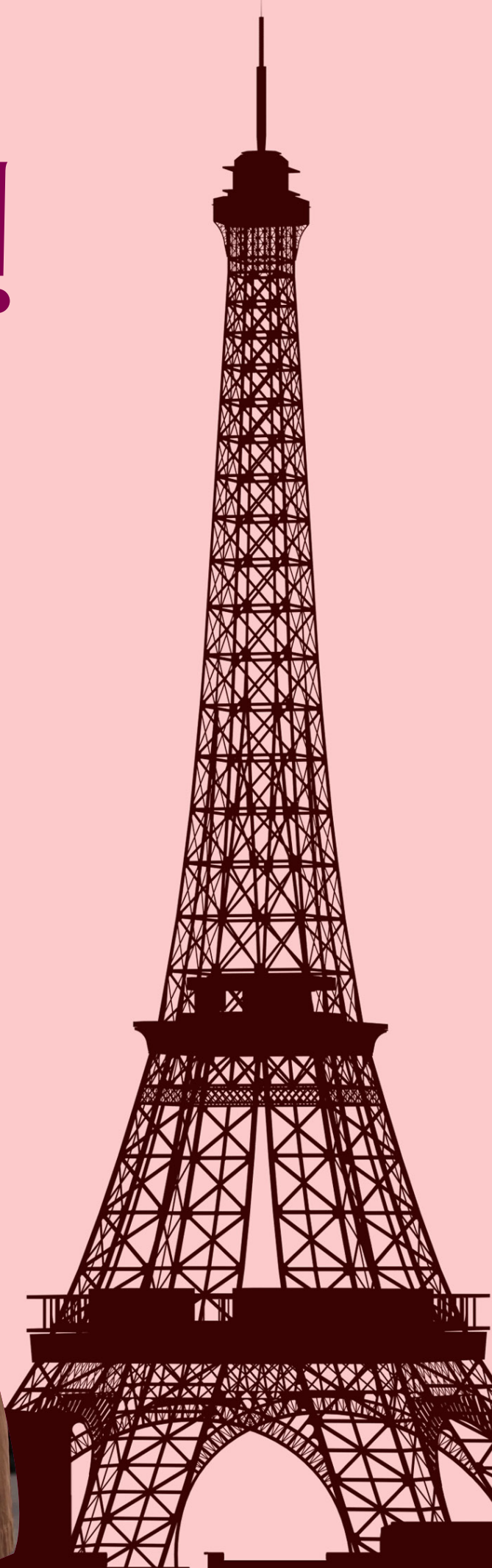


OOH LALA!

Step into Emily in Paris style
with our guide to sewing
French fashion classics

Written by Michelle Rowley





Bonjour! It's time to channel your inner Parisienne. Taking inspiration from the hit Netflix series *Emily in Paris* we're celebrating the timeless charm of French style. The character Emily Cooper (played by Lily Collins) has become almost as famous for her wardrobe as her adventures in the French capital. The show cleverly builds Emily's look from recognisable Parisian fashion staples such as berets, Breton stripes and the trench coat but then turns the volume up with bold colour, playful pattern clashes and statement accessories to make the outfits memorable on screen. The result is a style that nods to classic le style parisien while adding a distinctly 'Emily' twist. Whether you lean towards understated elegance or the playful, rule-breaking spirit of Emily's wardrobe, we explore the classic pieces that define French fashion. So, pour a café au lait, and get ready to say oui to sewing a little Parisian style into your wardrobe.

THE BERET

Whilst you're unlikely to actually see many people wearing a beret in Paris, a beret is still nevertheless one of the most iconic French accessories and it's used several times on the show to instantly signal 'Paris' to viewers. The beret's origin lies in the rural Pyrenees region. For centuries, versions of the soft, round wool cap were worn by Basque shepherds and farmers. Made from knitted wool that was then felted to create a dense, weather-resistant fabric, the beret was valued for its practicality. It was warm, flexible, easy to pack away, and could be pulled down over the ears in cold weather. The beret began to spread beyond the Pyrenees when it was adopted by various military units in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At the same time, it became a popular everyday cap among French workers, artists, and intellectuals, particularly in Paris. The beret gradually evolved into a symbol of French identity and culture, appearing in images of artists, the French Resistance, and

Top middle, Top right, Bottom right **Sew Over It's Amelia, Adelle, and Lorna beret** Far right **Lily Collins in a fashionable pink beret** Middle Bottom **Sewgirl's Le Chic beret**



later in fashion photography, where it came to represent effortless Parisian chic. In *Emily in Paris*, Emily pairs berets with tailored suits or coats (and sometimes a Chanel handbag of course!) to embrace French fashion but the styling is much bolder than true classic French style. Arguably the most recognisable outfit from the series, is a black and white checked blazer set accessorised with a red beret, which instantly became the iconic fashion symbol of the series.

