



Cool and Covered:

Six Ways to Beat the Heat This Summer—Without Baring It All

It's hot outside! But that doesn't mean you have to spend your days in short-shorts and barely-there bikinis (whew!). If you're looking to beat the heat this summer without putting your "problem areas" on blast, read on for six summer styles that will keep you cool and covered this season.

By Marla Tomazin

With summer in full swing, the temperature isn't the only thing rising outside. Hemlines, pants-lengths, and sleeves are rolling up—and comfort levels for women everywhere are taking a nosedive. If you dread the return to bathing suit season most of all, you're not alone. Summer styles often mean exposing those "problem areas" that most women work hard to minimize throughout the year—and making the choice between beating the heat and baring it all can lead to scores of women sweating it out all summer long. But you don't have to sacrifice breezy beach days in order to keep yourself covered and comfortable.

I have found that a lot of women think that summer style is synonymous with showing skin, and that doesn't have to be the case. There are plenty of ways that you can embrace summer style without feeling exposed—in fact, there are a lot of temperature-friendly looks that can accentuate your best features, while minimizing the areas you are uncomfortable with.

If you want to stay covered without being chained to your air conditioning, read on for six styles that will take you through the summer months and beyond.

Cool off with column dressing. This summer, if you're hoping to stay covered up—without burning up—consider color when it comes to the clothes you wear. While it's a known fact that an all-black ensemble is slimming and classic, an all-white look can have the same effect—without attracting the heat! Wearing a white "column" is a great way to stay cool while keeping yourself covered on warm days. For instance, pair a white t-shirt or tank top with a white bottom like a pant, short, or skirt. Or, if you want to keep your arms covered, consider pairing a sheer blouse (in lieu of a jacket) on top. If you still want to wear a jacket, choose a light and breathable fabric like cotton or linen and pair it with a cool tank. You'll look hot while staying cool all the way through Labor Day.

Take stock of your (bathing) suits. Before you hit the beach this year, it's a good idea to set aside some time to ponder your pool-wear. Women often lose track of their current figure and age and continue to wear the bathing suits they looked great in many years ago. As each new summer season rolls around, take stock of your suits. Make sure that you choose a bathing suit that is appropriate for your current age and body type that covers up the areas you want to hide. You will look sexier and feel more comfortable. Remember, when it comes to bathing suits, less is not always more!

Keep it classy with a cover-up. Sometimes even the sleekest of swimsuits can still be too revealing. Slipping on a cover-up for lounging poolside or attending a beach BBQ is a must! Try a scarf wrap to accentuate the hips and legs. For a larger waist, consider a dress or long skirt that hangs loosely and falls to a flattering part of your leg.

Work with your waistline. If you want to hide your hips and thighs, but don't want to sweat out the summer months in long pants, wearing an A-line skirt and a top that tucks in or is belted, is just the trick. This will draw the eye upward and accentuate a smaller waist. If a larger waistline is your problem area, choose a skirt or pant that is slim through the thigh and wear a blouse or t-shirt over the top, as tucking it in will only accentuate the size of your waist. The breezy looseness of the top will provide cooling comfort while keeping you stylish and svelte.

Say "so long" to short-shorts. Thankfully, we've come a long way from the time of Daisy Dukes, and summer fashion is full of options that offer more coverage while remaining stylish. Consider your options beyond shorts and pants this season. If you are uncomfortable wearing shorts, choose crop pants or long, Bermuda-style shorts. These options will give you confidence and a cool style all season long.

Go sleeveless with a summer shrug. You don't have to go sleeveless to stay cool in the summer—which is welcome news for most women who feel that their arms are a big problem area. Wearing a sheer, lace or knit bolero will give you great coverage without making you too warm. It's also great for keeping you comfortable on cool summer nights and around ocean breezes.

When you dress this summer, consider how an outfit makes you feel. If you feel comfortable, it will reflect in your attitude and how you carry yourself. And if you feel exposed or uncomfortable, then it's a good indicator that what you're wearing may not be right for you. Trust your own instincts and the intuition of your inner-stylist and you'll stay cool and confident all summer long.

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About Marla Tomazin:

Marla Tomazin, Certified Image Consultant, established her image consulting business in 1990 with the goal of helping clients identify an authentic image and develop its effective expression.

Through her successful career in the fashion and retail industries, Marla has gained invaluable expertise in retail buying, merchandising, sales, and marketing. She began with May Company in Denver after earning a B.S. in Marketing from the University of Denver. Marla moved to New York where she worked with several well-known Seventh Avenue design firms. As she developed her business skills, Marla made a serendipitous discovery—an innate sense of style and facility for working with fabrics and colors to maximum advantage.

The progression to Certified Image Consultant was a natural transition. Marla utilizes her abilities in evaluating body shape, movement, and coloring as well as synthesizing optimal cuts, lines, colors, and textures. This results in balance and proportion that accentuate attributes and conceal flaws. Her clients include women, men, and corporations seeking external revitalization that mirrors their internal development.

She has lectured at The Learning Annex on "How to Become an Image Consultant" and at The American Women's Economic Development Corporation on "What Does Your Image Say About You?"

For more information, please visit www.marlatomazin.com.