

THE NEW DRESSY SHIRT WAIST

THE most popular dress of the year is the shirt waist suit. Never has any other article taken as strong a hold upon feminine fancy as this. And deservedly does it win its high place, and because of its merits does it hold its own through all fashion's fickle changes.

The shirt waist suit solves the complex problem of the separate waist, which was not quite dressy enough for nice occasions, and the full suit costume, which was too pretentious and too expensive for general wear.

The shirt waist suit is a pleasant compromise between the black skirt and the colored shirt waist and the full costume, which lacked jauntness and was more for mature figures than for fresh young forms.

There was something of a prejudice, too, against the full cloth costume, for it made a woman's figure look heavier and it had certain features which were not adapted to daily wear. Then, too, unless of the most expensive type, it was not chic, and without this queer little French quality no suit is admirable.

But the shirt waist suit of the present season is a compromise between the two styles, and if you will gaze upon it a moment you will see that it combines all the desirable traits of the shirt waist without parting with any of the dressiness of the so-called "costume."

The shirt waist has a neat little waist with a blouse front or a semi-bouise front. Its neck is provided with a nice little adjustable collar or stock. There is a very pretty little belt or giridle to wear with it, and the waist is trimmed in some youthful fashion to bring out the yoke or to show the nice straight lines which make any waist so graceful on the figure.

Building the Suit.
The skirt of the shirt waist suit is cut very modestly and is up to date in every respect. It is tucked or shirred, as the suit requires, and it is made to fit the figure as snugly as fashion may dictate. Thus the shirt waist suit is very much in the fashion, and at the same time is very comfortable.

There is another point in favor of the shirt waist suit, and this is that it can be made at home, which is an economical consideration. The old-fashioned suit, which we used to call a "costume," cannot be made at home very well, for it is so tailored, or so very much betrimmed, that it requires the hand of a professional. But with the shirt waist suit it is different, and any woman with a few yards of batiste and a little lace for trimming can make a shirt waist and skirt to match and be very sure that her work will come out well.

The proper cut for the skirt depends upon circumstances, upon the material, upon one's individual preferences and upon the figure of the woman who is going to wear it.

In these days, when skirts are made all sorts of ways, it is difficult to lay down an exact rule for the skirt of a shirt waist suit, for so many different modes are now in use.

A rule which governs a certain very fashionable modiste is that the material, if it be thin, shall be shirred or gathered around the hips. She runs many lines of shirring from the belt down to the hips. Below this the skirt hangs as plain as possible to the foot, where it flares by means of cunningly contrived ruffles.

Another modiste lays her skirts in sun-pleats and fits the pleats to a hip yoke,

which she covers with lace. Still another made a woman's figure look heavier and it had certain features which were not adapted to daily wear. Then, too, unless of the most expensive type, it was not chic, and without this queer little French quality no suit is admirable.

The Skirt Question.
A great many women do not like the gathered skirt, nor the plaited skirt, as they feel as though such a skirt made the hips larger. But there are certain slender figures that can wear this sort of skirt to advantage. For those to whom it is becoming the gathered hip yoke is charming, for it is new and stylish and shows off the material well.

For those who like a plainer skirt there is the skirt that is made plain with two tucks running down the front about six inches apart. These tucks are about three inches wide and are stitched flat, so that they, somehow, resemble panels. There is no other trimming upon the skirt and the skirt depends for its beauty upon the foot flare, which is managed by cutting the skirt wide just around the foot.

There are various ways of cutting the skirt wide so that it will flare, one of these being the very simple one of making the breadths wider at the foot. But there are other ways, and one is the old expedient of setting in side plaits, and another is the fan method, which is still the vogue with lace and other fine material used in the fans.

One of the pretty features of the shirt waist suit is its skirt, which, instead of showing the plain features of the tailor-made, is usually very much trimmed and always to match the waist. If there be lace upon the waist there will be lace upon the skirt, and if the skirt has its trimmings of ribbon or velvet, or cording, or what not, the waist will be sure to show the same features.

Paneling, which is so much in style, is used upon skirts and waists, and lace panels, panels of tucking and panels of trimming of all kinds, are seen upon the skirt and repeated upon the waist.

Miss Roosevelt's Suit.
A very pretty shirt waist suit was recently sent home to Miss Alice Roosevelt. Its material, which was a linen stuff, was in a shade of blue bordering on turquoise. The skirt was plain down the front, but was laid in side plaits at each side of the front, the plaits pointing away from the front. At the back there was a wide box plait.

