

How To Dress Sharp In The Heat

# **WITHOUT** BURNING UP

Presented by **Real Men Real Style**



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So have fun and learn to dress sharp!

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## Chapter 1: Summer Clothing For Men

### Summer Fit

You can go ahead and relax your fit a little in the summer.

It's a good way to keep air flowing through, and to put some space between your clothes and your sweat.

That said, keep the looseness under control. A half-inch of space between a shirt and your torso is plenty.

Even less than that would be fine. You don't want to look like a ship at sail whenever the wind blows.

To stay trim-looking while wearing a looser fit, make sure the clothes are snug at the "hang" points where the clothing sits on the body: the shoulders for shirts and the waist/tops of the hips for trousers.

If you've got a well-fitted shirt that sits nicely on your shoulders, with the seams straight across the top and ending where your arm meets your body, any looseness in the body of the shirt will hang straight and clean.



Ditto the trousers: if they sit comfortably at the natural waist without needing a belt cinched tight around them, the legs will look neat even when they have a little extra room.

With a good fit in those key places, you can have your tailor leave a little extra room in the sleeves and waist of your shirt, and the legs of your trousers, and still look neatly-pressed while staying cool.

## Summer Fabrics

In hot weather, you want the lightest, most breathable fabrics you can find.

Keep in mind that the weave and thread weight is just as important as the material.

It's easy to think of wool as being inherently hotter than cotton, because so many wool garments are stout winter clothes, but the truth is that a loosely-woven wool in tropical weights will be much cooler than a heavy cotton twill.

Here are a few of the ideal summer fabric options out there:

### Linen

The go-to for true summer suits, linen is light, breezy, and comfortable. It doesn't hang as smoothly as wool, however, and wrinkles very easily. Wear linen shirts, trousers, or suits when formality isn't at a premium and you know you're going to be outside in the heat a fair amount.

### Tropical Wool

Made from fine, tightly-coiled yarns that leave a lot of tiny gaps for airflow, tropical wool is a very different beast from the three-season wools used in traditional men's suits. If you can afford it, tropical wool is your best bet for summer business attire.

### Seersucker

A distinctively dimpled cotton weave, seersucker is breezy but has enough weight to drape nicely, making it an attractive and comfortable summer option. It's generally a business-casual option or even less formal, but in the southern United States there's a traditional culture of wearing seersucker suits as daytime business attire as well.

### Rayon

Don't let the widespread bias against "synthetics" blind you to cellulose fibers like rayon and its more recent, higher-tech cousins modal and lyocell. These are non-petroleum-based fibers derived from plant cellulose.

They are more breathable than cotton and absorb less sweat, making them ideal for hot, humid climates. The cloth is too flimsy and sheer for jackets or trousers, but rayon shirts, sportswear, and undergarments are all good summer wardrobe items.

True synthetics like nylon and polyester should be avoided in the summer, as should heavy wools and thick cotton weaves.

Silk, while it has some popularity in loose summer shirts, is a relatively insulating fabric, and doesn't handle moisture well, making it another one to avoid.

## Classic Summer Items

Putting together your summer wardrobe? These are all classics that deserve consideration. And, of course, it's always worth knowing how to wear them well...

### Shorts

Ah, shorts. Subject of so much over-thinking on the part of anxious men who haven't shown their knees in a while.

Here's the long and short of it, no pun intended: shorts are always going to be casual wear.

You can be stylish in them (and even quite aggressively fashion-forward), but you can't be dressy.

So, don't stress the details too much! Find the length, color, and cut that looks good on you, and wear it.

You will be no more or less "appropriately" dressed than anyone else in shorts. (Assuming you're not way out on the fringes, of course. If your shorts are giant parachute cut-offs with a million zippers and chains, okay, yeah, you look even less formal than a vacationer.)



Shorts that end an inch or two above the knee, and are snug in the waist and butt with a little room for airflow in the legs, will always be a safe default. They look normal, they're comfortable, and you can make them pop with some patterns or keep them calm and monotone as preferred.

Shorts are simple. Don't overthink 'em. And don't wear 'em to anything other than purely social leisure events in relaxed company.

## Undershirts

If you're a heavy sweater who struggles with clothing spotting/staining, bite the bullet and add a layer: a tight, low-necked, absorbent undershirt that can cozy up to your chest and armpits and soak up some of that sweat.

Adding another layer may seem counter-intuitive, but it's all about goals.

If you want less sweat-spotting on your outer layer, put a layer in closer to your body. It not only absorbs the sweat, it also distributes it, so that you don't have such concentrated amounts soaking into the visible outer layer.

