

Art Department

What is the Best VPL-Resistant Underwear?

By Lori Keong



Photo: Getty Images/Chris Wedel

Visible panty lines, or "VPL," aren't necessarily a make-or-break when it comes to underwear, but they can be somewhat embarrassing. The term covers up galls and galls on the side (even amongst our editors) as a factor that separates the good pair of underwear from the great. How VPL show up underneath a pair of workout leggings, a body-hugging gown, or a pair of dress pants? For *Underwire*, we polled seven women — from stylists to boutique owners to fitness enthusiasts — to find the best seamless, VPL-proof underpant.

Thongs



Commando Microfiber Thong

When you think "VPL-free," you typically think "thong," which is why the style was an easy favorite amongst our experts. Commando is somewhat of the gold standard for preventing VPL (or so we've heard) and three of our experts were fans, too. Stylist **Lara Backmender** says they have a pair piece of hers when she's working with models on shoots, and she often asks to Commando for creating a seamless, smooth look under clothes. Cindy Kaling — the owner of lingerie and swim boutique *Adeline* — also calls Commando's bikini styles and thongs a "no-brainer" for creating invisible panty lines, while MMA La's owner Bryan Park, shoe room manager Lisa Wong says this thong is an everyday VPL-proof favorite.

THE STRATEGIST

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Happy Panty Low-Rise Thong

Two of our experts — Backmender and *Time* fitness coach **Randi Jones** — also recommended Happy Panty's lay-things-for-a-beautiful-everyday option. Backmender says, "They don't cut into your skin, they create a smooth line even though they are lace, come in five colors, and also work for a variety of skin tones."

Briefs



Spanx Undetectable Briefs

Another brand Backmender called out as being the best for a seamless look is — no surprise here — Spanx. She didn't specify a style, but we recommend these "undetectable" Spanx briefs which do double duty as control-top underpant and don't give themselves away under clothing.



LARA BACKMENDER

Lara Backmender is a stylist, mother and longtime friend of *ENT*. Here she's wearing her gloves from our Spring 18 collection. We bump out recently with Lara and her son Levi at her home in Brooklyn that she shares with her husband who is a photographer.

Lara is from a small town in Connecticut and moved to NYC in the late 90's to study fashion design. She fell in love with New York's underground scene, music and fashion scene, and early ambition to become a designer manifested into styling. She assisted and worked with some of the most influential stylists in fashion such as Ardenne Phillips and Peter-Dominic Shaw. Now, Lara works independently with the most progressive magazines, photographers, designers and celebrities. She travels the world for inspiration and inspires people she comes into contact with.

What are some of your earliest fashion memories, and what made you want to pursue styling in particular?

In elementary school I would write fashion articles for the school paper, and would spend hours the night before creating my outfit for the next morning. In my mind I fell into styling, but if I really had a strong hobby, it was a journey that led me to styling. I studied design at Parsons School of Design, but was assisting stylists all along and found that to be my niche.

Describe your personal style:

My style changes depending on my mood and the season, but generally it's: masculine meets feminine, something always subtly different, and maybe bit of vintage thrown in.

What/what inspires you and why?

I think fashion, art and design is very much innate for me, though I draw inspiration from many things — walking down the streets of NYC, an art exhibit, a concert, hanging with friends, traveling overseas, a film I have seen. It all gets tucked away and I draw from that depending on what I am working on and who I am working with. I do a very visual person, and it is the language I am most comfortable with.

What is your favorite thing about motherhood?

I have two things: the unconditional love you feel and have for your child, and how the whole process of creating them and their developmental years are so magical and perfect and that all of it is not in your control.

How do you balance work and family?

I am learning still how to balance it all, and it is extremely difficult as a freelancer, but I have a great partner to help me with that.

How does living in New York City inspire you in work and in life?

This city is such a hub for all kinds of cultures, and there's so much creativity. Combined with the fast pace of the city, it really inspires visual ideas. Just walking down the street I get sparks of ideas. After 23 years of living here, I do feel it is important to step outside of this moment. People and travel, or go to the countryside to balance that frenzy that I feed off of.

THE STRATEGIST

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THE BEST REALLY.

What Are the Best White Sneakers?

By Lori Keong



Women's Hand-Sewn Low

"As a stylist, I am on my feet most of the day, so wearing sneakers is usually a must for me these days. I always have been a bit of a sporty tomboy and find it essential to have a few different types of sneaker styles in my wardrobe. I rotate between a few depending on my outfit and mood that day. I have a fairly new obsession with this brand called Feit and like them for style and comfort. I love that they are a comfortable, chicer version of a sneaker, so I feel a bit more dressed up, and they are completely handmade with beautiful leather, so not only are they very special but I feel special in them, and they are not seen everywhere, as of yet!" —Lara Backmender, stylist, fashion consultant

\$600 at Feit



HOW TO STYLE THAT VINTAGE JACKET YOU'VE HAD FOR YEARS

January 23, 2021 | Whitney Port



So if you had this vintage jacket forever and haven't known what to do with it. It's very ornate and has an interesting shape so I don't go with it. Here's how all these pieces we don't want to give up but also don't know how to wear!

