

>> Sarah Shaikh believes that women are more stylish than men and that men need a woman's opinion when it comes to fashion

IN A MAN'S WORLD

There's a woman behind every successful man and according to new designer **Sarah Shaikh**, there's one behind every well dressed man as well! **Rhea Dhanbhoora** gets talking to the menswear designer to find out more



MEN MUST HAVE

"All men should have a well-fitted white shirt, a great pair of dark, well fitted denims and a sports blazer, preferably in a shade of grey. I also think it's really important for a man to have a classic two button suit, a dinner jacket with a contrast lapel and coloured socks. Men should realise that they can't wear white socks with everything, it's boring! And, every man should follow a mantra — match your belt with your shoes, it's more important than you think," says Sarah

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Jaina Kumar | HRM

While other girls were dressing up Barbie, Sarah Sheikh was busy putting together a wardrobe for Ken! Sarah, is the woman behind SS Homme, a menswear brand and the vivacious 23-year-old has come a long way since her days at London College of Fashion. We find out more about her label and what it's like dressing up men!

How did you enter the fashion world?

I was interning at GQ India and I fell in love with menswear looking at the likes of Prada and Gucci. I styled for commercials for a while but decided to take the plunge and start SS Homme.

What is SS Homme all about? Do you have any plans of going retail?



>> Sara specialises in formal wear for men

SS Homme is a bespoke menswear brand. I sit with clients and design clothes according to their preference, after which it takes 10 working days till a trial or delivery, depending on the client's needs. I want to branch out into footwear and accessories but I don't want to compromise on the personal touch, so no retail.

How come you've never wanted to design women's clothing?

I've always been interested in designing and what's more, I think it's time women got involved. I think the chances of me designing for women were always slim.

Do you think men in India are becoming more fashion conscious?

Earlier, formal wear was boring with mostly blacks and greys. Now, the younger generation of corporate professionals is open to being experimental. Small details make a big difference and the younger lot of Indian men are beginning to see this.

Who inspires you?

I absolutely love Yohji Yamamoto. His designs are different but I take inspiration from his creativity. As for my own style, I love Saville Row, Giorgio Armani and Tom Ford. European and English cuts are my favourites.

Are men unwilling to take suggestions from you because you're a woman?

Oh yes! Men who come in with their wives or girlfriends are much more willing to listen to my suggestions. But, then there is the slightly older crowd who come in alone and all they want is for me to design exactly

what they have in mind and not question their style. I have found that older men are rigid in their style and are also less willing to let a woman give them any tips.

Do you think men need a woman's opinion when it comes to style?

Yes, I do. Men are so busy with work that they don't have the time to be fashion conscious. Women have great taste and let's face it; we're really good at being stylish.

What are the current trends in menswear?

You shouldn't blindly follow trends, switch it around to suit your own personality and body type. Textures, weaves and a dash of colour can make a difference. Men should look dapper. I think bandhgala's are really trendy right now.

What's the biggest mistake men make when it comes to fashion?

The most common mistake is wearing ill-fitted clothes. Extremely loose clothes do not make you look cool and too-tight clothes don't make you look tough. Big hips can look ridiculous in skinny jeans, so dress according to your body type. And wear the right shoes. You can't wear moccasins with a suit or brogues with chinos.

How would you dress your perfect man?

I love formal wear and my favourite colour is navy — so it would be a classic two button navy suit. I'd love him to be wearing a well fitting salmon pink shirt, a black slim tie with a tie pin and rich burgundy shoes paired with a burgundy leather belt. I like my man to look suave in a suit.



>> A semi-casual cotton blazer designed by Sarah



>> Sarah says that a grey blazer is a must have for every man