

# DEAR JILL

## Short people got no reason to model?

**Dear Jill,**

I want to be a model, but I'm only 5'5". Do I have a chance?

—**Stubby, Phoenix, AZ**

**Dear Stubby,**

While designer doors are inching open to a widening range of looks, shapes, and sizes, most models still hover over 5'8", with 5'10" being about the norm. Lots of short stuff strutted down the runways this season, though, with stilettos—not genetics—helping them hit the 5'10" mark. The six-foot+ supermodels have been at home in their mansions for a few seasons, sitting pretty with their millions from the last millennium.

But...5'5"? Well, Kate isn't much over that and she had all those giants to contend with a decade ago. Her odds of attaching a "super" to her "model" were slim to none. Your odds of making the leap to the top of that lanky ladder are slim to...microscopic. Are you yourself slim, by the way? Slenderness can create the illusion of height, as can high heels of course, so get used to them, honey.

Also, remember that fashion modeling isn't the only way into this wacky world of glitz and glamour. Commercials frequently call for attractive folks who needn't have giraffe-like proportions. Likewise, commercial agents don't slam the door on anyone

who doesn't hit the 70-inch notch on the wall. They rep all kinds, from septagenarians who can sell Geritol to toddlers who can tout popsicles—"real people," they're called. And these real people get to go to castings and audition on camera. Sometimes they must read or memorize some copy ("sides"). Sometimes they just "slate" their names and agencies. Often they are asked to show their profiles, and

maybe their hands, or maybe a smile. Some casting directors may request that they "play to the camera"—pretend it's another person, emote, flirt, etc. Sometimes the commercial calls for someone who can squeeze a zit just so (the lucky "pick," so to speak) or feign a flu-sufferer with phlegm-full misery. Like I said, it's a wacky world (the glitz and glamour part was a bit embellished).

Patience and persistence will carry you much further on these castings than long legs—and breaking a leg is actually a good thing and has nothing to do with twisting your ankle in those five-inch stilettos and falling off the runway. Also, if you book a national commercial, you can just sit back on your couch and watch those royalties rack up. Then, after you move on to movies and become a celebrity, you can be a model again. It's the age of cross-over, kid, go for it!

—**Jill**