Gross to think about, but effective. Use 'em if you need 'em. And, unless you're a South Florida gangster, or trying to look like one, don't wear just the undershirt, or an unbuttoned shirt open on top of an undershirt.

Get one with a low V-neck or scoop-neck so you can undo your top few buttons, and keep the undershirt out of sight.



## T-shirts

A summer staple. If a T-shirt is all you're wearing on your upper body and you care about looking stylish, here's the skinny: nothing with a big graphic logo, nothing with a funny slogan or saying (they're not as funny as you think, trust us), and no band shirts unless you're at a concert.

Something fairly snug in a light color works well with shorts, or if you're a jeans-in-summer kind of guy you can kick it old-school with jeans, boots, and a tight white T-shirt.

## Button-Front Short-Sleeved Shirts

These come in a wide range of flavors and families, so take your pick: the blue chambray work shirt, the striped seersucker, the vivid Hawaiian, and so on.

Basically anything with a buttoning front, a soft turndown collar, and short sleeves is fair game for summer when you want to look a little sharper than a T-shirt, but still don't need business dress. Polo shirts fill the same basic niche, in a slightly sportier and more casual style. It's good to have a few of each so you can mix it up.



## Summer Suits

If you're a man who has occasion to wear a suit more than once or twice a year, it's worth picking up a summer suit. Something light-colored in linen or seersucker goes great at daytime/sunlight events, while a dark linen or tropical wool is perfect in the evening.

Stick to your basic two-button, single-breasted jacket here.

You don't want extra fabric, and that gives you the option of wearing the jacket with unmatched trousers as a light blazer instead.

## Slip-on Shoes

It's summer, so cut yourself some slack and skip the lace-ups unless you need to look extra-formal.

A pair of leather-strap sandals like Birkenstocks can work with casual looks, but most men will look better (and a touch dressier) if they wear a slip-on, closed-toe shoe.

Boat shoes (leather or canvas with a rubber sole) go with almost any summer outfit, while penny or tassel loafers dress things up and add a bit of prep to a look.

For a hipper, more urban look, try slip-on canvas sneakers or espadrilles.

## Dressing Up, Dressing Down, Staying Cool, and Looking Cool

Dress codes relax in the summer. Outside of very serious environments, even business dress tends to devolve a bit.

Embrace the freedom, but don't go overboard. You don't ever want to be the most casually dressed guy in the room, especially when the bar is already set low.

Outside of vacations, parties, and other absolutely informal events, it's usually still worth having a shirt with a collar and something more than sport sandals on your feet.

## Summer Casual

When it really doesn't matter what you wear, keep it looking neat with some well-fitted shorts, a T-shirt or collared short-sleeved shirt, and some boat shoes, loafers, or leather sandals.

Throw on a hat and shades for the sun, and you're good to go.

You're not going to impress anyone with your world-beating fashion, but you'll be comfortable, and you'll still look a notch nicer than the teenagers and beach bums.

## Summer Dress Casual

Light-colored trousers and dress shirts or short-sleeve, button-front summer shirts make up the backbone of dress casual in the hot months.

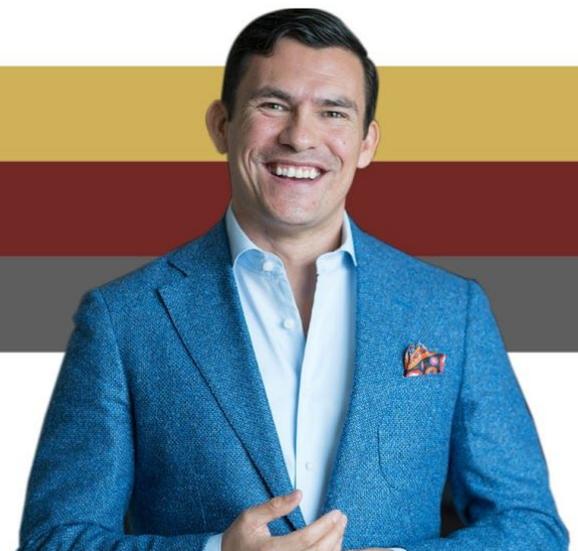
Invest in a couple of pairs of lightweight khakis, light gray tropical wool pants, or other comfortable trousers that can hold their own in an office setting.

Depending on the formality you need to hit, you can pair those with anything from an untucked short-sleeved shirt to a tucked-in dress shirt with a tie. (In the latter case, the sleeves can generally be rolled up if you're spending any length of time outside in the sun.)

Leather loafers will do at the more casual end of the scale; as you get dressier you can break out leather dress shoes with socks to match the trousers (or colored, patterned socks, depending on how playful you want to be).

