



Graphics intensive page - please be patient while images appear on screen...

[[Jump to photo gallery](#)] I have had the good fortune to work with some very lovely models over the years. Many of these girls turned out to be rather good at doing the “vintage thing” too and enjoyed showing how they get the retro shape. This part of the site is here to show how previous models achieved their classic concave waists and vintage hourglass silhouettes.

In days of old, the prevailing wisdom was that young ladies should not just to rely on corsetry to keep their figures under control. Girls were also taught to develop good posture and deportment. So we run regular retro fitness shoots, filming our models as they work to achieve the classic retro shape. During these sessions, our models often work out together and help each other to improve their figures and develop authentic-looking retro poses.



Laura reminds Chiara to “tuck in”

Serious, but not too serious

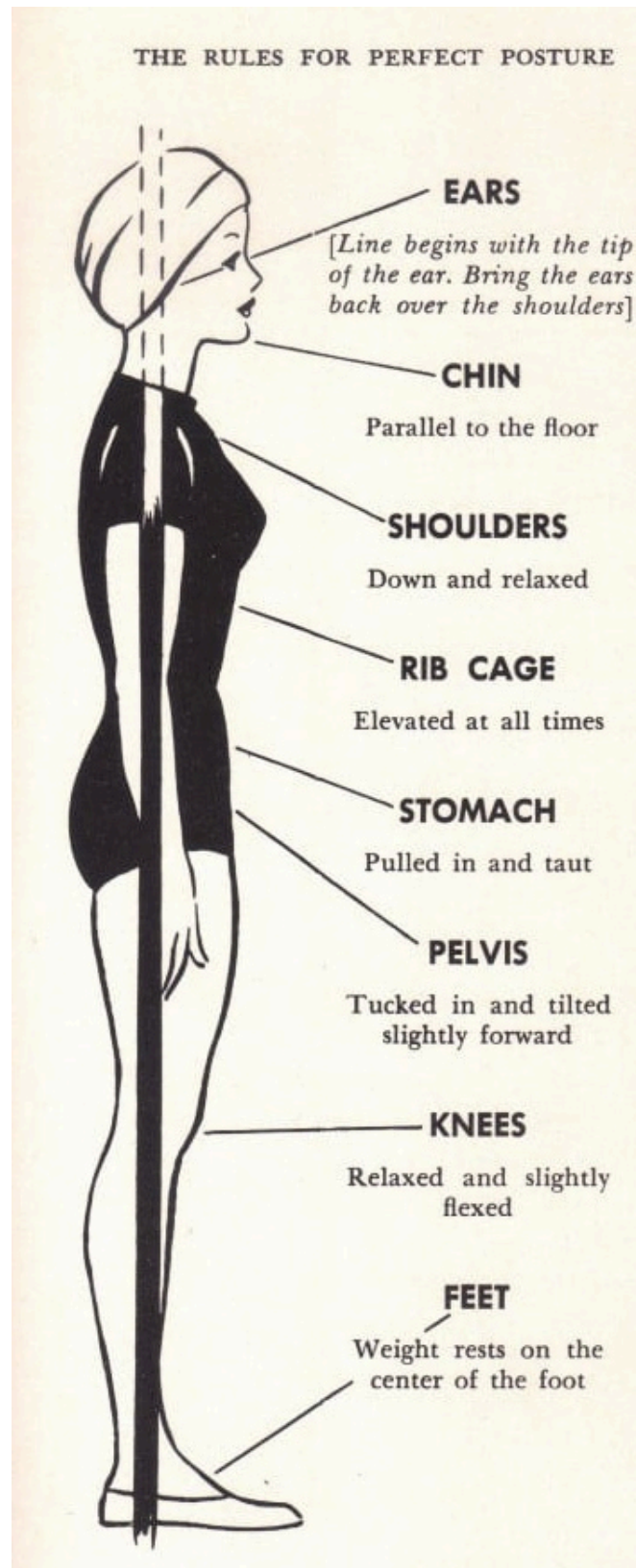
Of course, our approach is a little *“tongue in cheek”* too. Main reason we encourage these old-fashioned methods is because they really **do** make modern girls look better in retro-style photos. This is a fact that Chiara and Laura very convincingly demonstrate in the animation above.



We should just add that Chiara is a very competent retro model with fabulous retro-style posture. She is especially careful of her posture when she is teaching another model because she likes to lead by example. She only *let it all hang out* for this sequence of images, because she wanted to demonstrate three important things about being a good retro model:-

1. A protruding tummy, even a tiny one like Chiara's can completely spoil a girl's figure.
2. Although she was wearing a good quality firm girdle with plenty of tummy-control, it still allowed her tummy to poke out. Therefore, to look really good on film, a girl still needs to use her tummy muscles too!
3. Retro models working together can actually *help each other* to achieve the perfect shape. Even though Laura was effectively Chiara's student during this shoot, Chiara always encourages her students to correct her too. In fact, some of our most interesting shots happen when new models correct and shape their teachers!

Doing retro for the first time





The way young ladies were taught to stand

With first time models, we generally plan a “retro fitness” session as our first set. We ask these girls to try a series of old-fashioned deportment and posture exercises. Fact is that old-fashioned shaping techniques that worked on girls way-back the 40’s 50’s and 60’s can still help modern girls achieve the retro shape today. Interestingly, all sorts of women find these techniques helpful. These include teens, mature models and work especially well for ladies getting back into shape after pregnancy.



