



## School Style

**Starting the new school year with a style all your own.**

by [Bree Shirvell](#)

It's time to think about back-to-school shopping. Half of making yourself stand out— in a good way— is creating your own signature look, which is easier to accomplish than you may think.

To begin, think about different styles that you fancy. Do this by studying a wide range of magazines and clipping out fashion images. Also, turn to friends and role models for fashion inspiration. What do you like and dislike about their appearance? It's perfectly fine to copy other people's looks, just make sure that the total look you choose represents you in some way.

After gathering magazine clippings, start evaluating the different ensembles you like. Next, create a list describing the individual items— from tees to accessories— that appeal to you. Just one more step before heading out into the world of shopping: Go through your closet to see if any garments match those in the clippings. You might be surprised.

Now start your back-to-school shopping! Use your ideas and list of coveted items as a guide, and try to find similar threads in the stores. Remember to stock up on basics like plain T-shirts, jeans and black clothing items, which look good on everyone and are easy to dress up or down. Don't forget accessories. Try to incorporate a signature item, such as a scarf, necklace, bag or ballet flats, into your look. Picking one type of accessory (say ballet flats) and getting many types (an array of colors and embellishments) is a simple way to create a signature look. A great tip in completing the signature look is finding one-of-a-kind pieces no one else has— think vintage.

When you arrive home with your new items, let the fun begin. Mix and match pieces of your newly expanded wardrobe, and play around with different outfits. The key to creating your personal style isn't a matter of having money; it lies in being yourself.

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July 2009

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