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## Summer Business Dress

Again, there's a bit of a spectrum here. For a lot of day-to-day business in the summer, even conservative dressers will opt for a dark blazer and light-colored trousers, rather than a matched suit.

Use either the blazer/khakis combination (sometimes called the "California suit") or a lightweight, light-colored suit for daytime events, and invest in a dark tropical wool suit if you're expecting any evening events or truly strict business appearances.

Paired with a lightweight white cotton shirt and a decent necktie, either one will have you looking sharp and business-like in the summer -- without giving you heat stroke.



[Click here](#) to watch 7 hot weather hacks.



## Chapter 2: Hot Weather Dressing

Summer is a tough time in classic menswear.

Most of our most recognizable styles descended from British military and noble fashions, and the British Isles don't face the same kinds of summer that much of the United States does, to say nothing of warmer parts of the world.

So when traditional worsted wool suits and cotton dress shirts become unbearable, what should a fashionable man wear?

We've seen a couple different articles and style guides for warm weather dressing, but none of them complete or detailed enough to pass for a real comprehensive resource.

This guide is our attempt at a full hot-weather clothing resource.



Everything in it should be functional at temperatures into the 90s (32+ C) and even hotter.

The overall style is Western, but draws on knowledge from places like South and Central America, the Middle East, and East Asia for heat-beating fabrics and garments.

### Part I: Priorities

What matters when it's hot, and what doesn't. The things you should think about when you buy hot-weather clothing.

Looks are always important, but the line has to be drawn somewhere. When the mercury climbs up above 80 degrees (26.6 C) you need functional clothing. Consider these the most essential characteristics for hot weather menswear: summer weather men style look

## Light Weight

This should really go without saying. You want cloth that is physically light.

The less ounces/grams of textile piled up on your skin, the less work you're doing and the easier it is for air to circulate.

Wool is the only cloth that you can almost always get a weight for in specific ounces.



You'll see it for cotton and linen some of the time, but frequently you'll need to try on a garment, or at least pick it up, to see how heavy it's going to be.

Whenever possible, try hot weather clothes on before buying.

Ten minutes of gently moving around the store or changing room will give you a very good idea of how easy it is to carry the weight.

If you're sweating after that, it's definitely not going to be fun to wear on a hot day in the sun.

## Breathability

This is just as important as light weight, if not more so!

You need air circulating over your body to stay cool. Fabric that doesn't breathe well will trap both sweat and hot air near your skin, leading to rapid overheating.

Finer threads, looser weaves, and more porous materials all help add to a textile's breathability. Artificial fibers are typically non-breathable, and will make a garment more likely to keep sweat and air in.

It's hard to overstate the importance of a good weave as well as a good fabric. A lot of cheaper manufacturers will sell anything cotton as "summer wear," regardless of whether it's any good in hot weather or not. A tight cotton weave holds both air and moisture in – it'll be pure torture to wear on an 80-degree day.

## Sun Protection

Most men spend less time thinking about sun protection than they should. Even dark-skinned men will feel the heat more in the sun, regardless of whether their skin can burn or not, and lighter-skinned men can find themselves in a lot of pain if they're not careful.



Happily, classic men's styles lend themselves well to full-body protection. Long sleeves and full trouser legs can be more cooling than a T-shirt and shorts in the right conditions.

Hats and sunglasses play their role as well. And light colors will reflect far more sunlight than darker shades, keeping your clothes themselves from growing warmer in the sun.

Every warm-weather outfit should include a moment or two of thought for whether it can cover more skin comfortably or not. The less direct sun you're soaking up the happier you'll be, so long as it can be done with light and breathable fabrics.

## Deliberate Style

The trouble with most summer outfits is that they're products of necessity, not style. You throw on shorts and a T-shirt so that you don't overheat, not because they look good.

Looking stylish in the summer is as much about small, deliberate gestures as it is anything else. Khakis and a white shirt are comfortable, but you look like a low-level IT staffer.

When you make a summer outfit you need to be thinking about the colors, patterns, textures, and accessories all together.

The difference between stylish and just functional could be as small as a different belt or the right pocket square. But if you don't take the time to make that small difference you just look like one more overheated office guy.

So believe us when we say that style is as important an element of hot weather clothing as breathable cloth!

## Part II: Good Hot Weather Fabrics

What your clothes should – and shouldn't – be made of during the hottest months.

So how do you find clothing that combines all four of those characteristics we talked about above?