Leonie Tidy, getting back into shape after pregnancy, working on her posture, 2015-05-16. We took a series of images just to show how old fashioned techniques work just as well with modern girls. Note how it makes Leonie look taller and slimmer



How it started

I first got the idea from one of my very early models, who wanted to copy the images that her father took back in the 1950s. Sadly she is not on the internet. Then I met a [Filipino girl called Cathy](#) whose mother made her and her sisters do these exercises when they were kids. Then there was Debbie Allanson. She was into the old-fashioned posture thing and I often used to [hire her to teach other models](#) how to do it. Debbie was very good at it to and her “previous models tips” still form the basis of many of the routines we still do today



1998-10-02 Debbie and Taryn's first retro fitness shoot together. Debbie uses corset belt to pull in Taryn's tummy and improve her posture.

Chiara

Then came Chiara Borgonovo. She often used to bring her much younger friends along to



shoots. Even though they were very young and pretty, Chiara always managed to outshine them somehow. We soon concluded this was because Chiara paid great attention to her posture – shoulders back, tummy in etc. etc. So we decided to direct these lasses to do the same – expecting them to complain. However, they loved it! And the difference it made to them was simply amazing and many of them kept coming back for more shoots. Chiara turned out to be a very kind but persuasive teacher.



Candid mirror shot of Chiara (right) taken whilst preparing for a shoot 2004-01-25, correcting her young friend Carlie's posture – teaching her to straighten her back and tuck-in her tummy.

Then there was [Lora and Amy](#). Their grandmother had been a model in the late 1950's/early 1960's. When they were growing up, she was always nagging them to pull back their shoulders, straighten their backs and tuck in their tummies. She made them do exercises to get them in shape some of which are shown below. At the time Lora and Amy thought it was a bit boring, but they humoured her anyway. Now they are models themselves, granny's



teachings all make perfect sense. Sadly their grandmother is dead now. But I think she would be proud of them.



Lora and Amy working through the figure control routines that their grandmother used to teach them.

Two-girl shoots

Sometime girls turn up who take particular delight in controlling their figure with vintage corsetry such as [Vixxen](#) and [Olive Cartley](#), or have that perfect posture, such as classically trained dancers, [Kirsten Ria](#), [Fleur Louise Hunt](#) and [Dayna Leigh](#). And of course bellydancer [Stephy Samer](#) – who has done a number of fabulous shoots with me, including one where she [taught her sister Isabelle](#) how to pose the retro way!

In fact, I particularly enjoy two-girl retro-fitness shoots. Part of the fun of pin-up is when the two models take turns to make each other look good. Other examples include a [wonderful](#)



[fitness shoot](#) with dancer and fitness fanatic Jazmine “Jazz” Wrann and teamed up with one of my all-time favourite models, Laura Toy. And my fitness pinup shoot with mother and daughter [Heydi and ShannonPagee](#)



“Chest up, tummy in!” Mother and daughter, Heydi and Shannon in striped one-shoulder one-piece swimsuits during their retro fitness session in my studio, 2015-11-21

We have worked many, many more models, who really enjoyed the whole retro-fitness department thing. Of course we don't take it too seriously - this is pinup after all! But we know that a little attention to posture and deportment makes a massive difference to the way models look. Indeed, photographing the *figure-shaping process* can be as interesting as the end results. This process often means lots of time in front of the mirrors, straightening and stretching spines, pulling back rounded shoulders, coupled with plenty of tummy-toning and deportment-improving exercises. We even do the old fashioned *walking with books balanced on heads* routine - often in ludicrously high heels, and tightly belted waists - just



to make it a bit more interesting! As Chiara always says, *"even really skinny girls must learn to stand tall and tuck in their tummies, especially when they're being filmed!"*

Anyway, they say a picture says a thousand words. Well here's a large bundle of random snaps of these lasses working on their figures, the old-fashioned vintage pinup way. As Chiara, a model we have worked with since 2001, often says, *"Shoulders back, tummy in - and make it all look natural, and easy..."*

• Getting the retro shape – in pictures

Old fashioned but it works

Here at *waist.it*, we're never sure which is more interesting capture on camera:-

- A seasoned corset-wearing professional such as Chiara effortlessly posing with perfect form and posture?
- An inexperienced, slightly-awkward new model, taught to stand tall, pull in her stomach and move gracefully – or wriggle into some unyieldingly figure-forming shapewear – perhaps for the first time in her life?

Needless to say, we really love working with both types, and all in between! And we love mixing new models with very experienced ones. Regardless of experience, this retro *figure-shaping process* often produces some delightful and amusing imagery – both posed and candid. And all the models have a lot of fun in the process. In fact we often have to pause the shoot because everyone *gets the giggles!*

- To find out more about modelling for **waist.it** please study our [Modelling FAQ](#).
 - You might also be interested in why we think the [old fashioned way to look good is better and safer](#) than certain dangerous modern alternatives.
-



Getting the retro shape

[Home](#) [About](#) [<->](#) [Getting the retro shape - in pictures](#)

Related Images: