to lose, says Yang. If you do have enough cash to take the risk, you can

#### Some crypto biggies

#### **BITCOIN**

The most famous kind has been around for 13 years; its price (at time of going to print, £27,210.38 for one bitcoin) is so high because of its limited supply.

#### **ETHEREUM**

Its blockchain works faster than Bitcoin's. so you can use it to buy non-fungible tokens, or NFTs, like digital art. One coin = roughly £1,819.45.

#### **CARDANO**

At just 78p per coin, Cardano claims to have the most energy-efficient blockchain in the game.

#### **DOGECOIN**

Founded in 2013, this one is based on the infamous meme of a Shiba Inu dog. In stark contrast to Bitcoin, Dogecoin is intentionally abundant – with 10,000 new coins mined every minute and a total supply of one quadrillion.

use trading apps such as Coinbase or Kraken. Once you do, forget about it. Seriously. Don't touch those coins for at least five to 10 years. 'The longer you hold it, the better chance it has of doing well,' says Yang. Partly because most investments work like that but also because experts think the crypto world will stabilise over time. But remember, nothing is guaranteed...

#### It's also fine to just chill for now.

Listen, if you can swing it, buying coins isn't that terrible an idea (assuming you follow the rules on this page). But if it all seems way too adventurous for your bank account right now, you don't have to get stuck in that FOMO spiral. Even seasoned financial advisers aren't sure what the future of crypto could look like: it's pretty much the Wild West out there. If you want a solid, safer way to invest your cash, put it into an ISA (which means it's protected from UK tax) or maybe start a pension fund and you'll be just fine.





#### Still got crypto questions?

Yep, us too. The internet is full of info on crypto, but beware - there's a lot of misinformation out there. Try to cross-reference and double-check everything you read. We turned to Anna-Sophie Hartvigsen, co-founder of Female Invest, a platform committed to empowering women to achieve financial success, to answer our niggling questions. Consider this your cheat sheet to keep up if everyone's talking crypto at a party...

#### We know that crypto is 'volatile', but what does that really mean?

'The worry about crypto investment is that you can lose huge sums very quickly. As we entered February, a single bitcoin was worth £28,593 and a single Dogecoin was 11p. In the past year, Bitcoin's value has been as high as £49,800 and as low as £22,600, with Dogecoin starting life at less than a penny and peaking at 49p. Making the right calls at the right time during 2021 could have netted a very tidy profit; however, £1,000 worth of dogecoin bought when it was valued at 49p would now be worth around £300."

#### What can affect its value?

'It's an industry powered by impulse, rumour and the word of just a few key figures. Billionaire Elon Musk is a key crypto figure and - with just one action

or statement – he can impact your investment overnight. For example, Musk promoted Dogecoin on all his socials, but then apparently caused the price of it to dip by nearly 30% after he made an awkward joke on US TV show Saturday Night Live, which made investors sell their stock. UK investors, stuck in another time zone, woke up to find that a single Musk action had crashed their investment overnight.'

#### Okay, but is my money protected at all?

'It's an entirely unregulated market and not protected like normal financial

crypto via a platform and that platform folds, or the transaction is somehow mismanaged and the crypto fails to materialise, you have almost no one to complain to and there are few laws on your side to get the investment back.'

#### Are there any ethical implications?

'There are several ethical arguments made against crypto. First, due to its lack of regulation and the difficulty in tracking its peer-to-peer transactions, it provides criminal and terror organisations with

the means to move vast funds around the world undetected. Many hackers who attack businesses ask to be paid in cryptocurrency as it's untraceable. The other ethical issue comes from the digital coalface where vast amounts of electricity are used to power huge computer farms involved in mining new crypto. This process – in which a bitcoin is awarded to a computer that solves a complex series of algorithm – is deeply energy-intensive. The output associated with Bitcoin alone is now equal to the carbon footprint of Argentina.'

my own business



#### MILL WEIRD **FACTS TO IMPRESS** YOUR **MATES**

El Salvador adopted Bitcoin as legal tender in 2021, so all shops had to accept it. This caused riots, price crashes and technical glitches, too.

Only 21 million bitcoin can ever be produced, which means that the last coin is estimated to be mined by 2140. Only 118 years to go.

Bitcoins are stored in a digital wallet – either on a hard drive or the web. About 20% of all bitcoins are lost. too. Some are stuck in a wallet as lost passwords can't be reset.

You need to be careful where you use bitcoins. Some countries - such as Bolivia, Banaladesh and Ecuador have banned their usage.

One man threw out his Bitcoin hard drive after spilling water on it... and lost £210m. Now he's begging to be allowed to search for it in the landfill.





### How to network like a pro

On screen or off, you can still meet people in your industry. We show you how...

Remember that scene in Bridget Jones's Diary: 'Do you know... where the toilets are?' If your attempts at small talk are similar, you're not alone - but you can change your style. And, according to Mark Simon, founder of

The Chemistry Club, which organises professional online networking events, it's possible to create connections, whether you're at an event or at home. Here's how to be a conversational pro...

#### TIDY YOUR ONLINE APPEARANCE

The future of networking looks as though it'll remain a hybrid of reallife events and meeting online, says Simon - think booths connected to Zoom chats, alongside name tags and mingling over drinks. 'When you're speaking to somebody over a video call, standing up will make you seem alert and engaged. Make sure you're welllit and that you speak clearly too.

#### PRETEND YOU'RE THE HOST

If the thought of walking into a business event solo (IRL or online) fills you with dread, it's likely your reluctance will be obvious to everyone else, says Simon. 'Don't go into it negatively. Instead, pretend you're the host. Keep the benefits, such as potentially meeting a new friend in your industry or making an in-road at your perfect company, at the forefront of your mind."



#### TAKE SMALL STEPS

Striking up conversation with a stranger can feel daunting, so set yourself achievable objectives, says Simon, 'Start with a free local event; tell yourself that you'll stay for an hour and speak with three people,' he advises. 'Dipping a toe will give your confidence a chance to grow.' If you spot a chatting group, who aren't too closely huddled together, simply ask, 'Hi, do you mind if I join you?' then introduce yourself (first name only) with a brief explanation of your role, eg, 'I'm Sarah, I work in fashion buying,' or, 'I'm Ashley, I'm a new graduate and would love a career in marketing.'

#### FOCUS ON OTHERS

When we're nervous, we talk too much. Counteract this by asking questions – also a great tactic if you're uncomfortable talking about yourself. "Have you been to one of these events before?" is a good way to start. It's about hitting tennis balls over the net until you get one back.' Simon adds that picking up on cues (eg, You said you work in Bristol, which part? My sister is based there.') will help build rapport.

#### BE IN THE MOMENT

Networking becomes plainer sailing if it's the only thing you have to focus on, 'Shelve any deadline stress, or the bad day you've had, before meeting new people,' says Simon. Taking some deep breaths and recalibrating before the event will work wonders. When speaking, maintain eye contact and open body language (don't cross your arms over your chest or look at your feet).

The Rise and Rise



of Sydney Sweeney

Euphoria. The White Lotus. Next stop? World domination.







Sydney Sweeney changed my life. In 2019, I was Cosmopolitan's US opinion editor – a busy job unto itself. But I was also in the midst of another professional challenge: finishing my first novel, They Wish They Were Us. Around the same time, Sydney was stealing scenes in Sharp Objects and The Handmaid's Tale – and although she was about to debut as the hungry-for-love, bad-decision-prone Cassie in Euphoria and the snarky, privileged Olivia in The White Lotus, she was dreaming even bigger, too. Determined to be the person in control of her career, she was plotting the launch of her very own production company, through which she'd option books, adapt them for the screen and become a Reese Witherspoon-level Hollywood boss. She was only 22, by the way.

SYDNEY WEARS, OPENING SPREAD (LEFT): DRESS, GUCCI; NECKLACE, MINAUDIÈRE; HEELS, ROGER VIVIER. OPENING SPREAD (RIGHT): JUMPER, ALESSANDRA RICH; BRIEFS, COMMANDC TIGHTS, WOLFORD; HEADBAND, ROGER VIVIER; RING, FERNANDO JORGE. OPPOSITE PAGE: DRESS, ALEXANDRE VAUTHIER; EARRINGS, JPPOLITA

Sydney ended up reading my book – a high-school murder mystery - and flying to New York to talk to me about buying the rights. Now she's turning it into an HBO Max series called The Players Table, starring herself and IRL best friend Halsey. Like I said: life, changed.

Along the way, Sydney's been transforming her own life. She's been optioning a slew of projects through her up-and-very-muchrunning company Fifty-Fifty Films, writing screenplays and solidifying her spot as a next-gen A-list actor in movies such as Once Upon A Time In Hollywood, erotic thriller The Voyeurs, Netflix vampire flick Night Teeth and in the latest season of Euphoria, in which her already nuanced character has gone to even more complex places.

She dives deep into all her projects by creating what she calls 'character bibles', backstories and inner lives that can often take months to catalogue. ('There are characters I love, and there are characters I'm scared of – those are the good ones,' she explains.) It's a process that wouldn't surprise anyone who really knows her. This is, after all, the same woman who, as a pre-teen, convinced her family to move from Spokane, Washington to Los Angeles via a PowerPoint presentation that included a five-year plan for how she'd become an actor. 'I love something that feels like a challenge,' Sydney says in our interview. The more daunting, the better.

Actors seem to wait for decades before getting involved with the industry's business side. Did you know how to get started? I'm obsessed with branding and marketing. I love the idea of being like, 'Okay, I love this project, how can I make this consumable to a mass market?' So I called my agents and asked them, 'Do you think this is something I can achieve?' They've always believed in everything I put my mind to, so they supported me and sent me books to consider. I fell in love with yours, and you know the rest of that. But I don't think they thought I'd get so engrossed in it. What's surprised you about being in the driver's seat of your production company Fifty-Fifty Films?

One: how many steps it takes to get something made; there are so many hurdles and passageways and people. Two: as much as people in the industry say they support young female voices, I'm still having to fight, even among older women. I was told I couldn't get a credit I believed I deserved, and I couldn't get my company's name on a project I was developing. I have my theories why. Maybe they feel like we're getting it too easy. I was told I have to do multiple things before I can get a credit like that, as if I didn't deserve it. And that came from women. Everyone puts on the charade that we're supporting each other, but I have not felt that fully yet. It's like they want you to jump through the hoops they jumped through. What else - besides the projects we already know about - are you working on right now? Like, a shit ton. I sold a movie. I may or may not have adapted a book as a screenplay. I have about seven books that I have rights to. It's terrifying because this is the kind of industry where everyone gets to watch you fail. It's a lot of pressure. But everyone is going to have good and bad; no one has a perfect slate of box-office hits. Are there any roles you look back on now and, well, cringe? Anything before Everything Sucks! and Sharp Objects. I pretend that was a whole different person – I have blocked out so much of that time, of my high-school life. Going to school in LA was so different from back home in Spokane. People's values were on





'I'd love to share my normal life so people can see it's not all glamour. But I can't because one, I like my privacy; and two, social media is a platform for business'

> SYDNEY WEARS: TOP, SANDY LIANG; KNICKERS, SANDY LIANG; EARRINGS, MARLO LAZ; NECKLACE, MARLO LAZ

#### 'As much as people in the industry say they support young female voices, I'm still having to fight. I have my theories why'

a whole different level. My grandparents gave me their old Volvo that squirrels were living in. I had to put cardboard on the floor because oil would just spill out everywhere. All the other kids had Range Rovers and BMWs, and I was so embarrassed by my car. I feel bad because I'm so beyond grateful that I had grandparents who were able to give me a car, but I would leave the keys in the ignition hoping someone would steal it so that I could take the insurance out on it. No one did.

#### It sounds like you were straddling a double life as you were trying to get your acting career off the ground.

Yes. And at that time, I wasn't the most confident person. I knew I was a good actor, but no one believed in me. I was told to lose weight or that my hair was the wrong colour. Random things that made me question, 'Am I not going to ever become my dream?'