Remember, you want all your outfits to combine the following:

- Light Weight
- Breathability
- Sun Protection
- Deliberate Style

That's a lot to ask from one piece of clothing. Here, in no particular order, are the specific fabrics best suited for hot-weather outfits:



## Linen

Linen is one of the joys of summer menswear. It's light, breathable, and has a unique texture that makes it stand out in an ensemble.

Some men dislike it because it wrinkles too easily, but the lightly-wrinkled texture is part of the charm of linen, and higher-quality linens are woven tightly enough that the wrinkling is minimal.

Linen can be used to make matched suits, odd jackets and trousers, and dress shirts.

Traditional style manuals might tell you not to mix linens, but an unmatched jacket and trousers are usually fine. A linen shirt under a linen jacket can look a bit odd.

### **Pros:**

- Very lightweight and breathable – often the coolest option available
- Unique texture is visibly different from the more common cotton
- Dries quickly and does not retain moisture

### **Cons:**

- Expensive to manufacture, driving the price up
- Prone to creasing and wrinkling
- Less durable than cotton or wool; can require careful maintenance

## Wool

We don't usually think of wool as a hot-weather fabric. Most of its properties make it ideal in the winter, and typical wool suitings are both thick and heavy.

There are, however, a few kinds of "tropical-weight" wools meant for summer wear. The more common kind are essentially the same worsted or flannel wool of a conventional suiting, but made with very thin, light threads to reduce weight.



An alternative technique uses a looser weave to make the wool more breathable, but twists the individual threads much tighter to compensate for the loss in strength.

Fresco wool is probably the most famous example of these high-twist wools, which tend to be expensive but even lighter and more comfortable than traditional lightweight wool.

**Pros:**

- Neatest-looking and dressiest summer fabric
- Smoother drape and cleaner lines than linen
- More breathable and faster-drying than cotton

**Cons:**

- Heavier than linen or cotton
- Expensive
- Quality varies – not all “tropical-weight” wool is comfortable in the tropics!

## Cotton

Most men probably rely on cotton for the bulk of their summer wardrobe.

It's light and breathable and substantially cheaper than wool or linen, so there's some sense to that choice.

The trouble with cotton is that its performance can vary widely depending on construction.

Wool fibers are actually much more airy than cotton, which means that cotton needs to be woven more loosely to let the same amount of air out.

Breathable, lightweight cotton is mostly limited to specific summer weaves. Here are a few of the most common examples:

### **Twill**

Anyone will recognize twill weave from their blue jeans – the diagonal ribbing is very distinctive. Done in very fine threads it makes a light cloth, and is a common choice for cotton suits and jackets.

There are a number of variations on the twill weave, but in general it's used to make a garment sturdy and even. That gives it a nice drape, but can make it hot in the summer. While common (and cheap) as "summer wear," it's often not the best choice.

### **Poplin**

Poplin has a faint dimpled texture that comes from using two different sizes of threads in the weave.

The dimples make tiny air pockets, making the garment much more breathable and faster-drying than a flat weave. Poplin is a common choice for higher-end polo shirts and summer dress shirts. You can also find poplin trousers (very comfortable), and even the occasional jacket.

### **Seersucker**

Probably the lightest cotton weave, seersucker is slow and expensive to produce but very comfortable. It has a much more distinctive dimple pattern than poplin, giving it a wrinkled appearance.

Seersucker is used for shirts (usually short-sleeved), trousers, and suits, though the latter are usually not seen outside the United States. Madras - Madras is a specific weave, but is best known as a dyed plaid pattern.

Whether it boasts the specific plaid or not it's a lightweight summer staple used for shorts, shirts, and jackets.

The surface is smoother than seersucker or poplin, but a very loose weave keeps it breathable.

### **Gauze**

We mostly think of gauze as a medical fabric, but this loose weave was actually used for British military wear in the tropics for many years.



The individual threads are heavier than other light weaves but the weave is much looser (you can see through it if you hold it up to the light), resulting in a breathable cloth that allows moisture to evaporate quickly.

It's an uncommon but extremely comfortable choice for casual shirts. These are only the most common examples – people have been making cotton clothes for hot climates for thousands of years.

But the lighter the threads and the looser the weave, the more comfortable the cotton will be.

Densely-woven cotton like oxford and broadcloth quickly become stifling in the summer, holding both sweat and body-warmed air in close to the skin.

An easy test is to simply hold a small section of the fabric up and tug it taut.

Loose weaves will have stretch to them, while a tight weave like twill has relatively little give. You can also hold the weave up to a light to see how much passes through. The more see-through the cloth, the lighter and looser the weave.

