



TALENT STYLING 101 (ACTORS)

Please find below a brief explanation of the Stylist's working process, time frames, costs as well as factors to consider when styling Talent (the Client.)

We hope this information will help you understand more about our role and what we do.

The below applies to UK based Stylists working with Actors.

The Purpose of a Stylist

A Stylist advises their Clients on their clothing choices, helping to craft the public image of the Client. We work closely with numerous brands building up relationships between them and our Clients. When promoting we are an integral part of their team, helping garner publicity for both the Client and the production they are promoting. Good Styling is integral to a successful marketing campaign.

Factors to Consider

Where possible a Stylist will attempt to procure clothes by loaning them from brands we have relationships with. There are a variety of factors one must take into account when styling a client. The following will affect the likelihood of a brand giving approval to the Client:

- **Tier of Client:** How well known the Client is (or will be) is important to brands. Brands take the size of the Client's social media following, the potential success of the production and their role in the production into consideration when deciding if they will dress the Client or not. For newer Talents it is important for the Stylist to give the brand as much information about the Talent and the production they are in so they can make an informed decision as to whether they will loan clothing or not.
- **Size:** Clothes that are loaned come directly from the runway/catwalk and come in what is called 'Sample Size.' Sample size is usually a size UK 6-8 for women's and IT48/UK38 suit size for men's. There is flexibility depending on the fit and fabric of the outfit, and we may be able to tailor the outfit to work for a size above or below. Dressing Clients outside of these sizes is more difficult as more often than not in those circumstances a brand must pull their clothing from their store. If the clothing ends up damaged from wear or is altered then the clothing cannot be returned to the shop floor and must be written off. This can be incredibly expensive for a brand due to the high value nature of their products, therefore unless a client is able to prove they will garner significant press attention from the outing, most brands are likely to say no. It is possible to use oversized samples when dressing non-sample sized clients, but there are limitations especially when it comes to waist sizes or if the client requests a more form fitting, classic look.
- **Visibility:** Brands loan for the sole purpose of publicity. Therefore they will prioritise loaning clothes to Stylists and Talent who can guarantee them the best images at their proposed event. For example a premiere will be preferable to many brands for dressing compared to a junket as photographers are rarely present at junkets. Brands do still loan for junkets, but the client must be willing to have their photo taken by their Stylist or Hair/Makeup, and ideally post/tag the image. If there is no opportunity for photography the brand will not loan. For events where photographers are not present such as junkets, we would suggest the Studio or Streamer start to allow photographers access to the talent. If the Stylist cannot give the Brands imagery they are less likely to loan, this is becoming more and more of a

problem. Having a photographer present would fix that. As well as this fans are incredibly interested in Actors' fashion, if Studios/Streamers were able to give them more fashion specific content they would undoubtedly garner more press for their production.

- **Availability:** Brands loaning share their clothes across multiple markets, using them for both magazine photo shoots, events worldwide and for their own inhouse activities. For example during awards season or festival season it can be incredibly difficult to procure clothes as there are hundreds of attendees trying to be dressed for multiple events going on at the same time, there are only so many outfits to go around. Brands will prioritise the events that they will likely get the best publicity from.

In the event that no appropriate brand is willing to loan to the client a shopping budget is required to complete the job. Should the Payee or the Client not wish to give a shopping budget the Stylist must still be paid for their preparatory outreach work.

The Stylist's Working Process

Work takes place during normal working hours (9am - 6pm GMT, Mon - Fri.) Any work outside of these hours (i.e due to a client being outside the UK or the client having no weekday availability) should be classed as overtime and paid as such. Please bear this in mind if adding extra looks when a client is in the USA promoting, as this will require the Stylist to work on two time zones in order to acquire the outfits needed.

The timeframe of the below processes is dependent on the number of outfits required and the complexity of the job. We have shown the bare minimum amount of time needed to complete each step successfully, based on a minimum of 1 outfit.