#### And you had a lot going on at home as well, right?

In Spokane, I played sports every day. My cousins were always over at my house, teaching me how to start fires with magnifying glasses. I miss my childhood a lot. I miss how beautiful the world looked and I miss having a family unit; my mum, dad and brother all in one place. After we moved to LA so I could act, finances were a huge stress. My dad lost his job and we went bankrupt. They always say, 'It wasn't your fault.' It was. And when my parents were getting a divorce, my brother blamed me. But at first, I think they enjoyed LA; it was an escape from routine. That's what I tell myself. There was definitely a different, rough route that I could have taken.

#### What would that alternative route have looked like?

There's a history of alcoholism and drug addiction in my family tree. I've never done any drugs – I'm terrified that I'm going to have that addiction. There's something in my family's blood that just hits a different way when they do stuff. I drink maybe once a year, because I have social anxiety. I prefer intimate gatherings; I'd like everyone to pile up on the couch and play board games or watch TV. I can't do the pointless standing around and drinking and getting nowhere in life. But around the time my parents got divorced, I did act out with guys. I would run into the arms of guys to try to fill this void... I was looking for love to replace the emptiness of a home.

#### This is the stuff that makes us. How has your relationship with your family changed over time?

My relationship with my mum became way healthier, and my dad and I kind of drifted apart, which broke my heart. My brother and I are way better now. Do I wish that we could all be together? Of course, what kid doesn't? I tried, once. When you're an actor who's a minor, a small percentage of your pay cheques goes into a bank account you can't access until you're 18. I naively thought I was going to have all this money; I had this grand plan for it. When we left Spokane for LA, we had to sell the house I grew up in. It was my mum's dream house. So when I turned 18, it wasn't even

a year after my parents divorced and I thought, I'm going to buy this house back and I'll save everyone. I'll get my family back together. Turns out, I had nowhere near enough money. I never cried more in my entire life.

It's heartbreaking, that feeling of realising there are some things you can't fix. Since that moment, though, the rest of your life and career have changed a lot. Euphoria was such a turning point. You have a lot to work with when it comes to Cassie – drugs, pregnancy, revenge porn...

I don't agree with all of Cassie's decisions, but I remember being a teenage girl and letting my heart speak louder than my mind, so I would probably make some of the same decisions she did.

#### How has the reaction to season two of Euphoria been different to season one?

It's been a whirlwind. Seeing how many people feel for these characters is incredible, and I hope they're learning empathy as a result. We worked really hard for a really long time; the cast and crew poured their hearts and souls into the show, so [I'm glad it's] getting recognition.

#### Cassie's 'I've never been happier' scene went viral. How do you feel about fans relating to the show so heavily?

I know, it's crazy. I keep being sent different videos of people using the sound. It's fascinating. It's a beautiful thing when you have a character that so many people are able to relate to. It's a very special experience to be able to connect with people through that.

#### Season two ends with Cassie having a physical fight with her best friend Maddy and falling out with her sister Lexi. That must have been intense for you.

Alexa Demie plays her character so flawlessly. Who wouldn't be scared of Maddy? I personally would be terrified, so I can only imagine how scared Cassie is. But no, we don't [do method acting], we're best friends. Season two was so different [to season onel because last season Cassie was so confident and on this path of self-love and self-worth. And then in the season two finale, Cassie is completely destroyed and distraught. I can only imagine where she's going to go next season.

#### Do you have any predictions for season three?

I never want to put my own opinions on to a character, because I thoroughly enjoy Sam [Levinson]'s writing and I'm excited to see what he cooks up for Cassie. I'm patiently waiting to find out.

#### And how did it feel to see everyone's reactions to your character Olivia in The White Lotus?

The White Lotus has been a completely different kind of turning point. I don't think as many people took me seriously in Euphoria because I took my shirt off. With The White Lotus, all these people came out of the woodwork like, 'You're the most amazing...' and I'm like, 'But I went through the most crazy emotional roller coaster in Euphoria. So, thanks?







#### 'I remember being a teenage girl and letting my heart speak louder than my mind'

#### How do you feel about doing nude scenes, personally?

I'm so disconnected from it. When I get tagged in Cassie's or Pippa from The Voyeurs' nudes, it feels like me looking at their nudes, not Sydney's nudes. When you film one of these scenes, it's so technical and not romantic. There are people staring at you, pads between you; there's nipple covers and weird sticker thongs all up your butt. When I saw The Voyeurs for the first time, I wondered if I'd done too much. I researched celebrities who have done nude scenes, trying to make myself feel better. There are hour-long compilations of world-famous male actors with nude scenes who win Oscars and get praised for that work. But the moment a woman does it, it degrades them. They're not actresses, they just take off their tops so they can get a role. There's such a double standard and I really hope that I can have a part in changing that.

#### Does it feel strange when fans, especially on social media, think they have a real relationship with you?

I sometimes feel guilty about it. I would love to share my normal life so that people can see it's not all glamour. But I can't because one, I like my privacy; and two, social media is another platform for business. Sharing my life on it could go against the integrity of the business and brand I'm trying to create.

#### So how do you decide what to share?

I have this formula that I try to follow. I'll post about my work, I'll post about fashion because when the hell else would I look that good? And then I try to sprinkle in a Syd post once in a while.

#### Is Syd the real you?

Syd is the real me.

#### Who gets to see Syd?

A lot of my family back home, my dog Tank and a few close friends. I don't have a giant group of friends; I prefer quality over quantity. Sometimes at work, if I feel really comfortable with the cast and crew, different versions of Syd will come out. Sometimes I'll go home and be like, 'I wish I didn't speak as much.'

#### A few months ago, you went on Instagram Live and talked about trolls and how their cruelty impacted you, through tears. It was an incredibly intimate moment that went viral, but it also seemed a little out of character.

It was, but there's more to the story. That morning, I had a campaign shoot for a lingerie company. I started my period and I did not want to put a tampon in because I didn't want to be bloated in the photos. I googled that you could take, like, three or four pills of birth control and mix it with painkillers, and it'll make you stop your period. [We don't recommend this due to health complications, as you're about to see.] I did that and went to the photo shoot an hour later and started feeling dizzy and nauseous. I was like, 'F\*ck, maybe I need to eat something.' I had a muffin and it did not make me feel good. All of a sudden, I threw up in the middle of this shoot, everywhere. I was a mess. I felt so embarrassed. I was jacked on so many

different hormones. And I was appalled at myself because I'm always so on top of it and professional. I had to go home. That night, one of my friends really wanted me to go out with her and I texted her and said, 'I can't come.' I think it was the last straw, me bailing on her. She said that she couldn't rely on me and didn't want to be my friend any more. So that happens and I'm already crying, throwing up and then two seconds later, I go on Twitter and see that I'm trending. I'm reading all these comments saying so much stupid stuff about my appearance. I went on social media and cried. People were like, 'Oh, she's just looking for attention.' People literally kill themselves over stuff like this. And people just don't give a f\*ck. I went on for, like, maybe 12 seconds. I did not think anyone was going to record it. I just needed to let it out. Then it just went everywhere and it became its own beast. Looking back, are you glad you talked about it?

Yeah, because it's something people deal with on a daily basis. Am I embarrassed? Of course. I still don't think everyone is going to see what I do.

Is this – and the fact that most people don't see the real you - a reason you choose to keep romantic relationships private? I don't date people in the spotlight. I don't date actors, musicians or anyone in entertainment because I can just be normal Syd that way and it's easiest. I have a great support system; I have people who will battle for me and allow me to be on the pedestal and shine without making me feel like, 'Oh no, I'm shining too bright and I need to step back.

#### Is that what you look for in a partner?

I look for a best friend. I need to be with someone who I can hang out with 24/7 and never get sick of, and we laugh every single day. Like someone who can just hang out while you're working on your car? People are obsessed with your TikToks about restoring a vintage Ford Bronco. How did all that start? Anyone can go buy a brand-new car, but not everyone can have something rare that has history. In lockdown, my creative juices were overflowing. I was very bored and I got addicted to going to auction sites for cars. I wanted a Bronco so badly. But I wanted to build one so that when I drove it and people said 'cool car', I could be like, 'yeah, thanks' and know I made it.

#### What does it feel like to be able to indulge in these hobbies - and all the other things that used to feel out of reach?

I just bought a house for the first time. It has similar features to the house that my family lost in Spokane – little secret doors and laundry chutes. It really feels like I'm now able to start the life that I wanted to give to my family. Sometimes I feel really guilty talking about it because I remember myself just three, four years ago not wanting to park in my school lot because I didn't have a nice car. But then at the same time, I'm beyond proud of myself. I get teary thinking that I'm actually working and achieving my dreams.



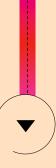


THE

## EGG

FREEZING DIARIES

Searches for the fertility treatment shot up during the pandemic and companies offer it as a work 'perk'. But what really happens when you freeze your eggs? Amy Grier takes us on her very personal journey



The glass from the tiny vial shattered between my fingers. As I stood in my bedroom, syringe in one hand, ruined medication in the other, I paused for breath for the first time that day. How on earth did I get here?

If you'd have told 25-year-old me that a decade later, at the age of 35, I'd be trying to preserve my fertility by injecting myself nightly with drugs from thimble-sized glass bottles, I would have chuckled in your face. That's not how it was going to go for me. It was all planned out: by 35, I'd have at least one of the two children I knew I wanted. I'd also have a three-bedroom house with a small garden, a husband (obvs) and at least one pet. I'd be a journalist (well, at least one thing remains true) and hubby dearest and I would be happily contemplating our next move. Maybe a bigger house. Another child on the way. Who knows! The world was my 25-year-old self's oyster.

As happens so often, the familiar tale I told myself turned into another all-too-familiar tale. Due to a car crash of a break-up (two-car pile-up, no fatalities, a few life-changing injuries) aged 33, the life I so badly craved disappeared like an etch-a-sketch wiped clean. It's not that the one I have instead is horrible. Far from it. It's full of love from friends and family, adventure, hilarity, intrigue and fulfilment from my work. I am beyond lucky, in the scheme of things, especially given the past few years we've all just dragged ourselves through.

But as all my self-imposed timelines gradually fell by the wayside (you know the ones: the 'I'll freak out about my fertility when I get to 30. Okay, 33. Okay, no, 35. Fuck it, 40 it is'), I had no choice but to pull my head out of the sand long enough to realise that no one was going to come along and fix my fertility anxiety for me. I had to fix it for myself.

That's how I ended up on the website of The Fertility & Gynaecology Academy late one night in March 2021. The pandemic had put life on hold. Like so many, I felt entirely out of control, and this felt like one small way I could claw some of it back. I was not alone. After steadily rising, the number of Google

searches for 'egg freezing' hit a five-year high last summer. The Fertility & Gynaecology Academy saw rates go up eight times compared with pre-pandemic.

For those uninitiated, egg freezing is a process that takes between nine and 15 days, where a cocktail of drugs (selfadministered injections twice a day in the morning and evening) are used to first stimulate a woman's egg

reserve before the eggs are extracted under sedation. They are then frozen using vitrification.

When I went for my first appointment, Dr Amin Gorgy, a fertility consultant and the co-director of the Fertility & Gynaecology Academy, explained what this would mean for me. 'This new fast-freezing method changes the water inside the egg into powder, which does not damage the egg. Therefore, the survival rate after freezing and thawing is about 95%,' he told me. Women under 35 have a 16% chance of having a baby when five eggs are frozen, and for those over 35 there is a 6% chance. This increases to 50% with 20 eggs frozen, so someone my age might end up





THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER
OF EGGS YOU'RE BORN WITH

WRITER RECEIVED A REDUCTION IN THE COST OF EGG FREEZING IN EXCHANGE FOWNITING AN HONEST ACCOUNT OF HER EXPERIENCE

doing two or even three rounds of the process to get the optimum number of eggs.

They are then stored in liquid nitrogen until the point where you want to use them to get pregnant (currently up to 10 years). Until this year, the physical and monetary cost of this process put me off. But suddenly the balance tipped, and I realised that I was going into every date, every potential relationship, carrying the weight of my fertility anxiety with me. How can you objectively appraise a man sitting in front of you when there's a voice in your head screaming, Yes, but is he your baby daddy? Is he? Ask him' at full blast.

