

I feel like a frumpy mum!

Leila, 37, lost her confidence after becoming a stay-at-home parent...



Now, I've rediscovered my style



I felt frumpy before

After having my son, I lost my sense of identity. I decided to give up work in order to care for him, but during that time, my confidence evaporated. My son is my world and he's my main focus, but I'd started to feel invisible.

Susie's tips for new mums:

'It's important to dress for comfort in the beginning stages of motherhood.

'Dress smart, by wearing prints and patterns that will easily disguise milk stains and baby sick! Look for convenient styles such as jeggings (elasticated waist bands are easier to wear) as well as dresses or jumpsuits.

'Avoid restrictive clothing or anything too short, as you will be constantly on the go — fitting car seats, lifting your baby up and generally rushing around a lot.'

How Susie styled Leila:

'Leila has a wonderful autumn colouring which means she suits rich, earthy tones that complement her complexion. She

would look washed-out in pastel colours, for example.

'I suggested she wear warmer hues and plenty of leopard and camouflage print to channel a vibrant, edgy, rock-chick look!

'Leila's figure is perfectly in proportion, with great waist definition, making her a true hourglass shape.'

Leila's verdict:

I felt frumpy before. My style analysis with Susie gave me a morale boost. She told me I'm an 'edgy, autumn, hourglass' — and just knowing the basics about what suits me and my colouring has been enough to change my style, improve my confidence and shine!

It's been a challenge, but I'm happier now. It's amazing how changing the way you dress can make you feel so different.

Life STYLE

Make me over!

Take some time to have a dig around your wardrobe and sort the good from the drab!



I've been through the change, now what?

Having navigated the menopause, Carol Leach, 70, still wanted to dress fashionably...

Despite hitting my eighth decade I was determined not to wear beige smocks and Velcro sandals! But I tended to wear dark, baggy clothes to cover my muffin top.

I had an elderly friend who was so stylish, right up until her death a few years ago, and I wanted to take a leaf out of her book.

Susie's tips for the menopausal and post-menopausal:

'As women go through their menopause journey, they can often experience body shape changes and weight gain. Also, if



Now I'm making better choices

Over time, we learn what suits us, and what doesn't. But what about when our body shape changes and our trusty go-to garments no longer work for us? It can feel overwhelming to break style habits and ditch the comfort clobber that has previously served us well. After going through life changes, Leila, Kate and Carol were all stuck in a style rut. So we enlisted the help of award-winning stylist Susie Hasler, of Styled by Susie, to give them their mojo back!

you're suffering from hot flushes, natural fibres and fabrics as well as light layering will keep you cool. The menopause can be a challenging time, but it's a great time to experiment with your style.'

How Susie styled Carol:

'Carol was a great example of how plus-size figures can be just as stylish as regular sizes.

'I wanted to take her away from swathing herself in dark, baggy clothing, and instead get her to

embrace her shape, by styling her curves in the most flattering way.

'I advised Carol to tuck her top into her skirt, so her waist was on show and her torso was elongated.

'Prints and patterns work well for covering bloating around the tummy. I also suggested buying classic cuts in quality fabrics that will flatter her shape as well as keep her comfortable.'

Carol's verdict:

Susie told me I had a waist and beautiful English rose colouring, neither of which I'd ever acknowledged. The style analysis encouraged me to dump my black wardrobe and wear more colours, starting with a bold lip, statement necklaces, belts and earrings.

I've ditched baggy tops and embraced jumpsuits and even a leather jacket.

I'm a size 20 and have always been a yo-yo dieter. But now, I don't give a damn about my weight because I look so much better with the clothes choices I'm making.



I tried to hide my muffin top

Now, I love my body shape



How do I dress for my new figure?

Despite losing weight, Kate, 30, still felt self-conscious about her figure...

Trying out new looks made me feel awkward and anxious and very rarely have I been happy with the outcome.

Inevitably, I'd blame my body. As a mum, I'd tend to gravitate towards joggers and pyjamas. I hated what I saw in the mirror and I found clothes shopping was the stuff of nightmares!

Susie's tips for new curves:

'When you gain weight, it's tempting to hide under black, loose clothing. This can affect your mood and confidence and won't necessarily flatter your



Before, I hid under baggy clothes

shape. A print or pattern is more likely to smooth over your frame when you have gained weight, and you can go bolder with accessories, such as handbags, shoes and costume jewellery!'

'Remember that your weight doesn't define you and the clothes you can wear. Most people won't notice if you've gained weight, so dress with colour, confidence and a smile!'

How Susie styled Kate:

'It was difficult for Kate not to see herself as plus size. Even though she'd lost weight, she was still dressing in the type of baggy clothes she wore when she was bigger.

'I helped Kate to learn how to dress stylishly and grown-up, with some loud colours thrown in.'

'Kate has proved it's all about finding clothes that make you feel good and are right for your shape.'

Kate's verdict:

I now understand I was dressing incorrectly for my figure, and half the time, for my colour too.

When I look at old photos, I laugh because I was just chucking on whatever I pulled out of the wardrobe first.

After almost 30 years of negative thinking about my body, I feel as if I've been given permission to start loving it.

I wouldn't have dreamt of wearing an item that showed off my waist, but as an hourglass, that's exactly what I need to do.

Now, I'm more confident than I've ever been, despite not even being my lightest weight.