- **Lead Time:** We recommend at least two weeks' warning before a fitting. Most Stylists require a minimum of 5 working days before a fitting to complete the brief and preparatory work. Stylists will not start work until a deal memo and terms and conditions have been agreed to. Adequate time must be given to negotiate these before any work can begin. Adequate warning time also allow us to fit jobs around others already in our calendar.
- **The Brief:** The Stylist will take into account what event(s) the Client is attending and the dress code. The Stylist will also talk to the Client to find out their likes and dislikes so they can ascertain the right direction to go. The Stylist may propose a moodboard should it be required. Once this is done the Stylist will set a fitting date with the Client and begin their preparatory work.
- **Preparatory Work (Min. 4 Days):** Once the Stylist and the Client have agreed on a brief the Stylist will write to brands to determine if they want to dress the Client or not. The Stylist will write to tens of brands to determine if they are able to lend. They take the factors in the previous section into account when making their decision. The Stylist will be dealing with brands in different countries across multiple time zones and this takes many days of back and forth to determine what can be sent in time for the fitting.
- **Deliveries & Prepping Looks (1-2 Days):** Before a fitting can take place deliveries of clothing and accessories must be made to the Stylist's studio. These are carefully unpacked and logged over the course of a day to make sure everything is there. Once all the garments are unpacked and hung the Stylist can carefully edit the rail and put outfits together, this usually takes another day's work. For each outfit a Stylist prepares there will be a minimum of 3-5 options. We need options in case the look does not work on the Client or if there is no way of altering it to fit correctly.
- **The Fitting (Min. 2 Hours for the first outfit, 1 hour for each subsequent outfit):** Once all outfits are prepared the Client attends a fitting at the Stylist's studio. The Client will try on multiple options to determine the best outfit for the event(s), pictures will be taken so we can see how the outfit will read. Depending on what is required a tailor may or not be present. For external fittings travel and set up time must also be taken into consideration as work. The chosen outfit(s) will be logged. If no tailoring is required the outfit(s) may be handed over to the Client, depending if the Stylist is attending to dress on the day or not. Due to the amount of clothing and kit required for fittings, transportation is required for external fittings.
- **Returns (Min. 1 Day):** Any unused clothing from the fitting must be returned by the Stylist ASAP. The Stylist will carefully log each piece on a docket to make sure nothing is missing and then place all items back in the packaging they came in. The packaging must be securely closed and clearly labelled. The Stylist will then arrange for a courier to collect the items or return them by hand.

- **Tailoring (Min. 1 Day):** Tailoring may be required to perfect the fit of an outfit. An external tailor will alter the garment where required. There are limitations as to what can be done and the majority of alterations must be reversible. Time is also required for the Stylist to collect the tailored garments and to deliver them to the Client. For complex alterations a refit and re-tailor may be necessary, this will add to the working time.
- **Dressing (Min. ½ Day, inc. travel):** Should the Client and the Stylist be in the same location at the time of the event, the Client may want the Stylist to attend to dress them. The Stylist will hang up the garments, steam/iron them and dress the Client. The Stylist may also have organised the delivery of any fine jewellery or watches with a security guard. For complex outfits the Stylist may be required at the event to make sure the outfit sits correctly and to help the Client walk comfortably. The Stylist may send an assistant if they are not available or the Client is not in the same country.
- **Recoup (Min. 1 Day. Dependent on reliability of Client):** Whilst clothing is usually required to be returned by the Client within 24 hours of the event, unreliable clients can turn this into a lengthy process. The Stylist's work includes contacting/following up the client, recouping the outfit, checking it for damage, reversing alterations, dry cleaning and finally returning the outfit to the brand that loaned it. Any late returns on the behalf of the Client can damage a Stylist's reputation with the Brand.

The minimum length of time worked for one look is 9 working days. It is possible to prep up to 4 more outfits in this time, however more fitting and tailoring time will be required, as well as an increase of the rate.