I came to think of egg freezing as an insurance policy, one that would take a psychological load off me in the short term. It's a deeply personal decision, and one lots of my friends in similar positions have not taken. But for me, it was the right time to do it.

#### PREPARING YOUR **BODY: FERTILITY TESTS AND SELF-INJECTIONS**

Have you ever seen your womb projected in front of you on a big screen? Because if you haven't, I thoroughly recommend it.

We have all seen the grainy ultrasound scans, proffered by friends in

the pub, plastered on Instagram or stuck up on fridges, but when it's your own womb, scaled up on an HD TV, it takes on a different meaning. Deep caverns of black give way to murky grey shading and white dots form silhouettes that shape-shift before your eyes: an intricate mess of life at its very source. I marvelled at it.

This was the beginning of my egg-freezing process, a fertility test to see what my ovarian



#### THE AVERAGE AGE OF WOMEN WHO FREEZE THEIR EGGS

reserves are like, and whether or not I was a good candidate for egg freezing. As Dr Gorgy looked at the screen, he told me he could see a good number of follicles, which is usually an indicator you are still producing a good number of eggs. That combined with a blood test to determine your levels of anti-Müllerian hormone – a hormone produced by your ovarian follicles - give a good indication of where you are in your unique fertility journey. My results showed that things were in order. The words 'for your age' hung in the air unsaid.

My entire adult life, the number 35 has loomed large in my consciousness. That's the age, we're told, when female fertility declines. Despite recent studies showing this might not be true, most gynaecologists and fertility experts

still work around it as a guide. Meanwhile, those of us in the age bracket who want children but don't have them yet feel as though there's a numerical scarlet letter emblazoned on our backs for the world to see. I have

never once considered lying on a dating app about anything, until I hit 35. The only thing stopping me is my inability to hack the age settings on Hinge.

The fertility test, before you even get to the egg freezing part, can be a barrier too far for some people. A lot of my friends have told me, 'I just don't want to know,' fearing that if the results aren't good, it might send them into a spiral of anxiety. I understand this entirely. I felt the same way. But the idea of not knowing became worse than whatever the outcome was, for me at least.

Tests done, egg freezing would begin on or just after the day of my first period. So, a few

weeks later, I was back in Dr Gorgy's reception, where collages of glowing parents and tiny babies hang alongside a number of handwritten thank you cards.

Clutching the huge Jiffy bag of medication I'd ordered from the private prescription I was given (total: £567), I had my first consultation with a nurse. She showed me how to mix the medication and inject myself. I could feel my face contorting into worry, a bug-eyed doubter on the edge of tears. 'I know you think you won't be able to do this, but trust me, within a few days you'll be a professional,' she told me, with the efficiency that only a truly busy person can muster.

Later that night, I cleared my make-up table, threw my cat out of my room and sanitised my hands approximately three times. Then I assembled the syringe, plunged it into the first liquid, pinched an inch of tummy fat under my navel and pushed hard. Nothing hurt until I took out the needle - then came the sting and a tiny drop of blood.

The next one was more complicated. You have to snap off the top of a glass bottle of liquid and mix it with a powder solution - the number of powders can change every couple of days, depending on the results of a blood test you have every two days at the clinic.

The levels are monitored closely so that you stimulate your ovaries enough, but not so much that they overstimulate (which comes

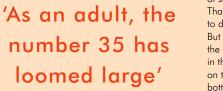
> with its own set of side effects). That night, I had to do two powders. But when I broke the glass, I did it in the wrong place on the neck of the bottle and tiny shards of glass sat on my fingers

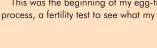
and fell like sharp snowflakes to the floor.

The second bottle I snapped went better, but there were air bubbles in the syringe and the liquid was hard to control and draw up. Fighting back tears, I managed it and plunged the second needle into my tummy. Rolling my gym leggings back up, I sat on my bed and cried. Not because it hurt, but because the reality of what I was doing and why was now unavoidable. My singleness and the pain that it

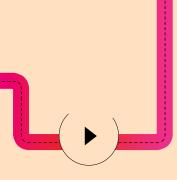
number 35 has

loomed large'









caused about the future I so badly wanted (but which had never felt so unattainable) was now a physical scar on the soft underbelly of my torso. No amount of distraction, of treats, of holidays or Asos hauls was going to take that away.

But over the coming days, as I settled into a routine of the injections, the initial sting settled into something more manageable. I learned to do my morning one after having had a pint of water, a coffee or something sweet, as it felt less brutal. On the days I had to go into town for a blood test,

I got up half an hour earlier, so I could build in a walk through Regent's Park in London on the way to the clinic, something almost meditative that helped me cope better with not going to the gym as much as I was

used to. And, most importantly: I cancelled all the plans I could and just took things very, very easy. The temptation to pretend everything is fine is so strong. But admitting it wasn't, telling my close friends and the trainers at my gym what I was doing and why, was the key to my survival in that first week.

At the end of my first week of injections, my tummy had a flush of purple-green bruising

2

THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF CYCLES IT TAKES FOR A WOMAN TO GET ENOUGH EGGS just under my belly button. I felt heavy in my uterus. Not pain, as such, but a deep sense of movement and weight, which was strange. The injections hurt, but not nearly as much as I'd worried about. Even the blood tests weren't too bad. For me, the anxiety around starting and the build-up was worse than the act itself. Even as my hormones escalated, I realised what I was doing was empowering and tried to reframe my fear as me finally facing something that had plagued me for years.

#### THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

'I realised what

I was doing

was empowering'

I have come to think of egg freezing as a three-act play. The first act is the decision to start the process. This can take weeks or years, depending on the person involved. The second act is the process of getting started, learning to do the injections and your body reacting to the medication and the routine of blood tests and scans. The final act is where everything starts to feel very real, and the physical and psychological effects of the process

crystallise towards the end point of egg retrieval.

In this final stage, as your ovaries are stimulated to create more and more eggs, the fatigue was overwhelming. Normally, I'm an energetic person,

but I found myself in bed by 9pm most nights. I was exhausted and had period-type aches in my womb. All normal, but still a lot to cope with, especially when there's limited language to explain these things to colleagues or anyone outside your inner friendship circle. I struggled a bit to maintain the facade of 'fineness'. In the end, I told a couple of close colleagues and felt instantly better for it. Even my male boss who I was worried about telling was incredibly supportive. I wish I'd told him sooner and taken that layer of pressure off myself.

How long the process of ovarian stimulation – the injections – takes differs for every woman. It can be anywhere between nine and 15 days. By day 13, my consultant Dr Gorgy said I was ready to be scheduled for egg collection. Towards the end, things happen very quickly, so you have to be prepared to clear your schedule at a moment's notice. When it's decided you're at a good point to get the maximum number of eggs collected, you'll be told to take 'the trigger', which is a separate injection you give yourself 36 hours ahead of the eggs being removed under sedation.

In my final appointment, Dr Gorgy told me he was expecting we would get around four



THE AVERAGE COST OF A CYCLE, PLUS STORAGE IN THE UK

eggs from this round. Current advice states that to get the most chance of being able to use your eggs to get pregnant later in life, you need around 15 eggs in the frozen bank. Some eggs can get damaged on thawing and not all of them may fertilise, so having more protects your assets, so to speak. Only getting four from this round meant a second, and maybe even a third, round was now definitely on the cards. It was difficult news to reckon with, and I left the appointment in tears. However, after a couple of days, I had settled into resignation and a renewed sense that I was doing the right thing. Four eggs is better than no eggs. And there would be more.

The morning of the egg collection, my mum and I arrived at the clinic. I'd booked that day and the day after off work, for my mental as well as my physical health. The extraction is done using a needle into the vagina under sedation. It takes less than half an hour, although the process of coming around from the anaesthetic takes a bit longer. Even so, I was in and out in two hours. The pain after is manageable with paracetamol and lots of rest. No exercise or sex for two weeks, and you're done.

A month later, I repeated the cycle and undertook a second round of egg freezing. This time, Dr Gorgy upped the dosage on my medication to try to get more eggs. My womb felt heavy, like I was carrying around a sack of precious marbles in my lower abdomen. Every time I crossed the road or narrowly avoided getting shoved on the train, I felt a small sense of what pregnant women must feel early on — like you're responsible for a rare precious cargo that no one can see. No one could possibly

know what the microscopic motherload I had grown meant to me and I felt the need to protect it from any harm at all costs.

It worked. Fifteen days after my second round began, I got a call from the clinic. That morning, I'd been in having my eggs extracted and, as I waited for the phone call from the lab to confirm how many were viable, it felt like waiting to get my A-level results. 'Amy, well done, we've got good news, you got 21 eggs, really well done,' the delighted lab technician told me. Pride, relief, happiness, more relief... they settled over me like a soothing silk sheet. It was over. I'd done it.

A week after my final egg retrieval, I went for a big walk in my favourite local park. I cried a bit. Tears that it was over, that I had

my insurance policy already written. But also sadness that I was still single, and that I felt like I had to go through with something so taxing to begin with. I took a few deep breaths and walked forwards. It's time for the next chapter.



#### **Amy Grier**

When I went through the egg-freezing process, I only knew one person who had done it, but the minute I started telling people, the response was amazing. I was so scared to 'admit' it, like it was a failure to need to do it at all. But it's not. It's a huge strength to be able to feel like you're taking control when life feels slightly out of your grasp. Talking about these issues is the first step towards normalising the conversation around fertility.



#### YOUR EGG-FREEZING **QUESTIONS ANSWERED**

WE ASKED DR AMIN GORGY ALL YOUR PRESSING QUESTIONS

#### Will the NHS cover the cost?

Egg freezing is only available on the NHS for medical reasons (eg, prior to cancer treatment or surgery that will damage the ovaries, leaving the patient infertile). Many clinics offer payment packages, such as paying the cost in instalments.

#### How do I find a trustworthy clinic?

You can visit hfea.gov.uk, which has lots of advice and information. Dr Gorgy also recommends reviewing the clinic's results of frozen/thawed eggs, including the percentage of frozen eggs that survive thawing, fertilisation rates and birth rates.

#### How long can my eggs be stored?

Statutory rights allow for up to 10 years at the moment, but the storage period can be extended in cases of premature infertility. There is currently a campaign for this law to be changed, to give the right to freeze eggs for up to 55 years.

#### Is there anyone who can't freeze their eggs?

Anyone with ovaries can do it. But the number of eggs you can produce to freeze depends on your ovarian reserve and the number of the eggs your ovaries can produce. The quality of the eggs will depend on your age at the time the eggs were frozen.

#### Are there any risks involved?

The risks of ovarian stimulation and ega collection are the same as IVF. These include under-response, ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome, vaginal bleeding (or internally after the egg collection, which is rare) and infection.

#### Can I test my fertility at home?

Pin-prick blood tests are available at most popular pharmacies, and while these kits can give you an idea of your fertility, they don't offer you the full picture, as your eggs and ovaries aren't scanned. Plus, it's a good idea to have a professional take your blood sample to ensure that enough is taken for the tests. •



## THE WOMEN **WE HAVE LOST**

One year ago, Sarah Everard's death shocked the world. Since then, many more women have sadly lost their lives. Here, Cosmopolitan pays tribute to them

Words CATRIONA INNES Illustrations LYNDON HAYES

he soft rustling of the wrapping was the only noise. Each bouquet - hundreds of them, all stacked up – was encased in delicate paper that caught the passing breeze. Everything else was still. I was surrounded by people: I should have been able to feel movements; that natural shift that occurs within a crowd But I couldn't. It was almost dusk and the light cast a golden sheen over us; it felt like the sky was telling us to listen, to feel.

I have often found that, at funerals or memorials, nature has a way of bringing a mysterious hush – no matter the weather. I guess it's trying to give us the space to remember, to reflect. A very small respite from a brutal world. That day at Clapham Bandstand, this peace lasted only a few seconds. But it was needed. Because what brought us all there with our shop-bought bunches of flowers - to be placed down amid handwritten signs displaying anger, sadness and fear – was an act of extreme violence. You'll know the story by now; you'll have read the court transcripts, the victim impact statements. I won't repeat it. I won't repeat his name, only hers: Sarah Everard. A woman who her mother Susan said was a 'beautiful dancer who... was always there to listen, advise or simply to share with the minutiae of the day'. She was funny, sweet and clever; a woman who went to festivals, did karaoke and had big career plans...

