

IT'S ALL IN THE JEANS

Feeling blue over finding perfect denim? Let Raleigh's style pros go to work for you—knowing pants is in their blood.

Most men didn't spend their childhood playing dress up; seldom do boys protest which T-shirt or sweater they would wear, and rarely do they make a fuss over a pair of pants. For these guys, few things change over the years. Even the most discerning gentleman today doesn't want to spend a lot of time in a dressing room: It's usually "get the perfect fit and go"—especially when it comes to wardrobe basics like denim.

At Raleigh Limited Menswear, we understand that many men may not want to get worked up while looking for jeans, but we also know that finding the perfect pair takes more than searching for a size tag on the waistband. A department store brand with a 32x30 tag, for instance, might fit differently when compared with Raleigh's high-quality denim by designers like Jacob Cohen and Teleria Zed.

When you visit Raleigh, Mark Koplow, Gerald Moreau and our other style pros will talk to you even before you start trying on pants. "We focus on getting the fit right as quickly as possible," says Koplow. He and the team ask three basic questions:

1. Do you like low rise or mid rise? "Mid-rise jeans tend to be most popular with our customers."

2. How fitted do you want them? "Some men like their jeans to be quite fitted around the thigh, but others want to be more comfortable."

3. What kind of leg opening do you like? "The trend is slim, but our best-selling fit is still regular straight leg."

Once the staff gets your answers, they're good to go. Inventory experts, they'll know to grab jeans from brands like 34 Heritage, Ermenegildo Zegna, Jacob Cohen, PT Torino and Teleria Zed, among others.

"We'll get the fit right in less than three tries," says Koplow.

But Raleigh goes beyond fit. Denim is about style too.

"Then we can talk about washes—a dark, clean pair that you can dress up or something more fun with detailing and distressing," he says. "We have a jean for every guy of every age...but you have to find the right fit first."





SKINNY FIT

Popularized by young hipster types in the late '00s, the skin-tight denim phenomenon stuck around for about a decade before trends began to shift. But with slight modifications, today's skinny-fit jeans are both fashionable and comfortable—and yes, they do allow breathing.

How they fit: The skin-tight feeling has given way to something more modern. Keep doing those squats because this style still hugs your seat and thighs. Most are mid-rise, meaning that the waistline will sit slightly below your belly button, but guys with uber-thin, Mick Jagger-type bods will benefit from a low-rise jean that sits closer on the hip. Dudes also should pay attention to the level of skinniness in the leg. Many brands still offer jeans that carry the close fit all the way through the ankle, but if that tightness is too boy-band for you, opt for a pair with only a slight taper at the bottom.

Who's wearing them: Paparazzi often capture style icon Harry Styles wearing a pair of black denim skinny jeans with a statement button-up and Chelsea boots, but your day-to-night look can be perfect with a light-wash pair and a long-fit T-shirt. And while skinny fit may be favored by the nightclub crowd, it's also suitable for the discerning man. Pair a subtler skinny jean with a sport-coat and loafers for a sophisticated look that is far from dated.

SLIM FIT

It's easy to use "skinny" and "slim" interchangeably in conversation, and there are indeed similarities when you're talking about garments. But if you have a slightly fuller body, you'll want to know the difference when putting on a pair of pants.

How they fit: Like skinny-fit denim, slim-fits also are close to the seat and thighs. They differ, however, in the leg opening—the calf and ankle loosen in most of the latter styles, providing greater mobility. Average slim-fit jeans are constructed with a mid-rise—meaning that the length from the crotch to the belt is anywhere between 9 and 11 inches—and give off a casual vibe. High-rise slim-fit jeans sit just above the waist and provide a neater, sometimes tailored appearance.

Who's wearing them: Slim-fit jeans are a great everyday cut for men looking to take the town by storm. Their versatility and ability to be paired with everything from sweaters and button-up shirts to sneakers and monk straps make them a preferred choice. And though they're popular with Hollywood's trim leading men, guys of all body types can feel confident in a pair because the slightly tapered yet close fit complements any figure.

REGULAR FIT

In the beginning, jeans were utilitarian pants worn for any and every task—thus, comfort was the priority, then fashion. That meant they had to provide the wearer plenty of room to move while still appearing tidy. That's the story of regular fit.

How they fit: Unlike slim-fit denim, which has a narrow silhouette and hugs the body, regular-fit jeans have a straight fit through the hips and thighs. In other words, they're not too loose, not too tight. Though there's no such thing as a one-size-fits-all pant, regular fit comes close. For shorter guys the style's mid-rise adds balance while elongating the body's frame. Taller fellows also benefit from the mid-rise, which can reduce the visual appearance of long legs.

Who's wearing them: Once worn mostly by blue-collar workers on the job, these jeans are perfect for casual Fridays at the office. The extra fabric standard in regular jeans gives added comfort to all body types. This style pairs well with sport shirts and boots for a casual or rugged look, but a darker wash can be dressed up easily with a dress shirt, sweater and monk strap shoes.

LOOSE FIT

The fashion police didn't ban baggy pants (though some U.S. cities did). In fact, this style isn't the faux pas that some made it out to be a decade ago. By considering a few sartorial rules, you can rock loose-fitting jeans and always be in style.

How they fit: Loose-fit jeans offer max-comfort feel and max-casual vibe. That's because the style is typically cut to sit below the waist, providing extra room in the seat and thigh area. The straight leg also is roomy, but doesn't give off an excessive bulky or baggy appearance. A high-rise fit can help men with larger waists flatten their mid-sections and shape their rear ends; it also allows more room in the leg for dudes with bigger calves. Watch the length of the leg: Jeans should not extend past the top of the shoes.

Who's wearing it: This style is best kept in casual settings (ball games and the like), but a variety of styles—different colors, patterns and washes, for example—will keep outfits interesting. For a smart combo, wear loose jeans in a light wash with layered pieces like hoodies, bomber jackets or large coats. Because of the jeans' relaxed nature, finish a loose-fit outfit with boots or sneakers.



DENIM THAT'S NOT DENIM

Gold-rush miners of the 1850s knew they were wearing durable pants, but little did they know that their garb would be a long-lasting fashion trend. Of course, indigo-dyed cotton denim has come a long way since then, going through more than a century's worth of transformations and incarnations (some memorable, others regrettable). Today's jeans and five-pocket pants are better than ever: They're just as durable to wear to a 9-to-5 job, whether you're mining or managing clients, but they are constructed with comfort and style in mind too. Top designers such as Jacob Cohen and Teleria Zed are incorporating fabrics such as elastane and Lycra to give their pant formulas stretch properties. Four-way stretch denim, for instance, provides the ultimate luxury. These pants stretch in four different directions, so they move with your body while you're on the go, and they won't lose their shape as they stretch over time—that was an issue with earlier stretch jeans. They're also super-soft (like your athleisure wear), so you can relax in a pair while you watch the whole ball game or binge the entire series of a Netflix show on your couch. Available in different washes and colors, stretch denim and five-pocket pants can be used equally in an office setting or out on the town. You'll be tempted to wear them at the health club—they're that comfortable—but go with the shorts and sweats for your workout.