Anyway, my stylist friend **Lara Backmender** saw over the other day and helped me style a look that anyone can emulate. It just requires jeans, a white tee and flat! See below for pics and shopping links!



Lara Backmender

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teenVOGUE

9 Fashion Jobs You've Never Heard Of

Yes, Skype Stylists are a thing.

Ermo Somon Webster
AUG 24, 2014 3:05PM EDT



Photo: Courtesy of 20th Century Fox

When it comes to working in the fashion industry, sometimes it may seem like there are only a few paths you can take: editor, designer, stylist, or model to name a few. But, while those roles are certainly some of the most visible ones in the industry, they're by no means the only career choices that exist within the vast world of fashion. Ahead, find 9 unique, under-the-radar jobs that currently exist within fashion that incorporate analytics, law, and even psychology.

2. Fashion Consultant: Nearly all businesses benefit from consultants who can inform and advise them, and that includes fashion businesses. **Lara Backmender** is a stylist with **Honey Artists**, but also a consultant for labels like **Kate Spade** and **Cole Haan**. "As a freelance Fashion Consultant, I help inspire, support and guide a designer or design team for their overall branding and/or specific collections." Lara tells *Teen Vogue*. Lara has a design background, but says for anyone who wants to consult fashion brands, it's important to have a strong understanding of fashion history and the ability to conduct extensive research. "Also, having confidence in what you believe creatively for an idea or direction is key," she said. "[And] I think that someone who is easily inspired and keeps up to date with current trends is an ideal candidate. Often, as a fashion consultant, you will be the point person for this and it is good to stay abreast of what's happening in the moment."



(Photo : Courtesy/Lara Backmender)

1. "Internships give you invaluable experience — have as many internship experiences as you can. This way, you can experience an array of jobs and find what you're most passionate about. Your career might be something that you weren't aware of until you tried it"



(Photo : Courtesy/Lara Backmender)

2. "Don't compare yourself to anyone else. You bring a different perspective and a distinctive set of skills to the table. There is not one specific track to success, so focus, work hard, and be open. People will notice and success will follow."

3. "Don't waste time obsessing over people who you perceive to be better than you. Instead, channel that energy into your own work. Focus on your strengths and weaknesses and work on improving yourself."

4. "Be a 'yes' person. Positivity and willingness to do even the most mundane task will get you far"



(Photo : Courtesy/Lara Backmender)

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Stylist Lara Backmender Shares Top Tips On How To Succeed In Fashion For Recent College Grads

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May 16, 2016 01:26 PM EDT

By Brittany Dee



(Photo : Courtesy/Lara Backmender)

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Graduation is right around the corner for seniors at local fashion schools like [the Fashion Institute of Technology](#) and [Parsons School of Design](#), which means the New York City area is about to have a pool of new designers looking for jobs.

Transitioning from student to professional designer can be tough, especially in an area as competitive as NYC, but fortunately for this year's graduates, Parsons alumna **Lara Backmender** has shared her top career tips with us.

Backmender, a former fashion designer and stylist represented by Honey Artists, has worked with brands like **Kate Spade New York** and **Cole Haan** and also critiques the senior presentations at her alma mater each semester.

5. "Networking is crucial! Understand the power of connections. It's who knows you, not who you know. This takes a lot of time and energy to pull off, but it pays off in the long run. Being passionate is the secret to not getting burned out at your job. If you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life."

6. "Point of view is important in distinguishing yourself from the rest of the herd. What makes you and your designs different? Everyone will want to know what makes you unique, especially if you plan on going after a highly coveted CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund."



(Photo : Courtesy/Lara Backmender)

7. "Editing is key. Your words and visual imagery should be crystal clear to support your point of view. Editing is an art you must practice. It takes great confidence to know less is more."

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Lara Backmender

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POPSUGAR

Whitney Port's Wedding Gown Is Just What You'd Expect — Until You See the Bottom

By Sarah Waxler 10/15/15 841 Shares



After Whitney Port teased us with an Instagram snap the whole internet seemed to think was from her wedding, she showed off a stunning bobo dress at her bridal party. So — with all the buildup to her big day — you can only imagine how excited we were to get a glimpse at her gown. In short (and long), it's not what we'd expected.

Whitney brought back the asymmetrical hemline in her pearl-adorned lace Ashli Studio design, a trend we haven't seen in quite a while. But on Whitney, the look is absolutely elegant. The star, who was styled by Lara Backmender, added a many feminine details as she possibly could, from her intricate floral bodice to her stunning drop earrings by DeLina DeLorenzo. And just like Whitney's waterfall train surprised us, so did her edgy diamond cartilage hoop and her simple chignon hairstyle, which allowed her feminine design to take center stage.