Expenses

The below breaks down the cost of the various expenses a Stylist incurs. Many are dependent on various factors, and will vary from job to job.

- **Couriers (London Based):** Dependent on the distance from point to point. A bike will be used for smaller packages and a van for anything that won't fit in a top box. A bike from West to East is a minimum of £40.
- **Shipping (UK):** Dependent on size and weight of package. An average sized 5kg box is a minimum of £10.
- **Shipping (International):** Dependent on size and weight of package. An average sized 5kg box to Italy or France is a minimum of £40. There may be import tax charged to the Stylist.
- **Assistants:** £150 per day minimum. Based on an 8 hour day. (\$350 p/d min if in the USA.)
- **Tailor:** £300 - £400 plus VAT. Based on an 8 hour day.
- **Transportation:** Required for external fittings and dressing days. Dependent on type of transportation and distance. Due to the high value of clothing, Stylists will only use reliable forms of transport and these can often come at a premium cost. Uber/Bolt is not an option.
- **Returns (London Multidrop):** £7.00 min.per drop off. Minimum of 6 drop offs (£42.00)
- **Returns (International):** Dependent on size and weight of package. There is an extra charge for the creation of a proforma invoice (customs document.) If a Client decides to not return to the UK after promo, the rough cost of getting a suitcase back from LA/NYC to London is a minimum of £250, but can cost upwards of £500 if multiple cases are to be returned.
- **Kit:** a £30 charge applies to every job. Any additional specialist underwear, shapewear or hosiery required for a job is additional to this.
- **Dry Cleaning:** As and when required. Dependent on type and number of garments. Reputable, premium dry cleaners will only be used.
- **Shopping Budget:** Not relevant if acquiring clothes via loan is an option. This is entirely dependent on the result required, however it must be realistic. Whilst the final spend must be pre agreed, the Stylist will require a minimum of three times the final spending budget in order to purchase style and size options for a fitting. E.g. If the shopping budget is £1k the Stylist must be given £3k to shop to buy more than one option. Once a fitting has taken place and the outfit is decided the Stylist will then return the additional £2k of clothing.
- **Day to Day Running Costs:** A freelance Stylist has multiple day to day costs to keep the business running. Including but not limited to mobile telephone (handset, calls (plus International calls), data and add-ons), internet, office supplies, public liability insurance, contents insurance and utility bills.

The Breakdown of a Rate

All the above factors contribute to how a rate breaks down. Another thing to consider is if a Stylist has an agent or not, as agents take a percentage of the Stylist's fee.

A busy Stylist will average about 60 looks a year (5 a month.)

IF the rate is exclusive of expenses the Stylist takes the full rate (minus agency commission if applicable) and expenses are charged separately. This is very uncommon when dealing with the Film & TV Industry. In this case the following have to be taken into account by the Stylist:

- **Agent's commission (if applicable):** 20%¹
 - ¹ Please note that where an agency fee is not paid on top of the fee by the client SOME agents charge the Stylist 33.3% commission**
- **National Insurance:** £179.40 per year PLUS 9% on profits between £12,570 and £50,270 PLUS 2% on profits over £50,270.
- **Income Tax (Sold Traders):** 20% tax on earnings between £12,571 and £50,270; 40% tax on earnings between £50,271 and £124,140; 45% on earnings over £125,141
- **Student Loan Repayment:** If applicable
- **VAT:** if VAT registered the Stylist must charge 20% VAT on their invoices

IF the rate is inclusive of expenses the Stylist must cover the cost of expenses and the exact amount they will take home cannot be determined until all expenses are accounted for. The above factors plus the below affect the final amount the Stylist takes home.

- **Expenses:** A minimum of 30% of each job (not including tailor or assistant.)

