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THE BEAUTY EXPERT

The Ponchos

STYLE 101



The Ponchos

Ponchos may be one-size-fits-all, but they're not one-size-flatters-all. Kors prefers long styles on curvy women; stylist Danna Weiss, who has dressed clients such as Molly Sims in ponchos, says, "Small women look better in ponchos that are short—even belly-button length—and made from thin fabrics." For everyone else: Choose one that hits below the waist and above the knee.

1 Fringe doesn't always have benefits. If the raveled edges are too thin, they can quickly tangle and fray. Heftier trim, especially in fur, is more luxurious.

2 Ralph Lauren turns the hippie staple into a preppy classic by making his poncho out of cable-knit wool cashmere with buttons on the shoulder. Ralph Lauren Blue Label wool cashmere poncho (1), \$298, at Ralph Lauren, N.Y.C., 212-434-8000.

3 Asymmetrical ponchos, like these by Murielle and Ponchotora, can be worn off one shoulder or turned backward for a higher neckline. Murielle rayon nylon Lurex poncho (2), \$219, at Henri Bendel, N.Y.C., 212-247-1100; Ponchotora wool cashmere poncho (3), \$165, ponchotora.com.

4 Most ponchos are warm enough for fall; a few are even strong enough for winter. The Kate O'Connor cloak has a high neck, holes for hand-warming, and zips up like a parka. Kate O'Connor cashmere poncho (4), \$1,438, at Dari, Studio City, CA, 818-762-3274.

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