

Introduction

I wrote this post for a client's blog with the goal of educating readers on the basics of sweater styles and knit patterns. You can view the original post [here](#).

The Ultimate Women's Sweater Guide: Every Style and Pattern You Should Know

Sweaters: the cold weather staple. People have worn these garments for hundreds of years to stay warm, dry, and fashionable. But since they've been around so long, there are hundreds of styles, patterns, and colors out there.

Knowing these different types and patterns helps you shop confidently and makes you look smarter too. Being able to tell the difference between a mock neck and a turtle neck might not save your life, but it could save your fashion dignity.

Don't panic if you know nothing about sweaters. In this guide, we cover all the important styles and patterns everyone should know. After reading this guide, you'll be ready to buy and wear sweaters with surety and style.

What is a Sweater?

Before we dive into the varieties of sweaters, we need to discuss what we mean when we say "sweater".

A sweater (or jumper) is a knit garment worn on the upper body, generally with long sleeves. The first ones come from the 15th-century English Channel Isles. They're made from cotton, wool, polyester, cashmere, and other knittable materials.

Types of Sweaters

As we said, there are a lot of sweater types out there and many of them overlap. For this guide, we've selected the top ten basic styles you should know. Click on a style below to jump directly to that section or keep scrolling to learn more.

1. Cardigan
2. Pullover
3. Crew neck
4. V neck
5. Turtle neck
6. Mock neck
7. Tennis sweater
8. Quarter zip
9. Sweater vest
10. Sweater dress

1. Cardigan

A cardigan is a sweater that you button up the front rather than pull over your head. They're perfect when you don't want to mess up your hair or makeup.

2. Pullover

As opposed to the cardigan, a pullover has no buttons, zippers, or other closures. It's the style that comes to mind when you say "sweater".

3. Crew Neck

A crew neck sweater has a round neckline with no collar that sits around the base of your neck. You can layer it with a collared shirt or wear it by itself.

4. V-Neck

The V-neck is like a crew neck, except that its neckline forms a V shape rather than a circle. Cardigans and pullovers can both come with crew or V necklines.

5. Turtle Neck

A turtle neck sweater has a long collar that folds in half. They're great for extra protection against the cold, but some people find them stifling.

6. Mock Neck

Mock necks imitate the look of a turtle neck without needing to fold in half. If you find turtle necks restrictive but like the look, a mock neck is the way to go.

7. Tennis Sweater

Tennis sweaters have been popular since the 1930s. They're a v-neck pullover sweater in white or off-white, with colored stripes around the neck. They look classy and chic no matter the era.

8. Quarter Zip

A quarter zip sweater is a pullover with a small zipper. It gives a bit more freedom to the pullover style.

9. Sweater Vest

A sweater vest is a pullover sweater with no sleeves. You can wear it alone or with a shirt underneath, giving the look of a full sweater without the bulk.

10. Sweater Dress

A sweater dress is just what it sounds like- a long sweater designed to be worn as a dress. Perfect if you want the coziness of a sweater, but the coverage of a dress.

Types of Sweater Patterns

Now that we've covered sweater styles, let's talk about patterns. Different patterns on the same sweater can change the whole look. Let's look at eight classic patterns you'll find everywhere.

1. Solid
2. Cable knit
3. Fair isle
4. Argyle
5. Aran
6. Guernsey
7. Open knit
8. Ribbed

1. Solid

A solid sweater has no discernible pattern. It's smooth and more formal-looking.

2. Cable Knit

A cable knit sweater features crisscrossed cable patterns on the torso and sometimes the sleeves. They're also thicker than most other sweaters.

3. Fair Isle

Traditional fair isle sweaters are made with wool from the island by the same name. Today, the name refers to a sweater with colorful geometric patterns across the upper half. Many holiday sweaters use this pattern.

4. Argyle

The argyle pattern has diamonds down the front of the sweater with intersecting lines across them. Argyle is often considered a nerdy pattern, but it's quite stylish.

5. Aran

Natural wool coloring is the mark of an Aran sweater. Originally made for fishermen on the Aran Islands, they've become a fashion staple.

6. Guernsey

The guernsey sweater features distinct knit patterns representing parts of being a sailor. They're also fisherman's sweaters but from the Guernsey Islands.

7. Open Knit

Open-knit sweaters are more for fashion than warmth. They're loosely knit, leaving large holes in different patterns.

8. Ribbed

Most sweaters use ribbing for cuffs and hems, but sometimes you'll find a whole ribbed sweater. They're more form-fitting and feature vertical lines of knitting.

Test your new knowledge by going through your closet and identifying what styles and patterns of sweaters you have. When it's time to go shopping for more, you can buy with confidence and impress your shopping buddies.