

FASHION SWIMWEAR

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Knowing what suits you

There are plenty of swimwear choices out there – but the most elementary of errors can ruin all your dreams of beach babedom. Avoid the pitfalls by following these simple guidelines.

The big top

If you are top heavy, choose styles that will minimise your bust while providing extra support.

Halterneck styles are great for providing extra support by pulling the weight to your neck, while unpadded underwired styles in the correct size will also create a more balanced look.

When shopping for a bikini, treat it the same as bra shopping and avail of free fittings to ensure you are buying the right size – this is just as important as the style itself.

1. Brown and white bikini, top, €40; bottoms, €29, both by Freya at House of Fraser and Brown Thomas. This is a fantastic choice for the well-endowed. Its clean and neutral colour and halterneck style is extremely flattering, and it comes in sizes 30D-36F.

2. Green print halterneck bikini, €69, by Roxy.

3. Floral print bikini top, €31 and bottoms €15.50, at Debenhams. This tie-front bikini ticks all the right boxes with its higher rise cups to minimise cleavage, while the halterneck adds support.



Flatpackers



Smaller busts should opt for either string bikinis or padded halterneck styles that create more definition. The less well-endowed are also one of the few shapes that can carry a bandeau style. Opt for patterns and contrasting colours for extra glamour.

1. Red, navy and white striped bikini, €24, from Topshop. Those with smaller busts are the few that can get away with wearing string bikinis. Where possible, choose styles with padding for extra lift.

2. Polka dot tankini, €76, (part of set) from Roxy. This is a great up-lifter with a push-up effect.

3. Striped bandeau with frill bikini, top €75; bottoms, €75, by Myla at Brown Thomas. This is an extremely flattering style for smaller busts as the frills will attract attention to the area and make it appear fuller than it is.

Bottoms up

Pear shapes should avoid high-cut legs as this will only emphasise problem areas. Opt for 1940s styles with lower cuts or, as an alternative, bikini tops paired with shorts. Stick to dark colours on the bottom to streamline your shape.

1. Polka dot short, €46, at Roxy. These shorts are ideal for curvy figures, with the pattern disguising lumps and bumps.

2. Halterneck bandeau and shorts, €45 each at www.figleaves.com. This is a great shape shifter, as patterns on the top will divert attention away from your hips while the dark bottoms create a slimming effect.

3. Paisley print bandeau swimsuit, €97 from House of Fraser. With its 1940s-style lower cut leg, this is great for streamlining pear shapes, with hidden cups for extra bust support.



Tummy tuckers



If your tummy is your problem area, choose swimsuits with lycra spandex fabric to streamline your shape or choose a style with a band around the front. Tankinis are the ideal compromise for those who like their separates.

1. Black floral swimsuit with ruching detail, €184, by Swim Shaper at House of Fraser. This 'MiracleSuit' is constructed to shape and form the body without girdles through its miratex lycra spandex fabric, with claims that it makes you look 10lbs lighter.

2. Red and white print tankini top, €74 and €69 by Vix Sofia at House of Fraser. This lovely print tankini set will help give confidence on the beach, while drawstring pants elongate your leg and give your figure extra shape.

3. Blue swimsuit, €175, by Gottex at Brown Thomas. Panels in the centre will help to create a leaner shape with tummy-tucking potential.