

# Looking Sharp, Cleveland

Esquire says he's one of the best-dressed men in America ... and he's from Cleveland. Take that, New York! Kevin Piunno offers a four-point plan every man can use to look his best.

**T**he best-dressed man in Cleveland — and possibly the country — is no namby-pamby pretty boy. He's a man's man, as comfortable swilling a brew at the local bar as he is talking couture. When he flew to Miami to audition for *Esquire's* "Best Dressed Man" contest, Kevin Piunno had no expectations besides getting a good tan and enjoying Florida. A stroll down the catwalk later, he's made the top five in the nation.

Piunno, 43, a managing partner with Midwest Real Estate, is a golfer, gardener and divorced father of two. The closet of his Aurora home is filled with 25 Italian suits, tons of ties and a raging shoe collection.

Piunno says he only shops for clothing a couple times a year, but when he does, he goes all out. Adesso, an *haute* men's store in Rocky River, helps him create his look. Calling his personal style "Carey Grant 2006," he favors classic pieces with modern flair. He embraces some trends to stay current, but avoids being tragically trendy by not buying into every fad. Piunno also buys shirts, ties and belts specifically to go with each suit he brings home.

"It's easy to throw on a white shirt, but I want the whole ensemble, and I want it done professionally," he says. "It makes a



Kevin Piunno of Aurora takes his turn in the spotlight this month as one of the nation's best-dressed men.

difference. It makes you feel better, increases your confidence."

This confidence, which Piunno has in every color, has already taken Cleveland's best-dressed man to New York for a photo shoot that put him in the pages of the September *Esquire* and will earn him an ap-

pearance on NBC's "The Today Show" this month.

"I think I've got a fairly good shot [at being named Best Dressed], knock on wood, but you never know!" Piunno says. "I'm honored just to be in the final five."

— Tori Woods

We asked Piunno for advice any Cleveland guy can follow to become his own best-dressed self.

## 1 Invest in classics.

If you take care of quality pieces, Piunno says they'll last and seldom fall out of style. He has suits that are 10 years old and a pair of Cole Haan shoes that are 13 years old. They've been resoled, and still look and feel great.

## 2 Quality suits are sewn together, not fused (read: glued).

"You can tell the difference the first time you dry-clean your suit. The seams start to pull apart."

## 3 Work within your budget.

If you're on a budget, look for quality suits at discount stores such as T.J. Maxx and Marshalls, then take the suit to a store like Adesso to get ties and shirts that match. Piunno says he did this during the early years of his career.

## 4 Dress up.

"So many people dress casually that you differentiate yourself by dressing up, and feel better about yourself."

## Fashion Emergencies

What fashion don'ts drive the "Best Dressed Man in Cleveland" nuts?

- 1. Unshined shoes:** Piunno suggests visiting the shoeshine guy or doing it yourself. "It makes your shoes look awesome, and makes you look professional."
- 2. Jeans or shorts in a nice restaurant:** Piunno says it's a nationwide issue, but Clevelanders can take a stand against this "irksome" problem.
- 3. Socks and sandals:** "It's weird. I never understood that."
- 4. Neckwear no-no's:** Piunno says you're better off not wearing a tie than wearing one that's obviously ancient, rumpled or fingerprint stained. "Just buy a new tie. And make sure it doesn't hang to your knees. It should go to your belt."

