

### Cameron Silver

## Talking Shop



Los Angeles vintage mecca Decades, Inc. owner Cameron Silver got into the business for the love of fashion — and ended up championing sustainability along the way. “I like the looks of past fashion and my philosophy is about vintage that looks modern,” he says. “Ironically, it has helped re-educate people about consumption of new things.” Here, Silver shares his top tips for vintage shopping.

### 1. Do your homework

Now that garments from the ‘80s and ‘90s qualify as “vintage,” says Silver, you have to decide what the word means to you—and whether or not you’re in search of investment pieces that will increase in value. Silver warns that shopping on eBay can be a gamble, but recommends using the site as a barometer for comparing prices on established and lesser-known designers.

### 2. Size matters (but not that much)

“Never consider the size that’s actually on the garment,” says Silver. A women’s size 14 in the ‘50s was roughly equivalent to a 6 today, for example, so trying garments on is imperative. Plus people’s bodies were smaller and less athletic in decades past; don’t let tiny waistlines bruise your ego.

### 3. Stay away from polyester

“Make sure your fabric isn’t flammable,” says Silver. “There were a lot of really disgusting fabrics in the ‘60s.” A good rule of thumb: If something doesn’t feel good on the hanger, it won’t feel good on the skin. And when buying wool, make sure to inspect closely for moth holes.

### 4. Consider the condition

Restoration can end up costing up to ten times more than the original garment, so look for clothes that are expertly constructed and only need a few nips and tucks. It’s possible to lop the sleeves off a dress with yellowed armholes, for example, but something that’s two sizes too big will never fit. Silver’s tip: Make sure to turn each piece inside out and inspect the seams, since shoddy or worn finishing can never be repaired.

### 5. If the shoe fits

While vintage designer clothing is still more affordable than its contemporary equivalent, quality pieces aren’t cheap. Shoes and costume jewelry, however, can still be found at bargain prices. But at the end of the day, Silver cautions, always be discriminating: “A piece of junk is a piece of junk—no matter how old it is.”