

choose your

blues

The right jeans for your body type by Kimberly Flynn

bLUE JEANS are not simply the backbone of your wardrobe, but the backbone of your life. They are the uniform for utility: Every useful thing we do has to be done in denim. What's more, the right pair will last longer than many marriages. So pull on something that will suit you. Four men from our office test-drove dozens of pairs of jeans to find the ones that best fit their varied body types, from big and tall to round and small. You've got flaws? Tell us about it. But we're here to say, "Hide 'em, cowboy." Here are the right jeans for every guy.

for BIG Guys

• CUTS TO LOOK FOR

Jeans labeled "relaxed" will give you some room in the thigh and leg.

• CUTS TO AVOID

Don't buy baggy jeans—they'll make you look like a rodeo clown.

• FAVORITE PAIRS

Guess? Urban Fit (\$58) "The best I tried," says Ted Spiker, senior editor (6'2", 222 pounds). "Roomy but not baggy. A simple, classic pair that would work with a T-shirt or a sport coat." *Polo Jeans Co. Ralph Lauren Banner* (\$52) As comfortable as khakis. *Tommy Jeans Freedom* (\$49) Spiker's wife called the dark blue "slimming." *Nautica Jeans Company Classic* (\$49) Soft, faded blue. Plenty of butt and thigh room.



From left: Guess? Urban Fit, Polo Jeans Co. Ralph Lauren Banner, Tommy Jeans Freedom. Above: Nautica Jeans Company Classic

7 things that go with any pair of jeans

CLASSIC POLO
T-SHIRT



CASUAL SHOES



BOOTS



for AVERAGE GUYS

CUTS TO LOOK FOR

Wear almost any style, from slim to baggy, but regular or relaxed cuts are the most flattering and versatile.

CUTS TO AVOID

You wear a favorite pair of jeans for 10 years, and the average style swing lasts 3. Stick with the classics.

FAVORITE PAIRS

CK Calvin Klein Jeans Original (\$48) "The fit is perfect in the waist and seat," says our production director, Erik Wikane (5'0", 170 pounds). "They're worth the price."

Levi's Jeans 501 (\$50) Plan on a break-in period. **Tommy Jeans Freedom** (\$49) Rich blue; baggy where you need it.

Above: CK Calvin Klein Jeans Original. Below, left to right: Levi's Jeans 501, Tommy Jeans Freedom



jeans dictionary

IF THE LABEL SAYS... IT MEANS...

SLIM FIT



The jeans are very narrow through the waist, hips, and legs. This cut can be too tight if you're big, and it's best for slender guys with good bodies.

REGULAR FIT



They'll be narrower in the waist and hips but roomier in the seat and thighs, with a straight leg. This is the dressiest cut.

RELAXED



You'll have extra room in the hips and thighs. These are casual and easy for almost any man to wear.

BOOT CUT



Flared to ride over high boots or really fat ankles. The jeans also sit low on the waist and are slim through the hips; a tough look for most men to wear well.

CARPENTER



Inspired by actual work wear, their defining feature is a hammer loop on the leg. They rest at your natural waist and are meant to be fuller than regular fit.

CARGO



They come in a variety of cuts, from slim to baggy, but they all have extra pockets on the legs.

BAGGY



Cut large all over, especially in the seat and hips. Unflattering if you're on the bigger side. >>

housebreaking new jeans

To make new jeans feel like old jeans...

- Lay the jeans on pavement and hit the right spots lightly with a hammer.
- Rub lightly with a pumice stone, sandpaper, or a wire brush.
- Run over them with your car, say the jeans experts at Levi Strauss. (Tip from MH research staff: Take them off **before** you try it.)

SMOOTH AND SLIM



WITH BUBBLING DENIM



WITH HARDWARE



WITH



for THIN Men

• CUTS TO LOOK FOR

Regular or slim fit.

They'll keep you on your training program.

• CUTS TO AVOID

Anything with tapered legs.

They're not flattering to skinny calves and ankles.

• FAVORITE PAIRS

AIX Armani Exchange Classic

(\$78) "The perfect blend of baggy in the thigh and lower leg and snug in the seat and crotch," says Peter Moore, executive editor (5'11", 150 pounds). "These are classic, classy blue jeans." **Diamond Gussset Regular** (\$40) Comfort jeans. **Gap Vintage** (\$54) Silky finish. **Edwin American Classic Regular Straight** (\$78)

If you've got bulges, these will show them off.