**Pros:**

- Cheap, ubiquitous, and familiar
- Can be extremely light in the right weave
- Easiest fabric to maintain – most cotton garments can be machine-washed

**Cons:**

- Absorbs and retains sweat much more than wool or linen
- Lacks the smooth drape of wool or the breeziness of linen
- Tends to lose its shape and droop in humid heat – does better in dry climates

**Silk**

It's hard to get fancier than silk, and in terms of strength for weight trade-off it's an unbeaten champion.



Unfortunately, the intersection of silk that's fine enough to look good as dress clothing, sturdy enough to wear regularly, and light enough to be comfortable in the heat is hard to find.

Good summer silk needs to be woven loose enough to let air in and out.

Lighter threads will make it more comfortable but also more fragile. Silk sturdy enough to make a jacket out of would be stifling in the heat – it's best left as a material for casual, draw-string or wrap pants and the occasional loose shirt.

**Pros:**

- Smooth, comfortable texture feels good on bare skin
- Can make much lighter cloth than other materials
- Holds colors well and gives a distinct sheen

**Cons:**

- Fragile, prone to wrinkling, and difficult to maintain
- Retains moisture
- Expensive – often costs the same as much more functional cloths

## Synthetics and Blends

We need to be very careful when we talk about synthetic fibers.

Some are very useful in hot weather – most modern activewear and sportswear is made from proprietary fibers engineered for specific moisture-wicking and breathability properties.

However, traditional synthetic alternatives to cotton and silk like polyester are also still out there.

Polyester, rayon, and their various relatives are plastic-like fibers that lack breathability. Their light weight is handy and they cost a fraction of even a plain cotton shirt, but they quickly become stifling and sweat-soaked in the heat.

Anyone who's worn a good "underarmor" style liner shirt or underwear can attest to the usefulness of certain, specific synthetics.

Avoid the older, cheaper synthetics, and the ubiquitous 50/50 cotton blends they often appear in.

**Pros:**

- Good synthetics can wick moisture away, making you feel less sweaty
- Extremely lightweight, often lighter than natural fibers can achieve

**Cons:**

- Entirely synthetic garments often lack breathability
- Can irritate the skin, particularly if the weave is fine enough to bunch up
- Often used for cost-saving rather than useful properties

## Part III: The Summer Fit for Men's Clothing

Getting the right fit for the hottest months.



Fit always matters; it is the difference between a man wearing expensive clothes and a man wearing good clothes.

In the summer it also makes the difference between a comfortable man and one who keeps fidgeting with his clothes.

Summer clothes can be fit slightly looser than three-season suits and shirts.

A bit of breeziness is both functional (increasing airflow over your skin) and thematically appropriate for the more relaxed social standards of summer.

The thing to remember is that too much looseness doesn't just look bad -- it bunches, absorbs sweat, and actually makes you less comfortable than a close fit would have.

So how to get that perfect summer fit?

## Shirts

A good summer shirt needs a touch of looseness at the collar and chest.

Assume that you'll want to wear it with the top non-collar button undone at least once in a while -- it should sit comfortably open in a V-shape when you do that, rather than flapping and billowing or clinging to your pecs.

Down lower you want the fit to come in pretty close to the waist. Shirts that you'll wear tucked in need to be close enough that there's no "spare tire" over the waistband of your pants.

About two finger's width of looseness in the arms is good for letting breeze in without making your biceps look undersized.

Try to avoid polos or short-sleeve shirts that cling tightly to your biceps -- people will think you're trying too hard, and it won't be comfortable anyway.

## Jackets

It's not uncommon to wear summer jackets (especially linen) unbuttoned at all times rather than just when you sit down.

The lapels should still lie flat on your chest, and the sides of the jacket below the waist taper should touch your hips rather than hanging loose when you stand straight.

If you do plan on buttoning your jacket (and it's good to at least have the option), it should button without pulling tight or wrinkling the fabric around the waist.

Shorter jackets are typical in the summer.



The back of the jacket should cover the top of your bottom, but doesn't need to fall all the way below the curve of your buttocks the way you'd want a heavier jacket to.

Like with shirts, two finger's width at the sleeve openings will help airflow.

A wider armhole (the hole where the sleeve joins the body of the jacket) is also typical, which gives the jacket a softer shape and lets air flow from the arm openings to the chest opening and vice versa.

## Trousers

An odd exception to the looser summer fit trend: hot weather trousers do best when they're reasonably close in the seat and crotch.

You don't want them pulling tight, but you also don't want any loose folds that are going to bunch up when you sit or move. Those will just gather sweat and keep hot air in close to your body.

Leg openings can be a bit wider, which will let air flow up the legs. A bit of extra looseness also helps when you roll the cuffs up, a common style in casual summer outfits.