A vear on, it's important we remember this, who she was. What those who knew and loved her think of when they hear her name. As in the media circus that followed. fierce and much-needed debates came to light regarding male violence and women's safety. It was easy for her to get lost in the noise. Then, in the months that followed, more names began to crowd public consciousness. Sabina Nessa. Nicole Smallman. Bibaa Henry. Ashling Murphy. These are the names you know, but there are so many others that you don't. Since Sarah's death in early March 2021, there have been 124 deaths in circumstances where a man is held as suspect, awaiting trial or would be if he was alive. There's no national database that captures the official number of women killed by men, but Karen Ingala Smith's Counting Dead Women project is the most comprehensive, used by charities across the UK. By the time this is printed, there will probably be more.

That you might not have heard about many of these cases is, most likely, down to them being considered 'unremarkable'. They're 'common' cases that the emergency services and police have to deal with every day. Two women per week are killed by a current or former partner\*. These cases don't tend to make national headlines because they happen so frequently. But why should their deaths be spoken about any less? Why are their names not brought into each and every public debate? The fact this happens so often should be the very reason we shout their names, so work can keep being done to prevent more deaths. But beyond that, we need to remember these women; they were so much more than a statistic.

When I returned from the vigil, I stood on my darkened doorstep and lit a candle, whispering the name Sarah Everard into the wind. Across the street, I saw other lights flickering. I want to light a candle for every woman lost, and this is how. From victim impact statements, to interviews with family and friends in the local press, to our own reporting, Cosmopolitan has tried to paint a true picture of who these women were. So that we can celebrate their lives and understand the meaning of their deaths.

Editor's note: due to legal restrictions and page limits, we couldn't pay tribute to every woman. While violence against the trans community is also rife, according to Trans Respect – which collects reports of homicides in the trans community worldwide - there had been, at the time of printing, no deaths in the UK's trans community at the hands of men. If you know of someone who has been lost to male violence this year, please email cosmopolitan-uk@hearst.co.uk so we can pay tribute to them in the online version of this feature.





#### **GEETIKA GOYAL, LEICESTER**

'Geetu was a kind, gentle, humble and honest person. She would not do anything to harm anyone else and always spoke politely of people... She was innocent and did nothing to deserve her death. We can never imagine the pain that Geetu went through that night. She was at work that day and was having a wonderful day with us. A few hours later she was dead. Geetika was 29 years old when she was killed on 3 March 2021. A man has been sentenced to life imprisonment for her death. Words taken from the family statement issued by Leicestershire Police.

#### **SMITA MISTRY, LEICESTER**

'So many people knew her. She had been a customer for a number of years, but she would also drop into the office for a chat. She knew the drivers and all the girls in the office. She was such a vibrant and energetic girl. She was funny and always had a big smile on her face.'

Smita, also known as Samita Saunders, was 32 years old when she was killed. Her body was found on 23 March 2021. A man has since been charged with her murder. Words from Uzayr Raja, manager of Aylestone Taxis, who with the permission of Smita's mother - launched an appeal to cover the costs of her funeral.

#### **BETH ASPEY, READING**

'She had many friends, and the love and energy she gave touched them all. Beth was an outgoing, vibrant and creative spirit with a love of music, dance and art. [She was] loved by so many... Our fond memories of her will never leave us.' Beth was 34 years old when she was killed on 30 April 2021. A man has been sentenced to life imprisonment for her murder. Words taken from her family's victim impact statement.

#### **CHENISE GREGORY, LONDON**

'Chenise was a loving and caring person, whose smile would light up a room. [She] worked as a childcare specialist. Throughout her life she touched the hearts of those she worked with as well as her family and close friends.'

Chenise was 29 years old when she was killed by a man in a hotel room in Yorkshire on 4 May 2021. The police are treating the case as a 'murdersuicide'. Words taken from a tweet written by her cousin Dévante Gravesande-Smith.

#### PENINAH KABEBA, LONDON

'She just wanted to help people... Penny was a kind, giving, loving, respected and wonderful individual... To the world, Penny is another tragedy, but to many of us she was a daughter, mum, an aunt, sister, friend and colleague.'

Peninah was 42 years old when she was killed on 27 May 2021. She was found at home suffering from multiple stab wounds. A man has been charged with her murder. Words taken from her friend Tricia Nyamata, speakina to the Evening Standard.

#### **SOPHIE CARTLIDGE,** NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE

'This beautiful woman had such an impact on my son's life. Sophie was always his favourite at nursery and they had such a special bond... Whenever I saw her, she always asked how he was and [said she] couldn't wait to see him again... She was adored by absolutely everyone.' Sophie was 39 years old when she was killed on 18 June 2021. A man has been charged with her murder. Words from a mum whose son used to attend the nursery where Sophie worked, given to Grimsby Live.

#### TAMARA PADI, STALYBRIDGE

'It just didn't feel the same knowing you weren't here, knowing that the most important woman in my life is no longer with me. I not only lost my mum but also my best friend all at once. You always were such a happy and outgoing soul, you always knew how to put a smile on my face by just being your crazy happy self." Tamara was 43 years old when she died on 7 July 2021. A man has been jailed for life for her murder. Words from Tia Padi, Tamara's daughter.

#### **JADE WARD, SHOTTON**

'Jade always saw the good in everyone, she would put everyone before herself and loved animals - if ever she saw someone even killing a fly she would be angry at them. She was a strong character [with]

her own distinctive dress sense, she loved her clothes and particularly her red lipstick... She was always dancing." Jade Ward was 27 years old when she was found dead at her home on 26 August 2021. A man has been charged with her murder. Tribute from Jade's family, shared by North Wales Police.

#### **MADDIE DURDANT-HOLLAMBY,** KETTERING

'A lot has been made in the press about her beauty and how pretty she was, but she was a beautiful person within. She was caring, loving, compassionate; she loved her family and she loved her friends. That's what we will always remember of her.' Maddie was 22 years old when she was killed by a man on 27 August 2021. The police are treating the case as a 'murder-suicide'. Words taken from Maddie's mum Rachel, who spoke to the media after her death.

#### **FAWZIYAH JAVED, EDINBURGH**

'From being a young toddler at nursery who played lovingly with other children, sharing your toys, to school, where you would spend your time and money buying candles and selling them to give the profit to charity. You would look after the younger children on the school bus. At university, as a law student, you took time out of your busy schedule to be a "buddy" for the new students. And you went on to do so much for others: volunteering as a mentor for vulnerable school children; feeding the homeless. You would never walk past a homeless person without buying them a drink and food. You would pack up food from the evening meal and go to find homeless people to give it to. You made such a difference to many people's lives." Fawziyah was 31 years old and pregnant when she fell to her death from Arthur's Seat on 2 September 2021. A man has been charged with her murder. Words by her mother, Yasmin, speaking to Cosmopolitan.

#### **SABINA NESSA, LONDON**

'When our school chefs started growing a few herbs and vegetables, Sabina was the first teacher to take her class to have a look. Sabina was always so involved. Without fail, [she] ate with her class every day and she didn't sit there quietly, she

would be involved, taking [her class] to the serving hatch, always encouraging them to talk to the chefs.'

Sabina was 28 years old when she was found dead on 18 September 2021, a day after leaving her home to meet up with a friend. A man has pleaded guilty to her murder. Tribute from Lisa Williams, the headteacher at Sabina's school, shared with MyLondon. Teachers and pupils are fundraising to create a garden in her memory.

#### **TERRI HARRIS, KILLAMARSH**

'Our Terri... from the day she was born she was our princess and remained so until she was cruelly taken from us. [She] was born and raised in the east end of London until she was 17, when she moved to Sheffield with her mum, travelling to Essex when she could to be with her dad. She made many friends throughout her short life and remained loyal to all of them. She was an amazing mum; her babies were her world. Terri and the children were well respected in the local community and known to many of the local shopkeepers.' Terri was 35 years old when she was killed alongside her children John Paul, 13, and Lacey Bennett, 11, as well as Lacey's friend Connie Gent, 11, on 19 September 2021. A man has appeared in court, charged with four counts of murder. Words by her parents, issued by Derbyshire Constabulary.

#### **NICOLE HURLEY, LONDON**

'Jason, Nicole, Violet and Amira Bell tragically lost their mother in the most terrible of circumstances. These children have been the heart of our community. They help carry groceries for you when they see you carrying bags. They offer to water your plants when you are away. They come and offer to help to paint and repair whenever someone is busy tinkering. These children are not average. [They are] extraordinary, and this is a testament to their incredible mother. They are bright, ambitious, curious and generous... In one evening [they] lost everything. Nicole was 37 years old when she was killed on 10 October 2021. A man has

appeared in court charged with her

Clements who set up a fundraiser for

murder. Words taken from friend Brigitte

#### TAMBY DOWLING, OLDHAM

'[She] will leave a huge hole... She touched the lives of countless people... Her door was always open, her home was filled with visitors and her kettle was always just boiled. She leaves behind six devastated children who she adored.' Tamby was 36 years old when she was killed in her home on 8 November 2021. A man has been charged with her murder. Words from Tamby's parents, speaking to the local press.

#### **BORI BENKO, BRADFORD**

'She was a personal friend to many, many people... She was very joyful, she exuded faith and was a very hope-filled person. And in the school where she taught, she was highly regarded and respected by all her colleagues who adopted the phrase "be more Bori" because of the way in which she was... Her intention was to go back to Hungary [her home country] to found a school because they don't have schools like over here set up to support children with additional needs.'

Bori was 24 years old when she was killed on 21 November 2021. A man has appeared in court charged with her murder. Words from Bradford Cathedral's acting dean Canon Paul Maybury, who set up a crowdfunding page in her memory.

#### AMBER GIBSON,

'You were our little ball of ginger light from the beginning and your smile lit up the room. Your singing was questionable, lol, but it was always your favourite thing to do. We love you, Amber, always.' Amber was 16 years old when she was killed. She was last seen on 26 November 2021; her body was found days later. Two men have appeared in court over her death. Words taken from her sister's Facebook tribute.

#### **CAOIMHE MORGAN, BELFAST**

'I have a lot of funny memories as we spent a lot of time together growing up and I was always in her house. We always played and did everything together - we were very close and now she's gone. [She] was always smiling, happy and outgoing and tried her hardest - she never ever complained... She always looked well

and everything about her was perfect.' Caoimhe was 30 years old when her body was found on 18 December 2021. A man has appeared in court charged with her murder. Tribute by her cousin Mary Therese Lavery, speaking to Belfast Live.

#### **KIRSTY LOUISE ASHLEY, GRIMSBY**

'We played together every weekend in the park near where mum lived and played in the street. Kirsty gave me a nephew and a niece, and I always remember us having a laugh when we were younger.'

Kirsty was 29 years old when she was found dead in London on Boxing Day 2021. A man has been charged with her death. Tribute by her sister Kyomi Martin, speaking to Grimsby Live.

#### **ASHLING MURPHY, TULLAMORE**

'[She] was our shining light. She loved her mum Kathleen, her father Ray, big sister Amy and big brother Cathal and all of her family and friends so much. She was always willing to help anyone, anywhere, at any time and always put herself last. She had so many hobbies and talents. which all combined to make her an incredible, loving, beautiful person we were all so lucky to know and loved to spend as much time with as possible... [She] was so much more to me than a girlfriend. She was my soulmate, she is my soulmate, she will always be my soulmate. She is the greatest love of my life." Ashling Murphy was 23 years old when she was killed in Tullamore on 12 January 2022. A man has been charged with her murder. Words by her boyfriend Ryan Casey at her funeral.