The plaits were released about at the knees, and round the skirt there was laid a very wide band of lace, which was stitched flat. Through the middle of this lace there was run a black ribbon, which could be pulled out when the dress was cleaned. Another wide band of lace went around the bottom of the skirt and there was a ribbon through the band of lace also.

The waist was plain in the middle of the front, with a bunch of little plaits at



each side of the front panel. Then came wide sleeves bagging over the long tight cuffs, and there was a little shoulder cape of blue linen with a shorter cape falling over it. Both capes were trimmed with ribbon and were buttoned upon the waist with big white pearl buttons.

The giridle was a wide, crushed band of linen folded around the waist and brought down to a low point in the middle of the front.

A shirt waist suit, intended for a Washington girl, is made of ecru cotton goods highly mercerized. The skirt has the tiniest tucks around the belt, all laid in pin clusters, while below these little tucks the skirt stretches away in one unbroken sweep to the very tip of the demi train.

Around the foot of the skirt there is a little trimming in heavy white insertion laid upon bands of deep blue cotton goods. The waist has its trimming of lace on bands of blue, it tucks and its plain unbroken lines of bust and sleeve.

The Shoulder Trimmings.
While a great many of the shirt waist suits preserve the features of the shirt waists in that they have a simple little waist with a skirt to match, a great many of them are made elaborately with shoulder trimmings.

And of all the shoulder trimmings none is as popular as the shoulder cape. This is made of lace and is as deep as the shoulders, and a little deeper, falling over the upper arm.

This deep lace shoulder cape comes in very nice lace and costs a little fortune. But you can buy it in the cheaper laces

and, then, it can be had for very little. It dresses up a short waist suit wonderfully and makes it seem more fit for street wear. More than this, the lace shoulder cape is warm, for lace has a warmth of its own, and it can be thrown around one in driving or sailing, or on cool evenings. It thus becomes a useful as well as a picturesque article of dress.

But the lace shoulder cape can be made somewhat newer if it be trimmed. One way of treating these lace capes is highly approved by modistes. They take a lace cape that comes down well over the shoulder seams and line it with liberty shoulder seams and line it with liberty to match the suit. The cape is now quite a pretentious little article of dress and can be worn instead of a coat if need be.

Capas that consist of bands of insertion, each band sewed separately upon ribbon, are sewed together and thrown around the shoulders. They are deep enough to give the long slope to the shoulders, and, so, they go a great way toward creating the fashionable figure.

There is a shoulder cape that is made of ruffles and ruckings of chiffon, laid upon a foundation, with little ruffles of lace set in between the ruckings of chiffon. These are very airy looking and very comfortable on a cool day. They can be cut with long graceful stoles and a wide hand-some pin. The hat must, of course, match this cape.

The object of the shoulder trimming, or the lace cape, upon the shirt waist is to make the shoulders look drooping. Anything that will accentuate the shoulder line is to be desired and the cape certainly does this. But, at the same time, it has a tendency to make the figure a little mature, so that the woman who is going to wear anything of this kind must be sure that it is a very short cape, not one that falls to the waist line, which is a very ugly length.

All sorts of shoulder capes, and capes in all sorts of conditions, are being worn and can scarcely go amiss in making such an article of dress if you will fit it to your shoulders and fasten it in front with long ends.

The foulard shirt waist suits are so pretty and so capable make a mistake in purchasing foulard for the purpose of making up one of the suits. Foulard has the great advantage over most other materials of being a dressy fabric, as well as one intended for daily use, and it can be made up so that it is good enough for a bride's gown for a midsummer wedding or plain enough for marketing.

A July bride is to wear a cream foulard traveling dress, picked out with tiny pink blossoms and trimmed with pink silk lawn. Her hat is a turban shape, covered with arbutus flowers, and her parasol is pink, her gloves white.

Another very dressy foulard is made in cream color ground with blue flowers scattered over it. The trimmings in this case are bands of silk, bands of Irish crochet and bands of Valenciennes, the three lacy trimmings being used alternately around the skirt. This foulard suit, which is a shirt waist suit, has a wide box plait down the front of the skirt. There is a box plait in the middle of the back of the waist and another in the middle of the back of the skirt. The box in every case is covered with lace.

What kind of a hat to wear with a shirt waist suit is a question which agitates many a woman. But to this she can reply that any kind of a hat can be becomingly worn.

The day of the severe tailored hat seems to have gone by and a woman can wear any hat that is becoming to her without regard to the character of her gown.