Read on to see Whitney's wedding style in full, from the engagement ring her new husband, Tim Rosenman, gave her to her stylish Instagram takeover and, finally, the jaw-dropping dress she wore down the aisle.

COSMOPOLITAN

Whitney Port Wore a Lazy Girl Bun to Her Wedding and Looked Amazing Her dress was nontraditional as well.



By Brooke Szymanski

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According to *Us Weekly*, Whitney collaborated with Mohammad Ashi of Ashi Studio to create the long-sleeve high-low gown that was "inspired by a vintage chandelier from Venice and Florence."

Whitney's stylist Lara Backmender paired the gown with matching shoes, and the best part? Whitney opted to wear her hair in an I'm-about-to-wash-my-face bun rather than a traditional bridal updo. She finished her super-nontraditional look with greenery in her hair and striped nail art designs, which basically makes her the coolest bride ever.

examiner.com

Fall trends talk with stylist Lara Backmender

October 10, 2015 11:09 AM MST



It can be a bit of a struggle to create the perfect fall attire. Thanks to celebrity stylist Lara Backmender, who's worked with starlets like Scarlett Johansson, Hayden Panettiere and Nina Dobrev, she's answering a few questions that will help any girl seamlessly transition their style for the colder months and look chic while doing it.

Q. What do you think will be the most popular accessory this fall?

Lara: There are so many wonderful accessory trends happening this coming season, but I would say the one that stands out and makes sense for your money is a nice big sized leather tote. One that you can carry a lot in and looks fantastic to run around with and when you only carry a few things in it is still looks good and floppy/crushable and effortless.

Q. How can one add life to her old work wardrobe?

Lara: I think accessories add life to any outfit no matter how much you spend on the outfit, I think a great pair of shoes, bags and other accessories can really revamp an old look. I really feel investing in a few good timeless or trendy accessories depending on your budget can help breath some fresh fashion air into your old wardrobe. They can really give personality to an outfit.

Q. What are three staple pieces every girl should have in her closet this fall?

- Lara:** 1. I think a great cozy sweater that you can dress up and dress down is a must. There are so many good knits out there this fall. It is so easy to wear over a dress or with jeans. You can look chic and be functional. I am all about fashion meeting function.
2. A wool blazer or jacket. One with a great print or fantastic shape or good detailing like cool hardware. Throw that on over a t-shirt, button down and jeans and your good to go plus warm for the cooler fall temperatures.
3. A fantastic fit trouser. Pants are all the rage this season for Fall. You wear them with a top or your cozy sweater or you wear them under a dress with the right proportions, that is another trend right now. It can be difficult to find the right fit but once you do it is everything. I also recommend if you like a trouser and the fabric but it is maybe a little to baggy in an area or too long, just tailor it to fit you perfectly.



LaraBackmender.com

Lara Backmender

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NORDSTROM

THE THREAD



Whitney Port styled by Lara Backmender for New York Fashion Week, image courtesy Whitney Port

Did our **packing posts** accurately portray the amount of over-thinking that goes into Fashion Week? Well now imagine you're a celebrity and a designer, like, oh, maybe Whitney Port of Whitney Eve.

There's a lot of **pressure to look amazing for photographs, meetings, and front rows**, and you might be surprised to hear that the former *Hills* star (and **star of our 5 Ws** series) doesn't always find all of that easy. I sat down with Port and her personal stylist Lara Backmender, who I met back in New York, for tea one rainy London afternoon to talk about how the sweet New Yorker helps the kind Los Angeleno navigate the world of outfits.

The pair goes all the way back to *Teen Vogue* days: Backmender was styling a hand for the mag, and Port, as you'll recall, was interning. They've been sartorially inseparable since. When Port launched **Whitney Eve**, Backmender styled the first show, but mostly they work together on Port's special event looks.

"Stylists understand the language of design," says the Parsons Fashion Design grad. "We translate design for the outside world." So while Port herself now speaks that language and works as a collection creator, she still defers to Backmender all the time.

Lara Backmender at Maria Cornejo during New York Fashion Week

"A piece on its own can be great, but when Lara puts it in another context, that's when it really comes alive," says Port. "I love choosing shapes and fabrics, but my strong suit is not thinking about how my girl is going to wear the pieces together."

Backmender also pushes Port out of her comfort zone. She brought all manner of loveliness of Port to wear this week, and they've had fittings every day with pretty great success, pictured here.

"Lara knows what's good for me. I didn't really tell her I wanted to take a few more risks, but she seemed to know it anyway."

The Lara and Whit show is pretty adorable really. Here, or, well, hear. You can heck it out yourself.



Lara Backmender

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