**BEHIND THE SCENES** 

#### Catriona Innes

We wanted to ensure that we could pay tribute to all of these women in the best way possible, showcasing their personalities and who they were. But we didn't want to disturb their families, which is why we opted to get most of the tributes from what is already in the wider domain, so as to let the victims' loved ones grieve in peace.

her funeral expenses.







ou've probably seen
the photos: a group
of young women and
men huddled on a beach
somewhere in Kent, each
wrapped in a silver foil
blanket; they seem to
shake with a combination
of cold and fear. Or
maybe you've seen the
other ones, the worse
ones: half-submerged
dinghies in the water;
life jackets lying
empty on the sand.

As journeys go, crossing the Channel on an overcrowded inflatable is probably one of the most difficult, dangerous trips you can make - and yet more than 28,000 people did it last year. As it stands, no matter the persecution or conflict you face in your home country, no matter if you're living in the centre of a war zone or your sexuality equates to a death sentence or you're the victim of torture, the only way you can claim asylum in the UK is to actually get into the UK first. For some people, who have the funds for a flight and whose passports or qualifications allow them to apply for tourist or study visas in advance, that might be fairly straightforward. But for thousands of other people, the policy creates a deadly obstacle course of impossible options: women, men and children are forced to decide between risking suffocation and hypothermia in the back of a lorry, or taking on the ice-cold waters of the English Channel on a tiny boat.

In recent months, it's the second scenario that's been making headlines. As the British government imposes increasingly thorough checks on vehicles driving over from France,



more and more people are being forced to take a demonstrably more dangerous route into the UK. By the end of December 2021, at least 37 people had drowned over the course of the year, including six women and four children. But however they manage to get here, entering the UK to seek asylum isn't illegal. In fact, being allowed to do so is a fundamental human right, according to the United Nations.

If someone survives the journey to the UK, it's not guaranteed that they'll actually be approved to stay. According to official statistics from September 2021, only 13,000 asylum seekers were granted refugee status in the UK over the previous 12 months, with more than 67,000 applications still pending. And the process can take years, with some applicants detained in controversial immigration centres, where the



conditions are reportedly 'worse than prison' and reports of staff violence are common. If you do manage to get refugee status, you can live and work in the UK for the next five years – but even then, the difficulties aren't over. According to research published by the Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford, at least one in 10 people born outside the UK experience racial abuse, and nearly a fifth feel unsafe. With so much at stake, just how desperate do you have to be to leave everything you know behind and seek shelter in the UK? We hear three women's stories.

#### 'Either someone was going to kill me, or I was going to kill myself'

G\*, 25, is from the Gulf. After years of domestic abuse, she claimed asylum in the UK in 2019. She received refugee status last year.

'Until I fled my country, everything I did was always controlled by a man. I was forbidden to leave the house without permission and someone accompanied me everywhere I went. That's why I have to hide my name and why I can't tell you exactly where I come from. My family is still trying to find me, and I'm terrified of what would happen if they succeed. All I can say is that I was raised in a place where women don't have many rights and, for a long time, I was a victim of domestic abuse. I knew that if I didn't escape, my future held two paths: either someone was going to kill me, or I was going to kill myself.

It was late on a Friday night in 2019 when I finally bought a flight to London. I booked a ticket on a tourist visa and then pretended that everything was normal. But afterwards, I was so worried my parents would notice something was wrong that I spent most of the next day hiding in the bathroom.

On the Sunday morning, I snuck out of the house. It was my first time leaving the country and I'd booked a British Airways flight because it felt like the safest option - as if being on

a British plane could somehow protect me. Even after we took off, I kept my eyes glued to the little map on the TV screen in front of me. I felt like I couldn't breathe until we left my country's national airspace.

After landing at Heathrow, I nervously told the man at passport control that I wanted to claim asylum, but he seemed irritated. He led me off to a small side room, where airport staff confiscated my phone and detained me for roughly 10 hours. I was so scared I felt sick. At around 11pm, someone from the Home Office took me to a shelter in Greater London. When they gave me my phone back, my inbox was full of messages from my family threatening to track me down.

Over the next 18 months, I was shuttled around between eight shelters and hotel rooms across the country. Most of the time, I wasn't told why I had to move, though I suspect it was often a matter of funding cuts and limited space. Sometimes my case officer would call me at 1am, telling me to be packed and ready to go within the next six hours. I never knew when it was going to happen, so I couldn't make friends or settle. I couldn't even eat properly - when you're an asylum seeker, the UK government provides you with an allowance of £39.63 each week, which has to cover everything. Knowing that I might be relocated at any moment meant that I couldn't really risk buying any fresh food, so I survived on instant coffee and microwavable pizzas. I felt completely alone.

In April 2021, I was granted refugee status, which means that I know I can stay for the next five years. I found a part-time job and signed a lease on a flat. The stability makes life easier and I'm slowly learning to feel proud of myself. I've come so far and I did it all on my own. But every time I turn on the television, I see the UK government passing laws that prevent people like me from ever feeling safe here, such as the Nationality and Borders Bill. It makes me feel so frustrated. I wish people could understand how terrifying it is to leave everything you've ever known behind. We don't have any other options. It's the only way we'll survive.

G has been supported by Refugee Action. To find out more about their services, visit refugee-action.org.uk.

'I don't have a home to return to'

Marwa Koofi, 21, was forced to leave Afghanistan in August 2021 after the Taliban took over Kabul. Today she lives in a hotel outside Leeds with her family.

'You never forget the worst day of your life. Even if I live to be 100, I will always remember the day the Taliban entered my city. It's like every single second is carved into my memory – I can still hear the screams as thousands of us begged to be allowed into the airport and on to one of the last flights out of the country. I can still smell the fear.

In Afghanistan, I had the perfect childhood. I'm the youngest of seven, and I was always really ambitious. When I was eight years old, I begged my parents to let me study at one of the best schools in the country. I promised that I'd get the best grades, and I did – I was top of my class. My mum was a politician and she raised me to believe I could do anything.

When the Americans announced that they'd be withdrawing their troops in August 2021, I knew things were going to go badly, but I never anticipated things changing so fast. My mum's job meant our family faced a very real risk from the Taliban, an extremist religious group that threatened to kill those who had collaborated with the United States. They also wanted to ban girls from going to school. As soon as they took over Kabul, we knew we had to get out. But it wasn't easy – my two sisters-in-law didn't have passports, so my dad offered to stay behind and keep them safe. Saying goodbye to him was one of the worst moments of my life.

There were thousands of people waiting at the airport, everyone desperate to flee. I had learned English at school, so I led my family to where the British army was stationed. For 10 hours, we stood in 30°C heat, up to our ankles in dirty water. My pregnant sister fainted, so I begged a nearby soldier for help. If he hadn't picked her up and escorted us through the crowds, I don't know if we would have made it out. Eventually, more than 600 of us crammed on to a plane. I found a spot by the window. The sky was black, but I wanted to see my city's lights just one last time.



I thought that we'd be sent to London, but after a 10-day quarantine, we ended up in a hotel in Yorkshire instead. We've been here for more than five months now; everywhere I look, I see green on green on green. It's beautiful, but quite lonely – I spend hours on TikTok or watching Netflix series, such as *Emily In Paris*. Often my family and I just sit in silence. So much has happened, there's not much left for us to say. I wish I could go home, even though I don't have a home to return to.

We have a saying in my country, that you don't know the value of something until you lose it. That's how I feel now – like part of me has woken up and I have to do something. One of the first things I did after arriving in the UK was apply to university. When in Afghanistan, my mum was pushing me to study politics, but I wanted to do business. My recent experiences have opened my eyes and so, in September, I'll go to King's College London to study international relations. There are millions of girls still in Afghanistan who are having their chance at an education ripped away as we speak. For as long as their lives and futures are in danger, I will never stop raising my voice for them.'

Marwa's family has been assisted by the Refugee Council. To find out more, visit refugeecouncil.org.uk.

## WHAT IS THE NATIONALITY AND BORDERS BILL? A controversial piece

A controversal piece of legislation, which (among other things) discriminates between asylum seekers who enter the UK by crossing the Channel and those who either fly into the country or arrive by means of a resettlement programme. Thosewho enter the 'wrong' way risk being deported

HOW MANY REFUGEES ARE THERE IN THE UK? The number of asylum seekers and refugees makes up less than 0.6% of the UK's population.

HOW DOES THE UK COMPARE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES? The UK is home to approximately 1% of the world's refugees. 'The UK has very few people seeking asylum. Germany welcomes four times as many people, France and Spain three times as many,' says Tim Naor Hilton, chief executive of Refugee Action.

ASYLUM SEEKERS
COST THE TAXPAYER?
Research shows that
in the long term, the
average immigrant to
the UK will contribute
more to the British
economy than the
average UK-born citizen
– and will pay more in
taxes than they receive
in social support.

HOW CAN I HELP?
Activism can make
a difference, so follow
@refugeecouncil
@refuweegee and
@chooselove. Email
your MP to oppose
the bill. Research what
settlement initiatives run
near you. And contact
your local authority to
offer your support.

#### 'I saw a bomb falling in slow motion towards my family'

**Khadeja Alamary, 35** (pictured in the opening image), fled Syria in 2013. After four years in Jordan, she was granted refugee status in the UK in 2017 with her husband and their three children.

'Nearly 10 years ago, I was looking out of our kitchen window in Syria, watching as my children and my husband picnicked underneath a tree, when a familiar noise made my heart stop. In the sky, I saw a bomb falling in slow motion, as if headed directly towards us. Without thinking, I ran to my children. As the bomb exploded 400 metres away, I pulled my small family inside our house and held them close to me.

After that, I knew we had to leave. Together with my sister's family, we fled over the border to Jordan. There, we'd be safe. But life was desperately hard. For the first year, we rented one dank, dusty basement, scrimping to afford food. In Syria, I'd been studying to be a teacher and my husband was working as an engineer; but suddenly, we had barely any money and we weren't legally allowed to work. Every night I lay awake worrying. It felt like all my hopes and dreams for the future had just vanished.

There are more than 650,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan, and when you arrive there you're expected to register with the United Nations. So, when a member of staff called my mobile in early 2017, I assumed it was just a courtesy check. Instead, she asked me if we'd like to be resettled in the UK. Half of me wanted to say yes immediately, but it wasn't that simple. My sister's family were going to be granted visas for the United States. If we went to the UK, it meant we'd probably never be together again. I asked the woman if I could have some time to think about it, but she said no. So I agreed and spent the rest of the day panicking. It took eight months of interviews, paperwork and uncertainty before we were approved to enter through the UK's Syrian Resettlement Programme, which meant that we'd already have refugee status when we arrived and wouldn't have to apply for

asylum. We were the lucky ones – that scheme only applies to displaced Syrians. If we were from Iraq, for example, we'd still be stuck. When we learned that we were moving to a rural village in Devon, I spent hours on Google Earth, moving the cursor around and trying to memorise exactly how I'd walk to the local shop or take the children to their new school each morning.

I was worried people would be unfriendly, but some of our neighbours had signed up to Reset Communities And Refugees' community sponsorship programme, so they helped us settle. Tiny acts of kindness could salvage an otherwise difficult day: a stranger smiling at me in the street, or someone going out of their way to buy halal meat for a barbecue we went to. My husband started training to be an electrician and I got a job with the Pickwell Foundation, which supports charities working with displaced people.

Back in Jordan, my sister was struggling even more than before. Her family had been packed and ready to move to the US, but President Trump had decided to block any refugees entering the country from Syria. I asked my colleagues to help her come here instead, but their community sponsorship project can't just pick and choose which families can come. I'll never know how they did it, but last year, my sister's family was approved to move here, too. There's a photo of us hugging and sobbing as we reunited in front of everyone in the middle of the arrivals hall: a tangle of tears and relief. Now she lives down the road from me with her family and we take turns to babysit, or we'll meet to have a cup of coffee and hold each other's hand.

Today, when I look out the kitchen window, I can see birds feeding on the breakfast I left out for them. I can see marks on the grass where my children have been cycling. And above them, I can see the clear blue sky?

