

HERE COMES THE SUN



The hot summer months can stretch even the most flexible budget – after all we need a cool work wardrobe as well as those holiday essentials. You needn't break the bank though, says **Katie Greengrass**, as some pieces can look as good at the photocopier as by the pool

LIKE CRICKET, BARBECUES AND inclement weather, the maxi dress makes an appearance every summer in some shape or form, but this year the style is synonymous with luxury. Gone is the boho chic of summers past; this year the focus is on sumptuous colours and fabrics. A maxi dress will ooze style in the office – team a cute linen jacket with a maxi dress and heels or with a cardigan and flats. Don't be afraid to team a maxi dress with flat shoes either – a pair of jewelled thong sandals or gladiator flats can look perfectly professional, as long as your toenails are buffed and painted to perfection. The beauty of the maxi dress is that it really can be worn anywhere, with smart sandals and a blazer at work or bare feet and a fresh face on the beach.

SCARVES ALL ROUND

The headscarf has long been the accessory of choice for the chic working woman. In the sixties it was worn with a Parisian twist and knotted delicately around the neck, whereas in the seventies it was left long and skinty. But in the noughties it can be worn every which way.

The scarf is the most versatile item in your wardrobe and can be worn to work, play or even poolside. If you opt for a handkerchief-shaped scarf, then wear it around your neck, at

Bangles, £8 each, *Mellis*Printed scarf, £65, *Radley*

work. Alternatively, tie it neatly around the strap of your beach bag to add a splash of style to your holiday wardrobe. If you're keener on a skinty scarf, then wear it loosely draped around the neck. Kate Moss style in the boardroom and around your head, seventies style, on the beach. Whether cheap and cheerful or high-end luxury, you can keep hold of a scarf for seasons to come as you never know when it might add a little something to your overall look.

You'd have to be blind not to have noticed this summer's craze for big jewellery. Most designers have used bangle stacks or voluminous necklaces to jazz up their spring/summer catwalk collections and this has now translated on to the high street in a big way. Invest in a chunky, beaded necklace or a set of big bangles for work – a bangle stack, although fairly irritating to wear, will look achingly on-trend teamed with a summer suit. A necklace on the other hand will instantly update an old outfit. These items can also form the staple of your beach wear as last season's bikini coupled with a long, beaded necklace will give you supermodel credentials poolside and a set of bangles will go nicely with a long, flowing dress as the sun goes down.

HATS OFF TO THE TRILBY

Hats are not a normal office accessory but can look spot on if they suit your style. The trilby is a great unisex model and in a relaxed, more

creative office environment it can give your outfit a fashionable edge. The most popular headgear this summer is the St Tropez-style floppy hat, which looks amazing on the beach but would look more than odd with a suit. Instead, opt for a small structured hat at work and remember to pack it in your holiday case too – it will keep the sun off your face.

Many of us favour heels at work as they can feel more powerful and confident. However, they are not the most comfortable of office wear. If you are taking the plunge, though, then the summer wedge is by far the best option. A wedge with a wooden or raffia heel is very much in this season and if you're feeling experimental, you could even try a patterned model. Designer Lulu Guinness is renowned for her fresh summer prints on shoes and bags or on the high street try shopping in Faith – their wedges are fun and colourful. A wedge also works fantastically on the beach as it lengthens the leg and smooths out that dreaded orange peel skin.

From bottle blue to acid yellow and even pink, the world's menswear designers just couldn't keep away from bright colours this season. Unfortunately, they are tricky to pull off in the office but if you stick to the 'less is more' rule then colour can freshen up your summer working wardrobe no end. Layer a bright tank top under a pale grey suit, for example, and your whole look will get a lift. Esprit and Lacoste have

some fantastic lightweight knits in store for spring/summer and these can be slung in the suitcase and worn with cropped trousers on a city break.

Alternatively, you can invest in a brightly coloured watch. Swatch have some high-tech models in orange and yellow starting at £50. A bright timepiece will jazz up your office look and can be worn poolside for a splash of futuristic chic.

MAC ATTACK

The man mac has had a bad press in the past but it's back in the fashion forefront this season as many designers such as Calvin Klein have chosen to reinvent it for 2008. Sling your mac (big buttons and crew neck) over a shirt and linen trousers for work or pair it with your suit when the weather's bad. The mac doubles up as a fantastic holiday evening jacket too. When the sun goes down and there's a slight chill over the beach, layer your mac over an open cotton shirt and rolled up jeans.

Men tend to travel lighter than women on holiday but in the office it always seems to be the men who struggle with bulging briefcases. Invest in an all-in-one bag as an alternative and it will double as a weekend bag for those trips abroad. A soft leather holdall with detachable straps is the ideal investment piece as it's fashionable and practical. If you're on a budget, then try Primark for cheap canvas carry bags or shop at Brics for quality. ■

ESSENTIAL SUMMER WEAR



The Mac Calvin Klein

Yellow tank top, £24.95, *Esprit*Tan leather holdall, £495, *Brics at Selfridges*

STOCKISTS

Brics
At Selfridges 0203 123 490
www.selfridges.com
Calvin Klein
www.calvinklein.com
Esprit
www.esprit.co.uk
Faith
0200 389 2799 ext
www.faith.co.uk
Lulu Guinness
020796 9905
www.luluguinness.com
Primark
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02 380 668 870
www.swatch.com

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PREPARE FOR SUMMER

Here's our tried and tested guide to the top beauty buys of the summer. Start your day-to-day regime at work and then later in the summer you can hit the beach feeling confident and looking good.

- Flash body Bronzer, £20, Lancôme at John Lewis, www.johnlewis.com
- Touch of Sun Daily UV Facial Moisturiser, £7.49, Olay, www. olay.co.uk
- Creaseless Crème Eyeshadow, £13, Benefit, www.benefitcosmetics.co.uk
- Pure Colour Ultra Light Gloss, £14,

- Estée Lauder at John Lewis, www.johnlewis.com
- Bronzing Duo, £25, Laura Mercier, www.spacenic.co.uk
- Le Vernis nail colour, £14.50, Chanel, www.chanel.co.uk
- Masterpiece Beyond Length mascara, £8.49, Max Factor, www.maxfactor.co.uk

Left: Flash body Bronzer, Lancôme
Below: Creaseless Crème Eyeshadow, Benefit