

Get Red Carpet-Ready for New Year's Eve

December 30, 2013 | By [Kristin Luna](#)

Style blogger Cassie McConnell Kelley, the brains and beauty behind [Womanista](#), knows a thing or two about getting all glammed up for a party or other big event. After all, the Nashville resident formerly worked as a music publicist and now is married to Lady Antebellum's Charles Kelley. With New Year's Eve on the docket and awards show season in full swing, 30-year-old Kelley shares her favorite tips to getting red carpet ready from your own home.



Cassie and Charles Kelley at the 2012 CMA Awards.

If you don't have the luxury of hiring a stylist, how can you still pull off a professional look?

The key to looking great, ultimately, is feeling confident. If you know what shapes, colors, and textures work best for your body, then invest in those pieces. You also can't *ever* underestimate the power of a great tailor. When a piece of clothing fits your body perfectly, it doesn't matter how much it costs—it will look great. (I use Stitch-It in Nashville; they are amazing.) From there, you can really show your personality with accessories. Pick one area where you want to make a statement: with a great pair of shoes or show-stopping necklace or bold lipstick.

What's your take on makeup: Is it best to go-bold-or-go-home or keep it simple?

I love a “more is more” look every now and then—and NYE certainly calls for a little extra sparkle! In general, I focus on one “wow” area. For instance, if you want to rock a fuchsia lip, then keep your eye makeup clean and simple. And if you want to play up your eyes with smoky shadow and mega-watt lashes, then keep your lips glossy and neutral. Right now, I love a copper or bronze smoky eye with a golden glow on your skin. My go-to bronzer is [“Park Ave Princess” by Tarte Cosmetics](#); it gives you the perfect sun-kissed look. During the holidays, I also love a berry lip

with a pink, rosy cheek. It feels so festive!



At last month's Victoria's Secret Fashion Show, Kelley went for an edgy look in leather with her signature smoky eye.

You've rocked a whole bunch of different looks at awards shows this past year and seem to always go in with an idea of what you want. Where do you find inspiration?

I look at what some of my style icons have worn on the red carpet recently. I think Rachel McAdams always nails it, and Blake Lively looks modern and youthful, yet sophisticated at every event. Ultimately, though, I really go with how I feel. I typically don't pick out a dress until a few days prior to an event—or even the day before!—and if I want to feel elegant and pretty, or fun and sexy, I will pick my dress, makeup, and hair looks based on that feeling.

What's the best way to pull together a fabulous outfit from your own closet if you don't have the time or funds to go out and buy something new?

Turn to your favorite fashion and style blogs—you will usually find someone wearing pieces that you have in your closet (or at least similar to something you have) but styled in a totally different way. I really love [Happily Grey](#), a Nashville-based fashion blogger who always looks so chic and styles her outfits in a way that I would never think of. I also really love [Polyvore](#). If I have a certain piece of clothing or shoes I want to wear, I search that item on Polyvore and see how other people have styled it. For instance, if you want to wear a gold sequin skirt, you can search for that piece under “sets” and see what outfits people have put together with a gold sequin skirt. It's genius and much like your own personal online stylist!

What's one thing you think is worth splurging for when getting ready for a New Year's bash?

A good blowout is, hands down, my greatest beauty indulgence. It's a necessity for me! But that's mostly because I'm not very good at doing my own hair, but feel pretty confident doing my own makeup. I would say save money on the outfit and re-purpose something from your own closet, then splurge on either hair or makeup to amp up your glam beyond your normal, everyday look.



Lady Antebellum wives Kelli Haywood and Cassie Kelley show off their pulled-together red carpet looks.