

Is Your Vehicle Dressed To Impress? This Q&A Will Let You Know

(NAPSA)—Does your vehicle express your personal sense of style? It's no idle question. Last year Americans spent \$26 billion on accessories for their vehicles—more than they spent on golf and golf-related products, reports Sue Elliott-Sink, director of content for *enjoythedrive.com*, the consumer Web site from SEMA, the Specialty Equipment Market Association.

To help you gauge your automotive style, *enjoythedrive.com* offers the following questions:

1. Must you wear sensible shoes?

A vehicle's wheels and tires are the equivalent of its shoes and socks. The wheels and tires that come on it from the factory are designed to do the job, just like a good, sturdy pair of walking shoes and sweat socks.

But we aren't all sensible shoes kind of people. For some of us, changing to a set of larger chrome, colored or polished rims—with matching low-profile or color-coordinated tires, or tires with a stylish tread pattern—is as necessary as filling our closets with everything from Manolo Blahnik pumps to black leather boots.

2. Are you contemporary or classic?

The world of automotive accessories is chock-full of products with different styles, just as fashion ranges from contemporary to Victorian. For instance, do you want your SUV to look tough or ultra-modern? Accessories like tubular grille guards, taillight protectors, skid plates and nerf bars will create your kind of look.

Prefer something classic? A billet grille insert, polished billet wheels and a deep black paint job exude old Hollywood style. Top them off with dark window tint (like sunglasses for your vehicle) and you've got that starlet-traveling-incognito look.

3. Want to add highlights?

Custom paint and graphics are the automotive equivalent of changing hair colors or adding



NICE WHEELS—For some drivers, changing to a set of larger chrome, colored or polished rims will create the look they want.

highlights. New color-shift paints allow a vehicle to change hues as it moves. Or you can accessorize with vinyl graphics and pinstripes that can be removed and replaced easily.

4. Is it time to tone and firm?

Just as many of us work out so we look our best in *haute couture* or cutoffs, we also can give our vehicle's body some attention. Ground effects, spoilers, hood scoops and fender flares can add body builder-style muscle—or give a vehicle sleek, sexy lines. A lowering kit can also remove flab, making a car or truck look faster and handle better.

5. Looking for a little sparkle?

The right jewelry can help a simple black dress make the transition from office to cocktail party. Likewise, shiny chromed and polished accessories, including muffler tips and license plate frames—plus sparkly items, like fog lights and Euro-style taillights—can dress up a plain-Jane vehicle.

6. Ready to redecorate?

Interior design doesn't have to stay in the home. You can redecorate your vehicle in styles ranging from Laura Ashley to Jacques Cousteau. Accessories like seat covers, CD holders, floor mats and steering wheel covers come in happy

Hawaiian prints, wild leopard prints, waterproof neoprene and hundreds of other patterns and textures.

For more of a clubby atmosphere, how about leather upholstery and burl wood on the dash and door panels? Or perhaps you'd like a techno look, with brushed stainless steel on the dash, shift knob and gas and brake pedals.

7. Do you tune in to hiphop, country, opera or rock?

Music and fashion are forever linked, so why not fashion your vehicle to fit your musical tastes. A truly high-fashion sound system shows off some of the audio components. For instance, you can mount amps, CD changers and other components in the trunk, the cargo area or even in place of the backseat. Adding custom-stitched speaker covers and carpeted subwoofer boxes, plus neon that changes colors to go with your tunes, complete the high-style look.

For more information on high-fashion auto accessories, visit www.enjoythedrive.com. The Web site includes information on hundreds of the latest custom auto accessories, as well as links to product manufacturers' and retailers' Web sites. If you don't have Internet access, write to SEMA, Fashion, 1575 S. Valley Vista Dr., Diamond Bar, CA 91765-3914.