## Part IV: A Man's Essential Hot Weather Wardrobe

What to wear on every part of your body during the hottest months.

Piece by piece, you have a lot of hot weather options. Even limiting the choices to traditional Western menswear, broadly defined, you can come up with an enormous amount of summer options.

Here are a few guidelines for each article of clothing, from the shirt and trousers to the final accessories:

## Trousers

Most of the time a man's better off wearing trousers than shorts.

The added sun protection helps, and knees are frankly just weird-looking. It's also very hard to match a jacket or even a nice buttoning shirt with shorts, limiting the amount of outfits they can go with.

The ideal summer trousers should be lightweight, comfortably fit, and usually light-colored, especially during the day.

Darker trousers can make a nice dress-casual option in the evening when sunlight isn't an issue (they look especially good with light blazers or sport jackets). Formality and function is often a matter of both color and weave:

### **Chinos**

Chinos originally referred to a specific twill weave, but you now see it used on most any casual, lightweight cotton twill. Khaki and earth-tones are the most common. Chinos descended from military styles, and are often made from thicker and sturdier cloth than other slacks, making them durable but less breathable.

### **Poplin Trousers**

Poplin trousers are uncommon but very comfortable, and have recently become popular in brighter colors than the traditional earth tones. Pastels and even bright reds, blues, and greens help liven up daytime outfits, while the dimpled texture keeps you cool.

### **Slacks**

Slacks is a broad term used to refer to the more formal style of dress pants. They're usually wool, although it's not a requirement.

Tropical wools in light- to medium-gray are often the best choices for daytime summer wear, while a darker navy or gray is appropriate in the evening.

You may also find trousers in more exotic materials like seersucker (very cool and comfortable), hemp (casual with a distinct texture and color), or even silk.



These are usually more casual styles, to be worn with a light jacket at the most.

## Jackets

Many of the same basic guidelines apply to jackets as to trousers.

Light colors are ideal during the day, while dark colors (especially navy) go well with light trousers during the evening hours.

A light material like cotton seersucker or tropical-weight wool is a must.

Summer jackets are also usually unlined or half-lined.

Cotton jackets are the most likely to be entirely unlined, since they're the easiest to launder; more fragile fabrics like linen and wool benefit from lining around the sleeves and armpits.

Many familiar details from cooler-weather jackets are removed from hot-weather jackets to save weight.

Expect lapels to be narrower, shoulders to be unpadded, and the gorge (the V-shaped opening in front) to be both deep and wide, minimizing the amount of cloth on the wearer's chest.

Two-button, single-breasted jackets will be the coolest to wear.

Three-button single-breasted jackets add more cloth, and double-breasted add even more than that. Apart from the occasional navy blazer in the evening, it's unusual to see anything double-breasted in the hot months.



## Shirts

Probably the widest variety in men's summer clothes comes in shirt selections.

There are literally hundreds of styles from around the world, many of them perfectly suited to Western wardrobes.

Light colors are preferable with shirts, as with other garments, but a bit of contrast with the trousers and jacket is usually a must (a few outfits do pair white trousers and a white shirt for a naval aesthetic).

### 3 Common Sport Jacket Styles

*Presented By: Real Men Real Style*

2-Button Single-Breasted  
Sport Lapel Flap  
With Ticket Flap Pocket



2-Button Single-Breasted  
Hand-Stitched Notched Lapel  
With Patch Pockets



3-Button Single-Breasted  
Closing Front Lapel  
With Flap Pockets



#### 18 Sports Jacket Pattern & Color Options

								
Tweed	Sharkskin	Seersucker	Houndstooth	Flannel	Corduroy	Camel Hair	Bird's Eye	Windowpane
								
Serge	Worsted Wool	Hopsack	Flannel	Fresco	Cashmere	Linen	Herringbone	Madras

**Sports Jackets Can Be Almost Any Color Or Pattern**

**RMRS**  
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Long-sleeved dress shirts in light cotton remain the best pairing for a traditional jacket and trousers, particularly if a tie is involved.

However, most social events in the summer are relaxed enough for a style that doesn't require a necktie:

### **Polo Shirts**

Polo shirts are ubiquitous summer wear. Every man should own a few in varying light shades. They can be worn solo with slacks or worn under a light jacket. Light poplin makes the best polos.

### **Short-sleeved dress shirts or sport shirts**

Anything with a buttoning front and a turn-down collar -- is a respectable alternative to a polo.

They can be paired with a tie, though it's best to avoid doing this with a plain white short-sleeved shirt (the look is one favored by Japanese salarymen and not much of anyone else). A lightly-patterned dress shirt goes well with a light jacket.