A Stylist with an Agent working on Netflix's most common \$500 (£386**) inclusive of expenses, per look rate for a full year would take home before tax \$16,800 (£12,993**) per year:

- 60 outfits annually x \$500 = \$30,000 (£23,200**)
- MINUS 20%² Agency Commission (\$6,000 (£4,640**)) = \$24,000 (£18,560**)
- MINUS min. 30% expenses (\$7,200 (£5558**)) = \$16,800 (£12,993**) **NOT inc. Tailors or Assistants**
- EQUALS \$16,800 (£12,993**) per year
- EQUALS \$8.08 (£6.25**) per hour based on a 40 hour week

That is below minimum wage in both the UK and the USA. A Stylist without an agent would take home \$21,000 (£16,239) / \$10.10 (£7.81), which is still below minimum wage.

Even if the rate was doubled to \$1000 (\$33,600 (£25,984) per year) or tripled to \$1500 (\$50,800 (£39,286) per year) the rate simply is not enough for a highly skilled professional, with many years of experience living in one of the World's most expensive cities.

² Please see note on previous page regarding Agent's commission

** Conversion correct as of 27th July 2023

What is a Fair Rate?

A fair rate is one that is exclusive of expenses. A Stylist should not be footing the Studios/Streamers bills. As well as this the rate should be paid in Pounds Sterling (£.)

Please bear in mind that as freelancers we do not receive company health insurance, pension or paid leave, so this must be reflected in a higher rate. As a Union we want to work towards a new rate model that takes into account both hours/days worked and the number of looks. In the interim we would suggest a negotiable starting rate of £1250 per look, rising annually in line with inflation.

- 60 outfits annually x £1250 = £75,000

- MINUS 20%* Agency Commission (£15,000) = £60,000
- MINUS £11,432 Income Tax
- MINUS £4,113.24 National Insurance
- EQUALS £44,454.76 annual take home pay after tax

The above calculation does not take into account Student Loan repayments, private pension plans, private healthcare/dental or day to day business running costs.

Regarding expenses, since they can be difficult to predict as they can range due to numerous factors, we would suggest including an overspend budget that is 10% of the suggested expense budget. The Stylist must provide proof of receipts in order to reclaim their expenses

- Rate - £1250 per Look
- Overtime - £100 per hour
- Courier/Shipping Budget (30% of Look Rate) - £375 per Look
- Tailoring Budget - £300 + VAT - £360 per day³ (Only to be used if required. TBD at the fitting.)
- Assistant - 2 days @ £150 = £300 (for every 5 looks required)
- Kit Charge - £30 per job
- Additional Kit (Underwear / Hosiery) - Women's up to £200 per job / Men's up to £100 per job
- Travel (within London) - up to £200 per job
- Shopping Budget - Needed for non sample size Clients or Clients who do not have a big enough profile.. To be discussed on a case by case basis
- Expenses Overspend - 10% of all expenses

Payment Terms: within 30 days of receipt of invoice. 5 working days for expenses. Long payment terms are not acceptable, and impact our cashflow severely.

³ Based on an 8 hour day. This is usually enough time to fully tailor a Men's Suit or a complex dress. The final cost depends on the complexity of the job, this will be discussed at the fitting. It could be more or it could be less.

In Conclusion

A Stylist works tirelessly to craft the image of their Talent and contributes significant value to the overall project, generating a substantial amount of press for the production through their work.

We must be compensated fairly for the hours we put in. Splitting a budget equally between Styling, Hair & Makeup is not a fair split. Stylists work significantly more time and incur far more expenses compared to someone in Hair/Makeup; who often walk away with the same amount as a Stylist; whilst only working a handful of hours compared to the many days a Stylist has to work.

In reality the high cost of expenses should *NOT* be the Stylist's responsibility, they eat into the Stylist's take home pay and more often than not mean that the Stylist is in the red.

Our job is highly skilled and should be highly valued. Pay us fairly and respect the work that we do.

We would like to invite the studios/streamers/etc to talk and collaborate on ways to work together more effectively and fairly moving forward.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THE ABOVE.