Above: AIX Armani Exchange Classic. Below, left to right: Diamond Gussset Regular, Gap Vintage, Edwin American Classic



leave her panting

SURE, you wear the pants, but it doesn't hurt to know what she thinks of them. Here are the results of our survey of 75 women who would stare at your butt if you walked by in the right pair of jeans.

A MAN'S JEANS SHOULD BE:

- Tight enough to threaten his circulation—1%
- Relaxed enough to be comfortable, but snug enough to show off his body—53%
- Loose enough to lie flat over a tucked-in shirt—48%
- In danger of falling off if it weren't for his belt—1%

WHAT'S SEXIER?

- Button fly—61%
- Zipper—39%

WHAT DO YOU PREFER TO FIND UNDER THE JEANS?

- Boxers—43%
- Briefs—14%
- Boxer briefs—38%
- Nothing—5%

IF A GUY'S JEANS HAVE A HOLE, WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE IT TO BE?

- Knee—37%
- Thigh—25%
- Butt—20%
- Where his wallet bulges out—18%

TOP ADJECTIVES DESCRIBING A MAN'S JEANS:

1. Clean
2. Relaxed
3. Faded
4. Neat
5. Worn



LEAST-FAVORITE QUALITIES IN A MAN'S JEANS:

1. Baggy
2. Ripped
3. Tight



laundry list

- **Stay true blue.** The first wash should be done separately or with other dark colors—new jeans are likely to bleed. From then on, wash them inside out in warm water if you don't want them to fade. To really protect the color, add 1 cup of vinegar or salt water to the wash.
- **Save that bulge.** For form-fitting jeans, pull them on while they're still damp

after a washing. Denim has a memory, and it will conform to your body.

- **Attack stains.** Act fast. Like, before the cops arrive. Stains soak into jeans quickly, and denim is tough to clean. Bar soap like Lava is great for removing grease, food, grass, and dirt. Under running water, rub the bar over the stain, then wash normally. >>

3 things never to wear with jeans

FRAYED TOMMYK



MAXIMUM TISSUE SHIRT



FRAYED SLIP ONED SHIRT



for FIREPLUGS

• CUTS TO LOOK FOR

Regular or relaxed fit. Extra room in the thigh and leg.

• CUTS TO AVOID

Big and baggy. They'll draw attention to your lack of a lower half.

• FAVORITE PAIRS

Gap Easy Fit (\$36)

"Extremely comfortable," says Ron Geraci, features editor (5'6", 170 pounds), "with the right amount of taper in the leg for a guy my size."

Nautica Jeans Company Easy Fit (\$49) Jeans you can dress up. *Diamond Gusset Rugged* (\$40); wear 'em cutting wood or to a rock concert. *Rustler Regular* (\$12) Soft blue, soft fabric.

Right: Gap Easy Fit. **Far right, top to bottom:** Nautica Jeans Company Easy Fit, Diamond Gusset Rugged, Rustler Regular



in the dressing room

Test the tightness.

The buttons or zipper and the pockets should lie flat, not bulge or pucker. You should be able to put your wallet in your back pocket—and take it out again—with ease (good practice for marriage). If you can bend to tie your shoe and get back up again without popping a rivet, they fit. Also, the crotch shouldn't rub uncomfortably when you walk.



Plan for shrinkage.

All jeans will shrink with the first wash. The difference is that preshrunk jeans will return to their original size with the first wearing. If you're buying jeans that aren't preshrunk, allow an extra 2 inches in the waist and 3 inches in the inseam.

Check the length.

Jeans should be worn at or below your belly button, not above, and they should fall to the tops of your shoes—no socks visible.



for the color-blind



Stone-washed

This is the basic blue jean. The denim is washed with pumice stones to soften and fade it. It's a classic and casual look.

Wear with: Anything from a white T-shirt to a cashmere sweater.



Black

Black denim is, uh, black. A computer-help-desk look. Good for guys who wash their clothes semiannually.

Wear with: X-Files T-shirt. Every day for a year.



Vintage

Vintage jeans are heavily stone-washed, sometimes with bleach, to create an old, worn look.

Wear with: An oxford shirt or pullover sweater in a muted color.



Indigo

Indigo jeans haven't been treated. Their dark-blue color makes them suitable for dressier events.

Wear with: Something light for contrast, like a blue or white shirt.



Antique

Antique jeans are both sanded and washed to make them appear aged.

Wear with: A casual shirt, polo, or pullover. No sport coat, and nothing too dressy. ♦

why a button fly?

Because it's manly, that's why. The original jeans were all **button fly**; zippers were first used in the women's line.

