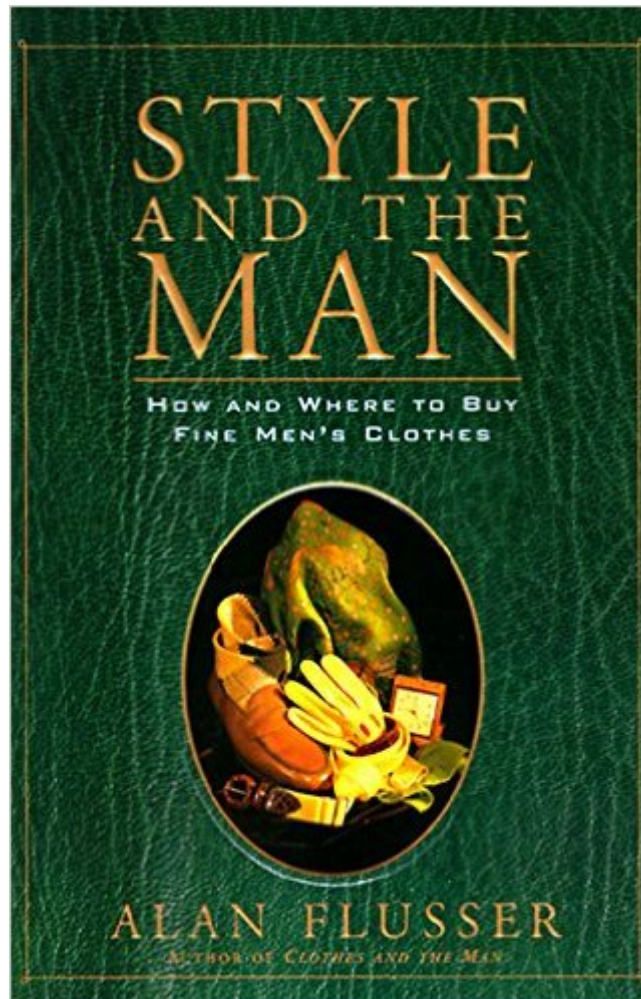


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Style And The Man: How And Where To Buy Fine Mens' Clothes



Synopsis

“If you dispense income on clothes, this book is indispensable.” GQ “Alan Flusser is one of the most knowledgeable experts on men’s fashion, and has created the ultimate reference for everything you need to know about good taste, great style, and where to find it throughout the world.” Ralph Lauren The classic, essential guide for men about buying fashionable and long-lasting clothes by the author of Dressing the Man.

Book Information

Hardcover: 399 pages

Publisher: ItBooks; 1st edition (August 30, 1996)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 006270155X

ISBN-13: 978-0062701558

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 5.8 x 1.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (28 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,432,978 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #13 in [Books > Business & Money > Business Culture > Fashion & Image](#) #139 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Beauty, Grooming, & Style > Men’s Grooming & Style](#) #1238 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Men’s Health > General](#)

Customer Reviews

If you’re seeking information on how to tell fine menswear from bad, skip this book and go directly to Flusser’s new one. If you’re a would-be dandy looking for information on where to buy men’s furnishings around the world, buy the book (with a minor caution). Many of the stores in the U.S. have relocated and some have closed. On the other hand, I’ve used it to find choices in London and Paris that I would never have known about otherwise. And once you’ve made the initial investment in the measurements, you can patronize many of these establishments by telephone. A number of earlier reviews criticise Flusser for focusing on the finest quality and most expensive clothing in the world. It is, and he does. But for people who do or want to play that game, it’s still the best source of information.

As noted by many reviewers, the clothing fact information is first rate. The second part of the book on shopping and retail establishments is so out of date in 2005 that I really question whether a

purchase is worthwhile if retailer information is primary purpose of proposed purchase. A good 60% of the information on establishments in the US and London is totally outdated or the stores have gone out of business. Try the library or borrowing from a friend to see if any of the desired information is still relevant before purchasing. This book needs a serious update.

Somehow Flusser has managed to win acclaim for a book that is one-half tourist guide for only the rich and famous (where to buy fine clothes in Milan, etc, which is useless to most of us) and one-half a pompous, overly opinionated instruction-manual on tailored clothing. The instruction in this part is useful, but it's not worth the price of the book. Take away the travel guide and then clip away Flusser's dreadfully affected, ornate writing manner, and the total amount of instruction here on men's clothing boils down to about 50 pages. As for those 50 pages: they are good for providing basic information about tailored clothing, but they are nearly ruined by overly rigid sartorial rules. Flusser, who seems to have an unwarrantedly high opinion of himself, judging from his pronouncements, does not tell the reader that many of his judgments are not shared by everyone. This is a crime against the reader who buys Flusser's book as an objective guide to men's clothing and doesn't realize it's one very opinionated man's view. And some of these views are questionable to say the least. This book should be read with caution, and in conjunction with other, less opinionated books for those who are interested in men's tailored clothing. Also, a lot of this book is historical, and Flusser has no list of reference books in the back to tell the reader where he gets his info. from.

As other reviewers have noted, this book is really two books. One is a guide to the style of fine men's clothes, the other tells where to buy them. Most people will probably find the style information in the beginning the most useful part. One reviewer thought that the author left out certain points of view on style issues. It is true, for example, that the author recommends only the four-in-hand tie knot, and not the questionable half-Windsor. I think that he makes a good case for the four-in-hand being better looking, anyway. You certainly won't go wrong following the author's conservative clothing advice. There is good information on wearing difficult clothes properly, such as the bow tie, handkerchief, etc. The book also describes how to buy clothes and judge their quality. I think that the style information could be expanded and spun-off into its own book. The shopping information could stand on its own as a travel guide quite well. I would recommend this book, however. It seems to be the best of its kind.

While it's true that Flusser's book contains a guide to some of the most expensive menswear in the world, it's silly to downgrade the book for that reason. By telling you about suit construction, Flusser makes it possible to buy good cloths inexpensively by showing you what to look for. Admittedly the second part of this book is a guide to "the best" available, but it's still interesting to read and instructional even if I'll never buy a suit in Milan (and I won't).

It's true there's too much of the book devoted to cities most of us will never visit. It's true that his first book (Clothes and the Man) was better. But it's also true that you must have this book for the definitive answer on dressing. I have numerous other books on style, and almost all of them reference Flusser at one point or another. You have to get the words straight from the horse's mouth. And even the shop reviews are good. You're likely to visit at least *one* of these cities in your life, right? Besides that, in this day and age stores have legs. The analyses of NY Barneys and Brooks Brothers easily translate. If you have any interest in dressing well and classic style, you really need this book above any other. And it looks great on your shelf.

This book, published in 1996 and half of which is a directory of shops, was bound to be outdated months after publication much less ten years after, as it is now. Hence the four stars instead of five. Given that, the first part of the book is crammed with a precis or summary of Flusser's recommendations that he has used several hundred pages to expound in his other books ('Clothes And The Man', 'Dressing The Man') and makes the book worth the (used) book price. I do not understand others who warn against this book because they think it is not objective enough! This is a book written by Flusser so of course you will get his subjective view. Had it been written by a committee of tailors, well then, I would expect a more balanced view, but it is not. It is up to the intelligent reader to understand they are getting a product of one man's opinion and then proceed accordingly.

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