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# Health & Fitness



## Skin deep with Samantha Altea

### Only if the suit fits.....

"She wore an it'sy bitsy, teeny weenie, yellow polka dot bikini....." If this song, along with the haunting phrase "bathing suit season" fills you with dread, then stop, take five and breathe. No need to begin starvation-like rations of food to feel good about wearing a suit, nor should everyone wear a teeny weenie one. That crash diet you've been meaning to get around to all winter long would be too unhealthy to rush into and you'll probably end up looking and feeling terrible. But never fear, Samantha, your swimming "costume" (bathing suit in England) fairy is here to help. We all can and should have the pleasure and self confidence of wearing a great suit at the beach, no matter what size or shape, and so part two of my get set for summer series illustrates a plan of action for getting the most fabulous look at the beach.

### Step one is the most important thing to consider.....

1. Figure out your body shape and you're almost on your way to a flawless looking figure.

#### Legs short?

To elongate short legs, look for a two piece swimsuit. A two piece, cut high on the thigh, really makes the legs look longer and more slender.

#### Hips a tad wide?

Boy shorts are very in at the moment and great to camouflage ladies with a wider girth. You could also try a one piece that sits high on the thighs to lengthen the legs and draw the eye away from your problem area.

#### You Have No Bust? (Hello, that would be me)

Know that little mantra, "I must, I must, I must improve my bust." If you've been trying to exercise your pectorals to no avail and are ending up with the same size décolleté, then quite frankly, the only thing to do is cheat. Go for a suit with a little padding, or look for a top that lifts - like the ones that have strings that tie around the neck. They do an amazing job of creating the illusion of cleavage. Some bronzer shadow in that area helps, too.

#### Torso too long?

Tankinis are the way to go. You know, the two piece suits with an elongated top half. The reason that these work so well is that the longer top disguises the fact that you are long and lean.

#### A little thick around the waist?

Tankinis work for you, too. But a dark, monotone one piece is your best bet. If you can find a pattern that goes at an angle running across and down, that can give the illusion of a smaller waist, too.

#### Your Torso is too short?

A high neckline on a one piece will stretch you out. So what if you're only 4ft 11.....with this cut of suit you'll look inches taller! A two piece that sits low on your hips is also something to try.

#### Tummy Troubles?

Go for suits that offer a cover-up piece that will be sure to take away from the problem area. Plus they're very chic this year. Cover ups can be draped in many different ways and shapes to disguise a



tummy, or even bigger hips. Ladies with a slightly pudgy tum could also look for suits with built-in tummy support.

#### Other things to consider:

1. When trying on a suit, be sure to move around, as you might at the beach. Sit, squat, wiggle. Jump

as if playing beach volleyball, or running after rug rats if you have any, and when doing this in the privacy of your home, or store dressing room, make sure everything stays in place.

2. If you see any of those pesky little bulges whilst trying a suit, sorry, but whether the label says it's your size or not - you have the wrong size and trust me, as a size 2, we've all got bulges! It doesn't mean you need a crash diet. Just a suit that fits and flatters you in all the right places.

3. Be comfortable.....(so even if the hottest style of the season happens to be a thong (which it isn't, thank goodness!) you have to feel confident and comfortable when in a state of half-undress. No hemming and hawing. Search until you have the right suit for you and you'll find the confidence.

4. Labels lie. Not only when it comes to bathing suits, but in general. Meaning that different designers cut differently. So try on your standard size, but also be prepared to try a size or two bigger or smaller. It's only a number, after all; and if it makes you feel better, cut out the label once you've purchased the suit.

5. Be prepared to spend a little more for a great fit and fabric. Think about it. You practically live in your suits all summer long. It's worth the investment in time and money to feel good about yourself.

6. Lastly, only if the suit fits should you wear it, so take the time to make sure it does.

Next column: beach beauty, fashion accessories and must-have style items.

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