To find out more about Reset Communities and Refugees and the community sponsorship programme, visit resetuk.org. ◆



THE

**MOST** 

**HONEST** 

**GUIDE** 

TO

# CLEAN BEAUTY

YOU'LL

**EVER** 

**READ** 

We're tackling everything – the good, the bad and the total BS

Words LAUREN BALSAMO

## JUST TAKE A LOOK AROUND

the next time you head to a major beauty retailer: entire sections – both IRL and virtual – are now dedicated to showcasing the best 'clean' skin, hair and make-up products. And you probably can't even scroll through your Instagram without seeing new clean beauty brands, formulas or influencers pop up on your feed. Clean beauty is everywhere and the chances are you're into it: more than a third of you already use these products or want to start using them, according to a new Cosmopolitan poll.

Except, at the same time, 53% of you are unclear about what 'clean beauty' actually is. The short answer is that it's complicated, sometimes needlessly so. The long answer is, well, this story. Read on for every bit of info you need and the products to try first. TBH, if there were ever a time to rip pages from a magazine, it would be now.

1

#### FIRST, THE BASICS

#### Here's what 'clean' really means

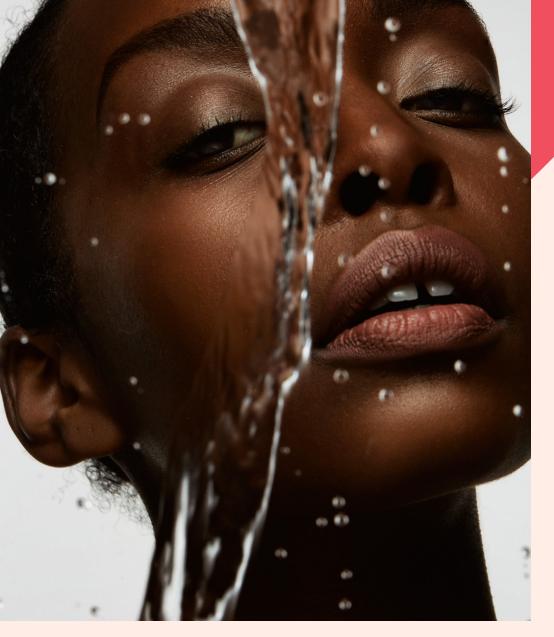
Everyone – from brands to dermatologists – has their own interpretation. That's mostly because (1) the category is still new and growing, and (2) there's limited regulation of the word 'clean' (or, for that matter, related terms such as 'green', 'natural' and 'non-toxic'). Right now and for our purposes, Cosmopolitan considers clean beauty to include brands and products that take the health and wellbeing of people and the planet into consideration when they're being developed, manufactured and sold. As the innovations and science evolve, so will our definition.

#### So is it actually better?

That depends on what 'better' means to you. If you're talking about things like efficacy, colour pay-off and performance, yes, it's likely some clean products are better than (or just as good as) their conventional counterparts. If you're talking about £, also yes: shops such as Boots and Superdrug sell a range of clean beauty items for the same price as other high street finds.

#### What about the 'free from' stuff?

Beauty products are often categorised as clean based not on what's in them (even though it's often natural ingredients), but on what isn't. Usually, this takes the form of 'free from' on the label, with common no-gos including parabens, phthalates, synthetic fragrances and dyes, PEGs (polyethylene glycols) and sulphates. Many consider these



2

#### **DECODE THE LOGOS**



#### FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

This means a product and its packaging come from responsibly managed forests.



#### **ECOCERT**

Verification that 95% of the ingredients in a product are natural, environmentally friendly and free from things such as parabens.



#### LEAPING BUNNY PROGRAMME

This indicates that a brand doesn't conduct or commission animal testing, or use ingredients that have been tested on animals.



#### CERTIFIED B CORPORATION

This shows that a company meets B Corp's social and environmental performance standards, which focus on balancing purpose with profit.

ingredients to be harmful to people and/or the planet over time. Cosmopolitan's stance: if you can avoid questionable ingredients and still find products you love, why not?

#### What to try first

'Start with whatever touches the largest surface area of your body,' says Katey Denno, a Credo beauty ambassador and clean beauty enthusiast. 'Try replacing an empty body lotion with a cleaner alternative. Also, think about what you're using in the shower because those products are rinsed right down the drain and eventually end up in our waterways.' In terms of make-up, swap out your lip items first, says Denno. 'The potential for them to enter your bloodstream is higher since you're using them on your mouth and most of us reapply our lip products repeatedly throughout the day.'



PS: you don't need to switch up your entire routine to make a positive impact. Baby steps are just fine

### WHERE CLEAN GETS COMPLICATED

The biggest issue is misinformation. Not surprising, considering many of the relevant regulations are still being established and, of course, the fact that the movement basically lives on social media, where facts go largely unchecked. Your current plan of action should be to (1) run if an allegedly clean brand tries to sell you something based on one of the mostly fear-based myths on the right and (2) get your information from reputable sources – check out the British Beauty Council's Planet Positive Beauty Guide for tips and advice on how to avoid brands that might be 'greenwashing'. Do not get your facts from random people on your social feed. (Sorry in advance to your mum's best friend's cousin.)

#### MYTH 1

#### NATURAL INGREDIENTS ARE ALWAYS SAFER

'Some of the most poisonous ingredients in the world come from nature,' says cosmetic chemist Jen Novakovich, founder of The Eco Well, a platform dedicated to sharing accurate information about the cosmetics industry. Natural ingredients are also notoriously difficult to work with when formulating products, which means their efficacy (or safety) can be iffy in the end. Plus, their quality can vary as weather patterns, seasons and minerals in the soil change. Meaning, you can't guarantee the same results each time. This definitely does not mean that plant-based



#### MYTH 2

#### CLEAN = SUSTAINABLE

ingredients are never

a good choice, says

tea, aloe vera and

dermatologist Ranella

turmeric, for example,

natural ingredients, as

long as they're being

used properly. So just

make sure you buy from

brands that clearly state

or use science to support

they do clinical testing

their claims.

Hirsch. They are. Green

are all incredibly effective

It's true that many clean brands are making eco-friendly strides, but sustainability is complex, and the truth is that any method of obtaining natural, plant-based ingredients can contribute to climate change. 'We know that agriculture is one of the most environmentally disruptive things we do as a society,' explains Novakovich. 'It disrupts biodiversity and also contributes to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.' There's also the issue of land availability: as the world's population continues to grow and we need more

land to support that population, the issue of land scarcity becomes more and more real. In other words, it just doesn't make sense to use land for the sole purpose of growing plants for producing natural cosmetics. But producing a synthetic ingredient in a lab? Often, that puts less strain on the environment, says Novakovich, which some may consider 'better' when you look at the larger picture even if it's not natural.

#### MYTH 3

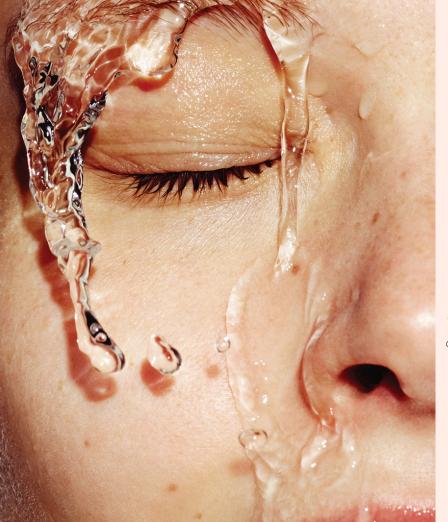
#### YOUR SKIN ABSORBS 60% OF WHAT YOU PUT ON IT

If this were even \*slightly\* true, you'd never have to drink a glass of wine again – you could just rub some chardonnay on your bod and get a nice buzz, says Dr Hirsch. Common sense (and your stocked bar trolley) tells you that obviously isn't the case, mostly because your skin has a barrier that's both incredibly efficient and effective. It's literally designed to keep stuff out, so for a formula or ingredient to penetrate your skin, a lot of things need to be just right. 'There are so many factors at play when it comes to product absorption, including the health of your skin and a molecule's size, charge and chemical make-up,' says Dr Hirsch. And even if an ingredient does penetrate your skin, it doesn't automatically mean it's going to enter your bloodstream and hurt you.

#### MYTH 4

#### **OUR COSMETICS** INDUSTRY ISN'T REGULATED

Cosmetic products sold in the UK have to meet strict safety regulations, it's 100% illegal for any company to sell something that's known to be toxic or poisonous. The idea that brands are out there formulating things that will kill you is untrue, not to mention a really bad business model, says Dr Hirsch. In reality, the facts are often taken out of context to scare you into buying a certain 'cleaner' product. So base your clean beauty shopping on proactive research and the tips you read on these pages, not on how scared a 'more natural' brand makes you feel.



The golden rule: make your clean beauty buying decisions based on data, science and the experts (hi!)

Lean into all the deeply different places fashion's leading you this year, from grunge to sparkly party vibes. This is your top trend edit







Jelliesssss Your primary school flex just got a high-fashion makeover and if you're not excited about it, do you even have a soul? Fisherman sandals needed this win, to be honest. But now that their moment has arrived, there's no denying how chic our taste was back then.

Heels, Versace















**Grunge** Your eyes do not deceive you. One of history's most iconic laid-back, casual trends is reclaiming its time. Your well-loved band tees, cosy flannels and relaxed-fit items all thank you in advance for your adherence.

T-shirt, skirt, hat and boots, Coach



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We have a brilliant selection of magazines for nature lovers, whether they're gardening fanatics or enjoy going for a run, from beginner to professional and everything in between.

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# love

SINGLE? SETTLED? WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED

### Welcome to the world of eco-sex

Yes, ecosexuality is a thing. So could bringing environmentalism between the sheets improve the earth and your sex life? Well, if it's good for the planet, who are we to refuse...

COSMOPOLITAN · 117

# Earth Day lands on



AND, IF YOU'RE **INCREASINGLY** LOOKING FOR WAYS TO LEAD A MORE **ENVIRONMENTALLY** FRIENDLY LIFESTYLE. YOUR SEX LIFE CAN PLAY ITS PART. YEP, THERE'S A GROWING GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO ARE DEFINING THEMSELVES AS ECOSEXUALS, USING THEIR SEX LIVES AS A WAY TO CHANGE THE WORLD. BUT WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? HOW HARD (AHEM) IS IT? AND IS IT FOR YOU? WELL, READ ON...

#### **Outdoor sex is** already up my street, so am I basically an ecosexual already?

You're not alone in enjoying getting to it outdoors. Whether it's a spot of skinny-dipping, a tent tumble during festival season or some foreplay in the local foliage (IMO the only interesting part of a date in the park), a new study has found that one in three of us are comfortable with the idea of alfresco sex. But ecosexuals take it that one step further and actually believe in getting their rocks off with nature.

#### Okay, so instead of hugging trees, we're humping them now?!

Not quite. Though there were two activist-artists, Annie Sprinkle and Beth Stephens, who 'married the earth' in 2008... and what they got up to on their wedding night will remain between them. Their ceremonial wedding performance (not legally binding, FYI) influenced an emerging facet of eco-feminist thought: one that encourages us to take pleasure in the sensations and sights of nature, take stock of our place within the ecosystem and ultimately take more of an active stance against climate change. The main message: that we treat the earth as our lover, not our mother.

## And I thought my ex had mummy issues... But seriously, what do they mean?

As any parent knows – hell, as anyone who's been a child knows – mothers are perennially taken for granted, whether it's shouldering all the emotional labour or cooking and cleaning for the entire household. So, when we apply the metaphor of the mother to the environmental world, it suggests a one-sided relationship, one where

humans feed off the planet but don't do much in return. And, in short, eco-sex thinking suggests that we reframe this. By thinking of the earth as a lover, we're encouraged to actively cherish it and enter into a reciprocal partnership based on give and take.

#### But where does the sex come into it? Do I have to get frisky with the flower trellis?

Well, not exactly, but obviously you could if that's the kind of thing that turns you on. Feminist pornographer Madison Young is a selfproclaimed ecosexual. For her, 'eco sex is the practice of connecting intimately with the earth or nature'. So 'that could be the experience of getting turned on by the crashing waves, finding yourself erotically charged by gazing up at the stars or the moon, bathing in the sunlight, sinking your feet deep into the sand [or] splashing in mud puddles', she explains. Young describes eco sex as a way of recontextualising our sensual - but not necessarily sexy interactions with nature. She believes in acknowledging the earth as a living organism

and thinks that once we open our body to that energy, '[the] physical connection can be intimate, lovely and ecstatic'.

