

Dress professionally in summer

How to take off layers without peeling away your credibility. Story by Elena Reed.

● There is no excuse for dressing badly or not minding your manners when the weather heats up. Is your image supporting or hindering your career aspirations? Being dressed for success doesn't happen by itself – you've got to plan for it, budget for it and shop for it! Ensure you create the right 'personal brand' with our summer survival guide.

Choose the right fabrics

Your comfort level will be determined by the fabric your garment is made of. When it comes to staying cool, natural fibres are your best bet. They let your body breathe. Fine wool is great for your formal business occasions. Cotton is perfect for a more relaxed yet credible look. Linen is good for its 'rumpled feel' and is a stylish solution for a smart casual day.

Opt for light colours

Black may be easy but it's also incredibly hot. Dark colours absorb light and make you feel the temperature more. Light colours also give you that summery, approachable

look. Have you thought of trading your staple charcoal for a cool light grey? Or swapping heavy chocolate for less traditional camel or rose beige? Wear one colour from head to toe and you'll create your slimmest and tallest look.

Go for the layers

It's the best trick ever created by fashion gods. Layering is simply wearing one clothing item on top of another so you can move from air-conditioning to heat and back with ease and confidence. Instead of the obvious, think outside the box. Why not to try a sports jacket and t-shirt combo for gentlemen? Or a cotton cardigan and a smart shirt for ladies?

Beware! What ever you have underneath needs to be business-right. Not too tight, not too loose and definitely not sleeveless!

Check your legs

No-one wants to see your toes, bare legs or hairy ankles. Thus sandals, flip-flops, short socks, no pantyhose and alike are a no-go zone for business. When it's super hot outside buy the best leather shoes you can afford. They are natural, breathable and they won't trap sweat. Guys, woven leather loafers with fine cotton socks will keep you in top shape. Girls, soft leather braided wedges with extra sheer pantyhose will make the right statement.

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Summer must-haves for men

Worsted wool jacket. Make it two if you wear it often. Buy in your best neutral colours.

Linen Blazer. It will last you years. Looks great with a t-shirt.

Cotton Cardigan. Blue or camel. Have a smart shirt underneath.

Long-sleeve business shirts. Have a variety of colours and styles. Tip: No jacket = no tie.

Polo shirts. Short sleeved business shirt? It doesn't exist. Smart polo does.

Suit pants. They'll take you everywhere. No pleats allowed and no cuffs!

Chinos. Best invention for summer. Works with everything and better than khakis.

Cotton socks and great shoes. Socks can be lighter but not darker than your shoes.

Summer must-haves for women

Light fabric suit. Hang pieces separately. Mix and match to expand your options.

Short sleeved jacket. Safari style is the best. It looks good belted and works with skirts.

Cool cardigan. Plain looks boring. Add current accessories and you'll turn heads.

Summer shirts. Have an array of designs. Just don't do sheer. Short or long sleeve.

Smart tops. Think colour, print and detail. Create some interest for a boring suit.

Skirts and dresses. Knee length is your best choice even if you own Megan Gale's legs!

Classic Pants. They should be darker than your top or your top brighter than your pants.

Tailored shorts to the knee. Girls' best friends. Just add pumps and a good shirt.

Summer business etiquette

It's professional to make the other person feel comfortable. The etiquette of good business is about being YOU focused and not ME focused. Wipe off these sticky issues with simple solutions.

My hands get sweaty... **Keep a tissue in your pocket. Wipe your hands discretely inside before shaking hands.**

I have underarm stains... **Disposable clothes protectors are available from most chemists. Stick them on your shirts and you'll prevent sweat from showing ever again.**

I am worried about bead breath... **Have some mints in your pocket. Visit the dentist regularly for professional cleaning.**



When running late, I arrive looking hot and flustered... **Keep blotting paper and a little mirror in your bag. Wipe your face before you walk in.**