### **Safari shirt**

Safari shirts are a casual style characterized by buttoning patch pockets, epaulets, tabs for buttoning up rolled-back sleeves, and similar military elements. They usually come in white or khaki, and have been a comfortable vacation and travel choice for decades.

### **Guayaberas**

A Central and South American summer shirt with a buttoning front and decorative embroidery, usually done in vertical columns on the front. They can range from the simple to the very elaborate. A light-colored guayabera in linen or cotton is an extremely comfortable summer garment, and stands out in a crowd of polo and sport shirts.

### Hawaiian shirts

have their place on the beach, but it can be difficult to find one in 100% cotton. If you can, and you enjoy the loud pattern, wear it with pride, but only at the beach or when on a Pacific Island:).

### T-shirts

Usually low on the style ladder. However, a close-fitted T-shirt under a light jacket can be a good casual look, especially if it features small decorative elements like a contrast-colored collar or light patterning.



### Tank tops

A lightweight way to layer an outfit. A short-sleeved buttoning shirt worn over a contrasting tank top is a good pairing with shorts, swim trunks, or casual trousers (especially with the cuffs rolled).

All of these styles can be mixed and matched with a wide variety of trousers and (in some cases) jackets.

In most cases they can be worn tucked into the trousers or un-tucked.

Dress shirts with the sleeves rolled up can also stand in for a more casual shirt.

As with all summer items, the keys are to keep the shirts light, breathable, and worn as part of a deliberate style.

Small decorative elements or just an interesting pattern can help turn a shirt from "just another shirt" into something that makes people stop and admire your style.

### Shorts

There's a time and a place for shorts. In most cases a man is better off in trousers, but on a hot day when you don't have anything more formal than a trip to the ice cream store in mind a pair of shorts is just fine.

Good shorts should fall past the midpoint of your thighs and stop above the knee. They can be solid pastels, patterned plaids, or just plain old khaki.

### **Polos and buttoning short-sleeved shirts**

Polos and buttoning short-sleeved shirts are natural companions to shorts. Jackets are rarely seen with shorts outside of fashion shoots -- it's not an impossible look, but it is a difficult one.

For the most part you want to avoid wearing socks with shorts.

If you do need socks, stick to an ankle sock at the highest. Sandals and slip-on styles of shoes work better than lace-ups and sneakers.

## **Shoes**

Good hot-weather shoes are a tall order. They need to be light, breathable, and stylish just like everything else, with the added requirement of protecting the soles of your feet. In some situations either style or safety may also require closed toes, making sandals a less-than-universal answer to summer footwear.

Realistically a man should plan on owning a few different styles of hot-weather shoes:

### **Sandals**

Sandals can be stylish and even reasonably dressy if they're made from dark leather and the straps cover most of the foot. Just a pair of traditional two-strap Birkenstocks (or something similar) will look fine with shorts and short-sleeved shirts. At the point where you're adding a jacket, however, you usually want to upgrade to something a little more substantial.

### **Boat shoes**

Also called dock shoes and top-siders - are a slightly dressier style featuring a crinkled rubber sole and a soft upper of leather or canvas. Most tie with either one or two pairs of eyelets, though there are slip-on styles available. They're a classic companion for khakis, navy blazers, and just about anything else from traditional prep-school and east-coast styles.

### **Espadrilles**

Espadrilles are a traditional Spanish shoe that caught on first as a European man's vacation shoe and then as a fashion item in the United States. They have a hemp sole and a soft canvas upper. The uppers are often brightly colored, making them a favorite of men who prefer colorful summer outfits to earth tones.



### **Leather slip-on**

Styles like loafers and driving shoes are a bit warmer but also a bit dressier. In many cases they're worn with low-cut socks that remain hidden beneath the shoe but provide some sweat absorption and cushioning for the skin.

### **Lace-up styles**

Lace-up styles like bluchers and brogues can be uncomfortably warm in the summer. When they must be worn, pair them with light, moisture-wicking socks, and if the occasion is casual enough go for a pair made with woven leather mesh rather than solid leather. Working brogueing (where the holes are actually punched all the way through the leather) will also help with airflow and evaporation.

### **Evening Wear**

You're unlikely to go to many formal-dress events in the summer (though if you do a white jacket becomes an option, unlike traditional black tie dress the rest of the year), but evening does usually call for a bit more cloth on the body.

Summer evening styles are in a large part distinguished by their unsuitability for daytime wear. Heavier fabrics, darker colors, and more covering on your skin in general characterize nice dress for hot-weather evenings. These are a few of the classic staples:

**Navy blazers**

Navy blazers are as traditional as you can get, especially when worn with brass or silver buttons and paired with white or khaki trousers.