If you fancy becoming ecosexual, you can create your own definition. The movement is pretty open to interpretation and this fluidity is actually one of its biggest strengths, particularly as these different methods all feed into a shared goal of saving the planet.

Whether you delve into ecosexuality through the use of sustainable sex toys or simply revel in the feel of grass against your skin, these are all seen as valid ways of exploring the intersection of desire and environmentalism.

#### So... will I start seeing this as an identity on Hinge?

As we begin to think more about our role on the planet and what we can all do to combat climate change, the ecosexual movement is set to keep growing as an alternative way to integrate ecological values into our lives. This is already starting to be reflected in how we use dating apps.

'Environmentalism' ranks as one of the top values added to Bumble profiles in the UK, and vegan dating app Veggly has 45,000 vegan swipers – FYI the UK has the highest number of users in relation to country

population, so there's bound to be some ecosexuals included in those figures.

But unlike LGBTQIA+ identities, many of which have relatively clear definitions based on individuals' shared experiences, ecosexuality is a way of thinking above all else - meaning it's more of a lens through which to see the world, rather than a concrete set of behaviours or actions. On top of that, it's still a relatively new concept - just over a decade old – so the movement remains in flux. and you can decide what it means to you.

### Okay, but will this actually help us save the planet?

Eco sex invites us to ask the big questions about sex and climate change – reminding us that every action we take has a potential impact on the planet. But it uses pleasure to make environmentalism feel more accessible, seducing people into rethinking their relationship with the natural world around them - and figuring out what they can do to help. As it turns out, not all eco-superheroes wear capes - but some of them do wear vegan condoms.

#### BRING SOME ECO TO YOUR SEX LIFE

Test the ecosexual waters by giving your sex life a green makeover...

#### **REST AND RECHARGE**

Ditch the batteries! 'Probably the simplest way you can help the planet when buying sex toys is by always choosing rechargeable products, which offer far less waste than traditional, battery-operated sex toys,' says
Lovehoney sex expert
Annabelle Knight.

#### RECYCLE, RECYCLE, RECYCLE

Recycling isn't just for tins, glass and cardboard. 'Don't just throw your old vibrator in the bin,' says Knight. 'Lovehoney recycles disused sex toys sent in by customers – not just Lovehoney toys – as part of its Rabbit Amnesty, which has been running for more than a decade.'

#### DON'T FORGET THE CONDOMS

Regular rubber latex condoms are treated with chemicals and take years to decompose. Brands such as Hanx produce vegan options that break down in your compost. Co-founder Dr Sarah Walsh says, 'Our customers care about living sustainably, which can affect their sex-life choices, too.'

#### GET GROUNDED

Spend some time in nature. Go for a walk and whether you're soothed by the sound of waves or a breeze blowing through the leaves, let the fresh air, peaceful setting and screen-free time bring you back to your body. If you and your walking companion get a little frisky along the way, so be it.



Prinvestigation.

# Your orgasms?

Let's ask the (actual) experts...

Words TAYLOR ANDREWS

Does 'Wow, you looked so hot when I made you come' sound familiar? I know I can't be the only heterosexual or bisexual woman in the world who's been told I just had an epic orgasm despite, well, not having one at all. Because here, friends, is the thing: unless you've specifically said the words 'I just came', a penis-having partner can't be 100% sure you've climaxed during P-in-V sex. Like, sure, maybe they felt your lea quivering uncontrollably

8%

Only 8% of you are most likely to orgasm through vaginal penetration or sensed some vaginal pressure on their penis or heard your moans reach max volume – but these things do not necessarily always equal an orgasm. And the only person who can know for sure whether or not you've had a moment of total euphoria is... you.

So why all the assumptions and weird flexes? It's likely because many people have been conditioned (a lot of the time by porn) to look for physical 'signs' that a woman has orgasmed — and as a result, they swear they can feel it. Like, physiologically, anatomically sense it.

This is how Brett, 40, thinks an orgasm feels – 'It varies from woman to woman, but it feels like a tightening and relaxing around my penis in a pulsing action.' Zach\*, 30, agrees. And on top of the tightening sensation, he also notices a 'change in wetness'.

Now, I'm not saying these guys are outright lying – it's very possible they feel legitimate pulsing and wetness.



If you had £1 for every time you heard 'Mmm, I felt that,' you could afford nail art this cute 24/7



What I'm saying is that, again, detecting a few physical sensations does not mean that someone can assume - or worse, verbalise to you in a smua or humblebraggy way that their work here is done. Experts who've researched this even harder than I have concur. 'There's no definite way for a woman's partner to know if the woman has had an orgasm,' says sex educator Janielle Bryan. And that's because pleasure comes in a lot of shapes and sizes.

### But is it ever possible?

When Hayden, 26, says he can sense 'the tightening of the muscles throughout his partner's body', he's probably talking about pelvic-floor and vaginal contractions, says naturopathic doctor and sexologist Jordin Wiggins. And it's true that such contractions can be an element of orgasm for some women and people with vulvas, but it's definitely not a guarantee. Contractions, pulses, quivers, an increase in lubrication – they can all happen at any point during sex and can

Contractions, pulses, quivers – they can all happen at any point during sex **25**%

Only 25% of women orgasm in opposite-sex relationships, compared with 72% of men

mean a bunch of different things depending on how turned on you are. So it's just wrong to automatically assume they simply mean that 'they've finished'.

This should actually be good news for men and other people with penises, because some of them might not be able to detect any sensations at all. A lot of it depends on the individual penis specifically, its size and how sensitive the nerve endings are, says gynaecologist Dr Kimberly Langdon. 'The bigger, girthier penises have a better chance of filling the vagina and thus may detect changes,' explains Dr Langdon. (And before you ask, wearing or not wearing a condom makes zero difference as to whether someone has the ability to feel vaginal movement, says Wiggins.)

#### Meanwhile, the orgasm gap is absolutely thriving

And that's why the answer to the question in this story's headline is so important. Because when men erroneously think a vaginal pulse they felt is the earthshattering orgasm we all crave, we miss out on a whole lot of pleasure. Case in point: in one post-sex poll, about 85% of men believed their partner had an orgasm - but only 64% of women reported that they actually did, according to the National Survey of Sexual Health and Behavior in the US.

And let's not forget that most women and people with vulvas can't climax from penetrative sex alone. Wiggins says only around 29% of women can, and some studies point to an even smaller number — making the 'I felt you come on my penis' during penetrative action seem even more like a not-actually-hot fantasy.

Of course, orgasms aren't the be-all and end-all by any means – you don't have to have one to enjoy great, satisfying sex. But when partners overestimate their success rate in general, it may also make them less likely to proactively address or ensure their partner's pleasure.

#### Idea: let's just check in with each other instead

Listen, I'm fully aware that some guys are into achieving their partner's pleasure along with their own. But maybe, just maybe, instead of making assumptions, they could make use of their communication skills instead? 'If you're wondering about the quality of a woman's climax, ask her how she felt,' says Mia Sabat, sex therapist at Emjoy. 'Don't attempt to make a judgement based on her spasms. Only she can express her orgasms.' Amen.

The surprising results of Cosmopolitan UK's biggest orgasm survey yet...

Take a peek into the sex lives of the nation – this is how women and people with vulvas are having sex in 2022

66%

of readers have faked an orgasm

38%

of you would like to orgasm more

91%

say sex can be pleasurable without

61%

would like to orgasm every time they had sex

15%

of you never debrief with partners after sex

See the full results at osmopolitan.com/uk/ orgasms

## My best sex

ever was...

## on PayPal

Billie got more than an orgasm from her first experience of digital domination...

It all started on MSN - the realm where David\* and I ignited a teenage crush, both shyly avoiding eye contact at school but enthusiastically chatting online. Ten years later he slid into my DMs to admit how much he fancied me all those years ago. The crush that began with intense hours of instant messaging continued in a similar vein. He was cute then, but his pictures showed he was even hotter now. Our digital flame was rekindled.

After chatting for a while, I messaged on his birthday asking if he was alone, hoping to send him a saucy pic. He said he was out with his mates, but then, almost instantly, my phone vibrated with him saying he had escaped and was now on his own. Instead of asking for a pic, he asked what he could do for my pleasure.

I didn't know what was hotter: his subservience or the image of him in a toilet cubicle missing his own party because he'd rather be sexting me.

I asked what he wanted and his answer made me burn — "Me worshipping you, and you giving me the opposite."

I commanded him to kneel, telling him I won't let him up until he's whimpering at my feet. My ego was full to bursting and I got wet watching him furiously typing on the screen. He told me how sexy I am and how he longed to feel my thighs wrapped around his head. The more complimentary he was, the harsher my replies became. I told him to beg for me, reminding him he was in a cubicle while his friends partied. "What are you?" I asked.

"Pathetic, Mistress," he replied. I pictured him on his knees, licking my boots as he tugged at the leather hugging my thighs. Desperate to taste me.

I was completely in control of his sexual gratification – not just in this fantasy as we sent texts back and forth, but also as I told him what he could and couldn't do to himself.

## 'Denying his climax made mine greater'

I imagined standing before him, his knees bruised from the hard tiles, his eyes staring pleadingly up at me. I denied his request to touch himself. I wanted him to be agonisingly throbbing – he didn't deserve the same pleasure I relish in.

Then, it got better: he asked for my PayPal. He begged me to let him buy me something sexy. And while the sexting continued, getting hotter and heavier, he sent me links to fetish sites. I refused anything cheap, telling him I deserved better. We settled on a latex bustier that would perfectly frame the breasts he had to beg to suck on.

I was totally alone, but the sex was more intense than anything I'd experienced - knowing that I was more deserving of his attention and money than a party full of his nearest and dearest. With my vibrator firmly pressed against my clit, I was giddy on my own power and the image of him grovelling before me. My orgasm was irrefutably mine - and so was his. The denial of his climax made mine greater. I ended the chat with my ego just as satiated as my body. After years of unconsciously submitting to men's desires, I finally felt fulfilled. The next day I woke up to a bonus in my bank account and a message. "Your parcel is on its way, Mistress."'



### Can I admit <u>hate</u> being single now?

What if I want fries and a guy to share them with, asks Dana Gerber...

on't get me wrong: I'll proudly rock a T-shirt proclaiming 'nachos are my bae' while listening to Lizzo ('put the siiing in single'). I love that our culture is now fully on the #SingleLife

bandwagon, championing the badass army of the unattached that's only gaining strength in numbers (in the UK, unmarried people make up about 50% of the adult population.)

My friends and family always tell me that I'm killing it soulmate-free - because, hi, I am. I never have to share my popcorn at the cinema, I live for chill nights vegging on the sofa and the only aisle I'm excited about walking

one with the ice cream. But yeah, I also really want a relationship. And why is this so wrong? Why does it make me feel like a traitor to single people everywhere? Or like I can't say this out loud without being labelled an anti-feminist who has failed to flaunt her fabulous free-agent status? How is it that admitting I might be even happier with a plus-one makes me seem both too thirsty and not fierce enough? Look, I know how privileged I am to even exist at a time when we aren't socially obligated to be coupled up. I mean, if this was before the 1970s, I wouldn't even be able to get a credit card without a husband's signature (seriously.) Now, there are entire movements dedicated to raising women up. We don't need to be girlfriends or wives to thrive, and that's definitely worthy of cheering. It doesn't mean, though,

down soon is the Tesco

that some (me) don't still want a partner to take late night drives with. And send LOL memes to regularly. And tag in

romantic Instagram



posts from awesome weekends together. I'm sick of doing stuff alone. I crave the intimacy of having a ride-or-die. A few weeks ago, I was so starved for touch that I found myself hugging people for way longer than is socially acceptable. (I'm not proud of this, and if this was you, I'm sorry.) I then got caught in a vicious Tinder-swiping cycle of feeling utterly miserable for not being able to find anyone I liked – and then feeling extra miserable for wanting to so badly. The worst was coming to terms with the fact that I don't actually love standing on my own. Lately though, I've been asking myself: isn't the entire value of independence that you can do what you want? And I'm pretty sure being a feminist doesn't mean I have to stay single just to prove

> my power as a woman, right? So here's my new mantra: leaning into what I know will make me happy.

