

RAW DRAFT: BEFORE EDITING

By Erin Golden

Picking out the perfect pair of glasses is about more than making sure you can see clearly – it’s an opportunity to change how the rest of the world sees you.

Increasingly, those of us with less-than-perfect vision are getting more options to find frames that show off some personality. Online retailers like Warby Parker have made glasses a trendy item, and other retailers are responding with new trends of their own.

Not sure where to start? First, decide if you’d like more personalized attention or if you’d rather go it alone.

When you want someone to walk you through your options – and adjust your frames to your face – check out your local eyeglass retailers. Many optometrists’ offices feature a glasses boutique, or you can seek out other independent retailers. A recent Consumer Reports survey found that many people reported getting the best customer service at independent shops, though they can be more expensive than other options.

The median price paid by all of the survey takers was \$244.

Big-box stores like Costco and Sam’s Club are also getting in on the eyeglass market, offering eye exams and a selection of frames. The Consumer Reports study gave those stores high marks, except for selection; you’ll likely find a wider range of options at an independent store or online.

If you’re sure of your prescription and not worried about getting hands-on help, your new glasses could be a few clicks away. Warby Parker is perhaps the best-known in the business, but there are plenty of competitors, including EyeBuyDirect, Zenni Optical and Goggles 4 U. Many feature frequent sales and cheaper prices than you might find in the store.

Warby Parker lets shoppers try out a few glasses – they’ll ship a box to your home – so you can try them on in front of your own mirror before making a decision.

No matter which route you take, Lynda Tarantino, a color analyst and stylist who works with clients in western New York, suggests first considering which shapes and colors might work best for you.

“You should go for glasses that instead of mimicking the shape of the face are the opposite,” she said.

In other words, if you have a round face, aim for square or rectangular frames. If you've got a longer, narrower face, check out the round options.

Tarantino said people with particularly strong jawlines can look sharp in cat-eye glasses, while heart-shaped faces pair well with more rounded frames.

Matching the color of your frames to your skin tone can also add appeal. Tarantino says people with more pink and blue undertones in their skin should look for brown, gold or beige glasses, or warmer metals like gold and copper. People with a cooler skin tone –more yellow undertones—often look good in bold colors like black, red or purple, or silver.

And perhaps most importantly, Tarantino suggests letting the shape of your glasses match up with the rest of you. She said smaller people shouldn't drown out their features with giant frames, and vice versa.

She said glasses should provide a window into your sense of self and your style -- not a distraction from them.

"They're the first thing people see on your face," she said. "You don't ever want to obscure your eyes – that's the first think people look at and notice."

OPTICAL OPTIONS

Tips for where to buy your glasses and how to find the perfect frames for your face

BY ERIN GOLDEN



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Increasingly, those of us with less-than-perfect vision are getting more options to find frames that show off some personality. Online retailers like Warby Parker have made glasses a trendy item, and other retailers are responding with new trends of their own.

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WHERE TO SHOP

When you want someone to walk you through your options—and adjust your frames to your face—check out your local eyeglass retailers. Many optometrists' offices feature a glasses boutique, or you can seek out other independent retailers. A recent *Consumer Reports* survey of 19,500 readers found that many people reported getting the best customer service at independent shops, though they can be more expensive than other options. The median price paid out-of-pocket by all of the survey takers was \$244.

Big-box stores like Costco and Sam's Club are also getting in on the eyeglass market, offering eye exams and a selection of frames. The *Consumer Reports* study gave those stores high marks, except for selection—you'll likely find a wider range of options at an independent store or online.

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

If you're sure of your prescription and not worried about getting hands-on help, your new glasses could be a few clicks away with online shops like Warby Parker, which is perhaps the best-known in the business. The company lets shoppers try out a few glasses—they'll ship a box to your home—so you can try them on in front of your own mirror before making a purchase.

There are also plenty of competitors to choose from, including EyeBuyDirect, Zenni Optical and Goggles4U. Many feature frequent sales and cheaper prices than you might find in the store.

FITTED FRAMES FOR YOU

Whether you choose to buy at a store or online, Lynda Tarantino, a color analyst and stylist who works with clients in western New York, suggests first considering which shapes and colors might work best for you.



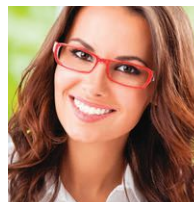
OPPOSITES ATTRACT

Opt for frames that complement your face shape.

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If you have a round face, aim for square or rectangular frames. If you have a longer, narrower face, check out the round options.

Tarantino says people with particularly strong jawlines can look sharp in cat-eye glasses, while heart-shaped faces pair well with more rounded frames.



COLOR COORDINATE

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cooler skin tone—more yellow undertones—often look good in bold colors like black, red or purple, or silver.

SIZE MATTERS

Perhaps most importantly, Tarantino suggests letting the shape of your glasses match up with the rest of you. She says smaller people shouldn't drown out their features with giant frames and vice versa.

Glasses should provide a window into your sense of self and your style—not distract from them, Tarantino says.

"You don't ever want to obscure your eyes," she says. "They're the first things people look at and notice."