



## Dressing for spring & summer

### Description

With spring approaching any man who wishes to wear a new light-coloured suit this summer needs to get on and place an order. The character of such suits is heavily dependent on the fabric specified, from the dry hand of linen to the fuzz of flannel and the slight sheen of cotton. The first makes sense for something like a Mediterranean wedding, where comfort takes precedence. There are few places the second makes sense because it's so warm, but it looks amazing in an old-fashioned way, and the third makes sense in town where even pale suits need to look snappy. When choosing a colour remember that the paler the fabric the more frequently the suit will need to be dry cleaned.

Once the suit has been made, the hardest thing about putting together an outfit is choosing the right shoes. It's tempting to go for light-coloured shoes but I believe that you need to commit either to ivory-coloured suede oxfords (or spectators if you're happy to make a statement), or brown leather or suede shoes. The half-way house of wearing tan-coloured leather shoes doesn't look right, at least to my eyes. Brown leather or suede loafers are another option, and if you're ever going to go sockless this is the outfit with which to do it. However, be aware that in very hot temperatures damp feet will rub painfully inside leather shoes if you have to walk any distance. To avoid this true aficionados should track down linen socks (good luck, as they're few and far between), but fine cotton socks will work perfectly well.

Irish linen is the only material you should consider for shirts in the heat, when suddenly the idea of wearing oxford cloth becomes unbearable, and poplin's general failure to let the body breathe through its tight weave becomes uncomfortably evident. If you're concerned about sweat marks stick to white shirts. Ties are also an important element in a summer outfit, which is surprising given that they don't touch the skin. While cotton ties are available they crease rather easily – it's better to go for ties made from crunchy cri de soie knitted silk, or slubby, matte shantung silk.

The final accessory, to complete the look, is a panama hat. These obviously keep the sun off a man's head, but they can also be employed as rather efficient fans if the mercury's really soaring. Now, anyone for a cold Pimms.

### Category

1. Spring/Summer

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