And never, ever apologise for slaying as a solo queen, while also looking for that someone special to share my throne with me.

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### BEAUTY EDIT

Look good, feel great

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### STYLE EDIT

Look your best





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#### JEWELLERY EDIT

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#### Enchanté Communication – Global Jewellery Brand Feature of the Year Interview with Jarilyn Lim from Jarilyn Jewelry





Jarilyn Lim Founder of Jarilyn Jewelry Enchanté Communication – USA

"All you need is love: Jarilyn Jewelery celebrates craftsmanship, art and the wonders of life"

#### Enchanté Editor's Pick - Jariyln Lim Edition



Jariyln Jewelry Signature
 Love Clicks



2. A Love Affair Earrings



4. For The Love of Halo Baguette Pendant

It's early 2022 and Enchanté Communication escape the bitter winter weather, only to find themselves in the sun-soaked California. More specifically the shop, studio and oasis of creativity Carmelby-the-sea, where we meet the Founder of the eponymous award-winning jewellery brand: Jarilyn Jewelry. Yet this envy-enticing pocket of paradise wasn't always what Jarilyn Lim called home. Growing up in Malaysia, Jarilyn moved to Australia at the age of 16 for her further education. Upon graduating, she relocated back to Malaysia and assisted her family business. After learning the tricks of the trade for over 10 years, Jarilyn shifted gears and pursued one of her first passions: skincare. Packing her bags once again, she moved to Northern California and opened her own spa in 2010. It was there that fortune came knocking on her door, as one of her long-term clients entrusted Jarilyn to take over her jewellery business, and thus Jarilyn Jewelry was born.

Jarilyn Jewelry is all about the celebration of love – in any form – placing it at the centre of everything Jarilyn pours her heart into. "I always listen to my heart, when I was younger, I didn't do that. I had regrets and struggles so decided to take my life into my own hands and pursue my passions. When I packed up my life to follow my dreams, I was very scared. However, I started getting compliments, saw improvements on my client's skin who soon after turned into friends. This gave me the confidence and resolution to keep going and have an open mind to new ventures and opportunities. The satisfaction I received from the daily encounters with my clients was unparalleled, so phenomenal. I came to realise that life can be so much more enjoyable if you just follow your heart and look where I am now." says Founder Jarilyn Lim.

It is this passion and desire for love that seeps into all of Jarilyn Jewelry's creations, and truly sets them apart. "My designs are based

on the feeling of love, creating an emotional attachment. I focus on creativity and uniqueness both in my designs as well as the choice of gems and semi-precious stones used to adorn them. They need to fit the mood and essence of the person wearing them," says Jarilyn. Jarilyn's namesake jewels raise the bar, as they transform any ring, necklace or bracelet into a wearable work of art. They become heirloom pieces passed down from one generation to the next, much like how Jarilyn herself became enthralled in the jewellery business. "My mother was my biggest influence, she instilled a passion for design and appreciation for handcrafted, exquisite jewellery pieces in me," says Jarilyn Lim, "That's why I focus on one-of-akind skilfully crafted adornments. When people enter my shop, I want them to feel as if they're walking through a gallery, while also making the art accessible for them too. Every piece is different, some I create myself, for others- such as silver - I partner with other designers. I also exhibit some of my personal collection such as the Parrot Ring, a piece I picked up years ago on a trip to Italy enlaced with all the rich colours of a bird set in Austrian crystal.

In addition to making her everyday working – and shopping experience – feel like a museum visit, there is the added service of customisation, ensuring every piece you buy from Jarilyn Jewelry is a true representation of yourself and your desires. "Personally, I love working one-on-one with my clients, we exchange ideas either in person or online. Then I start hunting down the perfect gemotone to match their wishes, I oversee every process of the design. Nothing gives me greater satisfaction than creating a jewellery item that will be cherished forever. At the moment, I'm working on a truly unique engagement ring, the fact that Jarilyn Jewelry will be part of such a special moment, articulates everything that I want to represent with my brand," says Jarilyn Lim.

Although we might get lost in the world of passion, love and craftsmanship, achieving the level of expertise Jarilyn Jewelry offers, is no easy feat. "I am a perfectionist, a true Virgo. Since we don't focus on mass production, gemstone quality and sourcing are our most important pillars. All my gem setting is done by hand and overseen by me. I work very closely together with a team of experts, who ensure everything is done ethically and to the highest standard of quality," says Jarilyn. Due to this extreme attention to detail and flawlessness, the creation of a single piece of jewellery, such as her 'Love of Sunset' can take up to 6 months, ensuring every piece is intertwined with patience, craftsmanship and love.

Jarilyn Jewelry namesake line of fine heirloom pieces are everyday luxuries, with a high-end appeal of precious and semi-precious gems and the sentimental value of a personal touch, enlaced with passion and love.

#### Enchanté Communication

PR & Advertisement Director: Xavier Tan Jiang Hoe Fashion Editor: Lupe Baeyens Founder of Jarilyn Jewelry: Jarilyn Lim Jewellery Collection: Jarilyn Jewelry Editor: Bessy Huang Photographer: JunJie Pang Art Director: Yanle Shen Producer: Heartj Wang Make-Up Artist: Natsumi Yamamoto Hair: Shihori Ito Stylist: Yisha Lu Set Designer: Kiara Gourlay Assistant: Tianyi Sun Styling Garment: Siyi Chen, Zi Yin, Christopher & Qi Liu

> For more information, please visit: Jarilyn Jewelry Instagram: @jarilynjewelrycarmel Instagram: @houseofenchante Email: info@enchantecommunication.com Website: www.enchantecommunication.com

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#### **Enchanté Communication - Global Men's Brand Feature of the Year** Interview with Jong-Jin Kuo from Vivvant London





Jonq-Jin Kuo Founder of Vivvant London Enchanté Communication - Taiwan



1. Alexis Stone-Grey Suede Jodhpur Boots



2. Oliver Black Oxford Shoes



Chelsea Boots



Suede Jodhpur Boots

4. Urban Off White Leather Sneakers

#### "To be a gentleman is to be kind, thoughtful, charismatic and effortless... "

To be a gentleman is to be kind, thoughtful, charismatic and effortless... Above all else though, a gentleman is the empath of the room; one who cares for others and is generously attentive to those around them. Such qualities were not only represented by our featured brand Vivvant London, but also the Taiwanese-born founder and designer himself, Jonq-Jin Kuo. "It isn't just about the polite manners... It is something deeper. When a group of people get together, a gentleman cares about the atmosphere and how other people feel", says Jin of what it means to be a gentleman. Naturally, Jin emanated an admirably humble and gentle aura as he spoke of his very much established and high-end men's footwear brand, Vivvant London.

Jin has made tremendous efforts to distinguish and define his brand identity, not only by concept but also physically. Jin shared with us his incorporation of the leather three V logo featured at the back of his shoes, "It looks a little bit like army ranking badges... It is quite a masculine detail", he says. Additionally, his shoes tend to follow a more narrow and slender design, which is yet another feature of Vivvant London's elegant brand identity. When asked about fashion trends, Jin has both adhered to and rejected certain trends in the fashion world. One trend he favours is the trend of being more casual, simple and minimal, "I really like the idea of combining the classic and sporty and casual elements together... I will put more casual elements in the collection in the future". A trend that he respects, however knows isn't fitting of Vivvant London's style, is that of flamboyance. Although fluorescent colours seem to be popular with the youth, this is not definitive of the "Londoner Style", a concept Jin considers heavily. He prefers the classic to the modern and avant-garde when it comes to the designs of his footwear.

Jonq-Jin Kuo has shifted careers in his lifetime and his journey is definitely one that would inspire many, especially those still in pursuit of their dreams. Whilst his career began in fashion marketing. Jin was able to align his background with a more direct pursuit of fashion and design. It began with a simple desire to "look nicer like all the other young people". "What really inspired me and opened another door for me was when I came to the UK", Jin recalls. Jin worked in retail for a while in the UK before discovering and learning of his aesthetic. This experience became pivotal to his career and eventual establishment of his brand. Vivvant London, He loved witnessing the beautiful and timeless marriage of high-fashion and classic, gentlemanly attire. Walking the streets of Mayfair, immersing himself in the surroundings and architecture of London, this really began to inspire and facilitate Jin's passion for menswear. The charming gentleman's grooming stores found in London's arcades sparked Jin's curiosity. Jin knew these stores and practices were embedded in London's history, culture and fashion. With reference to Jin's book title, it was these elements that Jin came to know as "The Londoner Style".

When asked about Vivvant London's developments for the new year, Jin disclosed an exciting one. Jin revealed that he would like to introduce camera bags into his collection. A camera bag that is not simply functional but also fashionable, one that also exudes the "Londoner Style". Typically camera bags don't consider aesthetics, functionality is top priority, however Jin wants to create one that can easily be doubled as an accessory.

Jong-Jin Kuo considers footwear to be the ultimate statement piece for a gentleman, as it is the most accessible and timeless item of clothing. Unlike watches for example, which Jin noted as slowly transitioning to the digital world, shoes have remained somewhat traditional. The classic, analog watch is no longer a necessity (although very gentlemanly), but a classic shoe to accompany you to any event, whether it be a business meeting, night out or casual daywear, will never go out of style. This reasoning has contributed to Jin's establishment of Vivvant London

Finally, Jin shared with us some heartwarming advice to the dreamers out there. When in pursuit of your dreams, there is nothing more frightening than the initial first step or action you take, but it is also the most rewarding part. This is how Vivvant London came to be, how talented designer Jonq-Jin Kuo manifested his dreams.

"I had this fear of failure... There was a long period of me being stuck... I believe sometimes when you really start to chase your dreams, that is the step where you start to feel scared. When you are really far away, you can talk about it all day long. So I think the most important thing is to start the first step and continue." - Jonq-Jin Kuo.

Enchanté Communications wants to thank Jong-Jin Kuo once again for his insights and time, it was an honour to interview such an established, inspiring and yet modest gentleman.

#### **Enchanté Communication**

Fashion Editor: Jessica Wen Jun Ciprian Founder of Vivvant London: Jong-Jin Kuo Shoes Collection: Vivvant London Editor: Bessy Huang Director/Photographer: Yanle Shen Stylist: Alice Secchi Art Director: Jiao Ling Producer: Heartj Wang

PR & Advertisement Director: Xavier Tan Jiang Hoe

Hair & Make Up: Chieh-Ping Lee Model: Earl James & Jobey Set: Yuan Gu Stylist Assistant: V.Rosalia, Mutombo-Cartie

Special Thanks: Airui Li, Junjie Pang, Haowen Yang & Wenhao Xie

For more information, please visit: Vivvant London Instagram: @vivvant Instagram: @houseofenchante Email: info@enchantecommunication.com Website: www.enchantecommunication.com



Daniel Radcliffe's bedside is high-key chaotic. The Lost City star is also ready for ghosts, so there's that. Oh, and he's going to show this page to his mum. Hi, Daniel's mum!

Words MADELEINE FRANK REEVES

### My overall nightstand vibe

Cluttered and overflowing. It's a mess and I'd be lying if I said I could navigate it. Thank you for asking me to do this interview, by the way – it's really drawn into focus how urgently I need to get organised.

What's in there at all times? A crystal dagger, which I use to kill ghosts!

I wouldn't
want my mum
to find...
If I didn't want her to
find it, why would I say
it here?! She will
definitely read this.

The Lost City is in cinemas 25 March

## My snack situation If there are any in here, they're buried deep and in a

there, they're buried deep and in a very advanced state of decay, so I'm probably better off never finding them.

What's on top?
A light. My keys.
And a random pile
of change.

What I steal from my partner's side Her moisturiser.

How I wake up I have two alarms, both labelled in all caps so I'm shouting at myself.







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