

# Sharon Carpenter

The TV and quiz app presenter likes to play the game in edgy style and designer heels

Words by Laura Mulley

Sharon, 36, hosts live quiz app HQ Trivia in which players answer questions to win a share of the prize money. She is a familiar face on American TV, presenting on the *The Wendy Williams Show* and *Entertainment Tonight*, and regularly covers red-carpet events for BBC America. She has also appeared in the TV drama *Empire*. Born in England, she now lives in New York.

**How would you describe your style?** Off camera it's a little edgier than what you see on-screen and a lot more relaxed. I love to wear a nice pair of jeans, a T-shirt and flats, but I also have some real statement, fashion-forward pieces in my wardrobe.

**Which colours and shapes suit you best?** I used to wear a lot of black, white and neutrals but working on HQ Trivia has made me much bolder and I've realised I can pull off bright colours. I love salmon, coral, mustard and cobalt blue. Waistlines are important for me, especially on camera, where simple, fitted looks work better. I don't wear trousers often, as I struggle to find ones that fit well, but I'm really into pencil skirts.

**Which is your favourite fashion era?** The 1920s, which had a real edge to it – the whole flapper look is gorgeous – and the 60s, which was a great era for bold, feminine, empowered style.

**Who is your style icon?** Rihanna can do no wrong when it comes to fashion. I love that she's always taking risks. I also love the Duchess of Cambridge's buttoned-up, very British style – and I get inspiration from Kim Kardashian.

**Why do you think HQ Trivia has become so popular?** First of all, people love to challenge themselves and each other. Even though we're part of this "in your phone" generation now, the game is actually bringing people together. People are playing in teams, with friends, family or colleagues. People also like the live element, where anything can happen. And it does.

**If you were playing, how far do you think you'd get?** On average I get to question 11 before, though. I know it's tricky, which is why playing with friends is a good way to increase your chances of winning.

**What do you wear for hosting the show?** There are lots of things to consider. With HQ Trivia, the camera framing is tight, so fit on the torso is very important. I like outfits that make a statement, even if it's just a great fit or a good colour or, for example, I'll add earrings to the collar of a dress for a bit of detail. HQ Trivia's colours are very bright as it's a fun game and you can't wear too much of a pattern, but I like to push the boundaries of what "camera ready" is.

**Do you own more high street or high end?** I have a mix. As long as the fit and the fabric are right, I don't care if something costs £300 or £30 and I'll happily wear a Boohoo dress with a pair of Saint Laurent heels. I do spend a lot of money on shoes, though. They're my guilty pleasure. I find designer shoes are more comfortable, especially when I have to spend hours in heels for work.



Sharon shows off her unique style in this Nina Tiari crop top and skirt she teams with a pair of purple Gianvito Rossi heels



Clockwise, from left: Sharon's off-the-shoulder sequin and feather number is a Nina Tiari design. Her shoes are Prada

Wild Palms sweatshirt, HQ Trivia socks, Joe's shorts and Nike trainers

Her handbags are by Kurt Geiger, Untold and Chanel

A jacket from her own Ego Soleil collection

Sharon always goes for simple sparkly jewellery

Her Diane von Furstenberg dress

"Shoes are my guilty pleasure," she says of her Louboutin heels, Carvela by Kurt Geiger peep toes and Gianvito Rossi courts

Sharon's colourful Nina Tiari trousers

**How do you think American style differs from British?** Everything is so globalised now that I don't really notice much difference. But I think women in the UK put a lot more time and effort into getting ready to go out. New York has more of an effortless, chic style.

**Which are your favourite high-street stores?** I like brands with a European flair, which can sometimes be hard to find in the US. I love Karen Millen, Reiss and Ted Baker. Maje and Sandro are also totally my style.

**Who are your favourite designers?** Dolce & Gabbana is one of my favourites because the clothes fit me perfectly. That's where I'll go if I want a really special dress. I also know a lot of independent designers from working on red carpets, like Nina Tiari, Mimi Tran and Zuhair Murad.

**Do you own anything vintage?** No, although I do have a little lace top that looks Victorian. I like vintage style but I admire it from afar.

**Are you a hoarder or do you clear out your wardrobe regularly?** I'm terrible at doing clear-outs. I never do that thing of putting clothes away for the season. I've got three wardrobes and two chests of drawers at home and I've still got clothes piling up.

**What is the most expensive item in your wardrobe?** My Chanel handbag, which was about £2,000, followed by a pair of fluorescent coral Christian Louboutin heels. I think that says a lot about my style – half is classic and the other half statement, bold pieces that catch people's eyes.

**How many shoes and handbags do you own?** Probably about 150 pairs of shoes, including heels, boots and flats. Manolo Blahniks are my go-tos. They're great quality shoes. I don't have as many handbags – maybe about 50. So many handbags look great but are just too small.

**What is your best beauty secret?** Mascara is a girl's best friend and the high-street chemists have some of the best. Just wear mascara with a bright lip and you'll look put together.

**What is the best piece of fashion advice you have ever been given?** "Just try it on, Sharon." Sometimes the hanger doesn't do the clothes justice, so take the time to try it on to see if it works. 📌

Download HQ Trivia through app stores.