As a beret is quick and easy to sew, it's an ideal project for an absolute beginner and with minimal fabric required it's the perfect scrap buster too! Sew Over It's The Beret pattern includes two versions of a classic beret (with or without a narrow band at the bottom) but if you'd like the fun little stalk on top of your beret try Le Chic Beret Sewing Pattern from Sewgirl. I can't think of a more fun sew to celebrate the show! What's more, you'll have a chic accessory to add some French flair to your handmade wardrobe.



BRETON STRIPED TOPS

Originally worn by French navy sailors in Brittany, the Breton stripe is a classic French wardrobe staple, thanks in part to Coco Chanel and her love for the simple but striking design. When the designer visited the seaside in 1917, she noticed the striped tops worn as part of the Breton maritime uniform. Inspired by their easy, practical style, she introduced her own version of the marinière. Today it might seem like a simple design, but at the time it was quietly revolutionary. Fashion in the Belle Époque was often restrictive and elaborate, so a garment that prioritised comfort, movement, and practicality felt refreshingly modern. The Breton stripe soon became synonymous with effortless elegance, especially after Chanel herself was photographed wearing the top with trousers in 1930. Since then, The Breton Stripe has become a wardrobe staple for so many of us, including Kate Moss and HRH The Princess of Wales.

Top right **Gathered Shop's Brenton Top and Brittany Tee** Bottom right **Lily Collins in a fuchsia outfit** Bottom middle **Tilly and the Buttons' Coco Top** Bottom left **Christine Haynes' James Tee**

In *Emily in Paris*, Emily wears a three-quarter-sleeve Breton striped top, styled with bold skirts or high-waisted trousers. Again, Emily's look is over styled with bright accessories and jackets compared to the more effortless French styling. Whichever look you prefer, a Breton striped top is a wardrobe workhorse that every sewist needs! I love The Brittany Tee pattern found on the Gathered Shop for its classic silhouette and cuffed sleeves. Alternatively, the James Tee sewing pattern from Christine Haynes is a classic Breton-style knit top with a comfortable boxy fit and a relaxed drop-shoulder design. Tilly and The Buttons' popular sewing pattern *Coco* gives you the option to sew your stripes as a top or dress. Knowing the versatility of a Breton Top, Simply Sewing's The Breton Top pattern was first published in issue 68 and is now available as a digital pattern at gatheredshop.com Fantastique!



CHOOSE YOUR STYLE

Emily's wardrobe is very different from real Parisian fashion culture. As sewists, we can choose to sew our French fashion favourites to embrace either true French classics or Emily's more playful style.

EMILY

- ✓ Choose fabrics in bright pink, red, yellow or loud prints and don't shy away from bold colour mixing
- ✓ Accessorise with a large statement bag and heavy jewellery
- ✓ Don a beret!
- ✓ Be intentionally maximalist and theatrical

TRUE PARISIAN STYLE

- ✓ Choose fabrics in neutral colours such as black, navy, beige, and white and keep bright colours to a minimum
- ✓ Accessorise with minimal jewellery and simple leather bags
- ✓ Prioritise effortless chic



Photo: Marc Plasecki / Contributor via Getty Images

Photo: THOMAS SAMSON / Contributor via Getty Images



THE CLASSIC TRENCH COAT

Although the trench coat's origins are unmistakably British, over time, this resolutely British piece of outerwear crossed the Channel and found a second life in the world of French style. Developed in the early twentieth century for officers in the British Army, the coat was designed with practicality in mind: a waterproof gabardine fabric, a belted waist, and functional details such as rain guards and deep pockets. During the First World War, it became an essential piece of military kit, valued for its ability to keep soldiers dry and protected in the trenches from which it takes its name. In Paris, the trench coat shed its strictly military associations and became something far more elegant. Worn loosely over dresses, paired with sharp tailoring, or simply thrown over the shoulders, it came to embody the effortless, understated chic often associated with French fashion and practical city style. Whilst a classic trench coat is usually beige or neutral, in Emily in Paris, Emily wears bold or colourful versions to give the classic garment a modern twist. She's rocked a pink one, a red one, a rather fabulous gold leather Dolce & Gabbana version

Top right **Atelier Brunette's Trench** Top middle **I AM Pattern's Bob Trench** Top left **Lily Collins in a floor length trench coat** Bottom left **New Look's N6788 Trench Coat**

and the unforgettable pink and brown checked trench (with matching bucket hat no less!) in series 4.

When it comes to sewing a trench coat, there's a wealth of beautiful patterns to choose from. New Look N6788 is a trench coat pattern with similar lines to the aforementioned checked trench with its double-breasted button front closure and belt. Atelier Brunette's Le Trench is a fresh take on the trench with an oversized fit for style and comfort. If you'd prefer a shorter version, the Bob Trench Coat from French brand I AM Patterns is a straight cut with lots of interesting detailing, such as a storm flap finished with a metal D-ring, a hidden button placket and faux button flap.



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