

5. Shirts fit better with a taper, according to the designer John Varvatos. “It’s about elegance,” he said, adding that there is nothing elegant about yards of cotton bunched up under your coat.

6. The half-inch rule for the cuff reveal has always been inflexible, said Michael Hainey, deputy editor of GQ. Unless you’re Bruno Mars.

7. Thom Browne fans may favor Pee-wee Herman lengths, but most men are best served by a modest break atop the shoe.

8. No cuffs on tuxedo trousers.

9. While pumps are preferred, Ford said, “most men think they’re too femme.” A calf lace-up is an acceptable option; avoid perforations or extraneous details.

10. A simple steel (or white metal or, if you are bucks-in, platinum) watch



1 Writer Guy Trebay, right, is fitted for a tuxedo by Tom Kalenderian of Barneys, in New York.
f 2 Following some basic rules helps when wearing a tux.

tuxedo is just a suit, but buying and wearing it strikes fear in a lot of men. Following some basic rules helps, as does emulating George Clooney. 10 tips on wearing a tuxedo

By [GUY TREBAY](#)

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This Sunday, scores of men — some celebrated actors, others appendages to the famous — will expose themselves to the scrutiny of the world and, more alarmingly, Joan Rivers as they stride the red carpet at the Kodak Theater in Hollywood.

Most are likely to be clad in what is surely among the more foolproof dress uniforms ever devised: the tuxedo. Yet few will manage to get it right. Why is that?

“Men take advantage of their advantages in general,” Fran Lebowitz, the humorist and herself a tuxedo wearer, said recently. “But not with this.”

overstyled or dowdy, like some models by his big-name competition. Still, it seemed a trifle generic to my eye.

Having gone out with the conviction that I wanted a relatively narrow notch collar and not a peaked one, that the suit had to be two buttons and conservative in cut, I found, with Kalenderian’s guidance, that the best suit for my tall frame was, in fact, a double-breasted four-button tuxedo with a distinctly Fred Astaire lapel. It was beautifully tailored and carried the label of [Andrea Campagna](#), a designer whose father, Gianni, was famous for having dressed Gianni Agnelli, the Fiat chief.

“It’s all about the silhouette,” Fahlgren had told me. “You nail the shape and build from there.”

It took Kalenderian and me some hours and 10 suits, but we nailed the silhouette. With a few tweaks I could have walked out of Barneys and into Oscar night. I could have, that is, if I had Fiat finances to match my tastes. The [Andrea Campagna](#) suit cost well over \$4,000, so I left dejected and with nothing to wear.

Stimulated by my expedition, however, I stopped at the J. Crew Men’s Shop and found exactly what I sought. The J. Crew tuxedo (trousers, \$295, and jacket, \$510) from the Ludlow range was in stock in my size and fit me right off the rack. The store even had a pair of trousers sized perfectly for my point-guard legs.

— [GUY TREBAY](#), *The New York Times*