



Spring Jackets

The investment worth its bounce, says our Fashion Stylist, Kirstie Smillie

WHEN I work with a client, the most common items missing are a good selection of jackets. The problem arises when we find a great outfit... a super top, sleek trousers, belt and shoes – perfect. Then the question is what to wear on top, and no, not the dog walking jacket!

So if you are pondering a purchase this month, think of the final top layer. I am talking about a jacket for reasonable weather, not a rainy day that needs classic practicality (always check the forecast), but a choice of jackets in various lengths, colours and moods. Think about a day look, for popping into

town, a smart suit layer for meetings at work or school and an evening layer to go to a restaurant. These are timeless items so avoid over designed features like epaulets and odd hem lines.

Here are a few easy styles to look out for, with similar found in our local boutiques, dress agencies or in charity shops, the choice is yours. Jackets by their importance, are pricier items, but this doesn't mean you have to spend top whack if you don't want to. My own leather jacket, which I love, was found in a charity shop in Lyme Regis for £20!



Some little points to remember after you have bought your jacket

Remove holding top-stitches

Have you ever wondered about the tacking X stitch in the back split of a coat and longer jacket? It is definitely meant to be removed before wearing and only there to hold the split together and avoid wrinkles during transport.

Pockets sewn up

Most tailored jackets and coats will be sold with the fully functioning pockets sewn up. Why? Well it's really to keep the shape of the jacket front, and sometimes you can choose to leave it that way, but if you do open up by carefully unpicking the stitches, try not to overload your pockets as they will droop and spoil the look.

Remove labels

This happens mainly with men's tailoring, a brand label tacked on the jacket cuff that needs to be carefully snipped and removed. It was put there during manufacture and a sign of a well cut suit. This has to come off.



Images from GQ

Clockwise, from above left,

Cropped and neat

Monochrome cropped jacket
Warehouse, £59

A classic worn over a tailored dress or funky t-shirt and jeans.

Loose, cardigan style

Mint Velvet boyfriend coat, £189

A stylish throw on over weekend

jeans to an instant up grade.

Casual blazer

Oasis navy textured over sized
blazer, £50

Over jeans or skirt, sleeves up for relaxed smartpants look.

Leather...the big one!

Choose simple styling, less is more with zips and studs. This one will never date and great as an evening jacket and cute over floral dresses too, Reiss, £325



Now add some colour into your wardrobe

Over the last few years, colour began to appear more obviously on the high street and whilst the catwalks are heading back to neutrals, this spring is your chance to shine. A strong colour can be a trickier buy, as it can't be worn with everything and sometimes you will have to take a deep breath as you walk in a sea of black and charcoal, but you will definitely cheer yourself and others up. Go rainbow!



“The purest and most thoughtful minds are those which love colour the most” John Ruskin



RED: A bold colour for tailoring, perfect for a special occasion or as separates over neutral, French Connection, £145; **ORANGE:** A killer colour in the form of a coatigan (half coat, half cardigan!) French Connection, £140; **YELLOW:** Bold citrus waterproof by Joules, £81.75 - I'm reminded of my UK camping trips!; **GREEN:** A light weight layer great with jeans or any neutral shade, Monsoon, £120; **BLUE:** A Trench coat, a fabulous colour over dark suiting, Hobbs Petite, £199; **INDIGO:** A great denim shade of choice, worn to balance the power of colour or amazing with neutrals, Oasis, £45; **VIOLET:** Tailored double faced (which means the same fabric is fused inside and out) wool blend jacket, in Candy Violet, Jigsaw, £275. All of these clothes are available to order from the John Lewis site, www.johnlewis.com, or visit your local Waitrose store to order and receive by person.

JOIN ME - There's No Planet B

My passion is to help re organise wardrobes to offer easy, stylish outfits but with a sustainable edge. Ideally we should all focus on buying less but better and looking after the clothes we own. Join me at Two Ducks, a gorgeous independent store in St.Johns, Woking, for #TheresNoPlanetB, an evening of inspiring talks, and local goodies. Owner, Clare Leigh will be talking alongside Anna Jones from WWF and Marie Ovenden, founder of local group Sustainable(ish) and Mel Hemmings from Bare + Fair and myself, discussing Guilt Free Wardrobes.

Thursday 19th March 2020 at 7pm - Tickets at £5.80 are available from www.eventbrite.co.uk

Two Ducks, 5 St Johns Road, Woking GU21 7SE Tel: 01483 385827 selling unique gifts, fashion and homewares, on a mission to become a more eco-friendly business.

If you would like to chat about how we can work together visit my website www.kirstiesmillie.com or email me, kirstie@kirstiesmillie.com