**Dark slacks with a light jacket**

An interesting inversion of the usual style (men's jackets are typically darker than their slacks), and it works well for casual dining or dancing.

**Light-colored suits with dark undershirts**

A young man's classic look, although if you add a pair of sunglasses it starts to look a little too Miami Vice. Skip the sunglasses at night in general, in fact.

**Light trousers and black or navy collared shirts**

A good default for men that aren't going to wear a jacket. Whether it's long-sleeved or just a polo, the dark shirt should be close-fitted and tucked into the slacks.

In general you can expect to see more contrast and less patterning at night. Dark and light solids mixed is the traditional look, in part because there isn't enough lighting to make out subtle color changes.

## Part V: Hot Weather Accessories for Timeless Menswear

The items detailed above are the essential core of a summer wardrobe.

They give you the basic building blocks for stylish outfits.

Much of the style, however, lies in how you complete those basic outfits.

Hot-weather outfits are simple by necessity: you have, typically speaking, a pair of trousers, a shirt, and perhaps a jacket, all in light colors and materials.

A well-dressed man always wants to add at least one personalized detail to those basics.

It makes it clear to the viewer that you've chosen your outfit with care rather than simply wearing the lightest things you could find in your closet.

Always strive for at least that one added touch -- if not more. Happily, the necessities of staying cool actually give you a number of small items that make excellent points for customization:

## Hats

The ultimate way to shade your face, a hat is something you should strive to include whenever possible.



Formality can range from a white straw Panama hat on down to a mesh baseball cap, although the latter should be saved for doing physical labor or actually going to a baseball game.

Even a yachting cap would not be out of place with many summer outfits, particularly ones involving blazers.

The best hat is one that breathes. A quality Panama hat made from woven straw is the dressiest way to get that all-important ventilation.

Smart buyers can get a single white or cream-colored hat and then buy several colored hat bands to choose from, making it an accessory that can work with any dressy outfit.

For a less upscale look, safari hats with wide brims and netting crowns are practical, easy to transport, and keep the sun off.

They're more of a vacationer's style than a city man's, so try not to wear them around downtown areas. Save them for the beach and the hiking trail.

Western-style straw hats are tough to pull off without cowboy boots or a tractor. Be cautious using them for anything but actual farm work and line dancing.

## Sunglasses

A man should find a shade he likes and make it his. Wayfarers, aviators, ovals; pick something you like and always have it somewhere close to hand in the summer.

Of course, if you're wearing a hat, you'll always have a place to put your shades when you aren't using them. A lot of times (especially on the beach) your sunglasses are your only real accessory.

It's worth spending a few extra bucks to get a sturdy, lightweight frame, some lenses that offer real UV protection, and a style that doesn't look like it came from the drugstore bargain bin. You don't have to spend hundreds of dollars, but count on spending more than five.

## Belts

A good belt can make the difference between just another guy in khakis and a sharp-looking savvy dresser.

Cloth belts with leather ends work well with many summer styles, as do leather web belts. Belts don't add any weight or heat but they do make a clear style statement (particularly if they contrast with the trousers and shirt), making them one of the most efficient ways to add a personal touch to an outfit.



## Pocket Squares

If you're wearing a jacket, stick a pocket square in it.

Like a belt, it's a free way to add an obvious personal touch without adding to the weight or heat of the outfit.

## Neckties

For the most part men want to avoid neckties in the summer.

They require the collar button to be closed, which reduces airflow, and sweat tends to gather around the collar when it's pulled close to the skin.

If you do have to (or choose to) wear a necktie, use them to contrast your outfit, particularly if everything else is in light earth tones.



Click on the above image to view the full infographic.

Just a simple pastel will seem bold against khakis and grays.

Bow ties are a good lightweight alternative to the classic necktie in the summer, since they go with the minimalist feel of hot-weather outfits and put less cloth on your body.

Light knit cotton and wool ties are another good choice, as they can be tied much more loosely while still looking like a big, solid knot.

## Watches

A good wristwatch becomes more and more important as you wear less and less clothing. A metal sports watch adds a ton of class on the beach, and a good dress watch on a leather band helps dress up a casual outfit of slacks and a short-sleeved shirt.

By the same token, of course, a battered old plastic watch on a cloth band is going to jump out at people when you're lightly-dressed, and it won't make the impression you want it to at all. It's worth investing a little if this is a detail you're going to wear.

Any man buying a good-looking watch would do well to buy one that can change bands easily. A lot of smart dressers have one watch face that they wear all year round by simply changing the band as needed.

## Wallets and Money Clips

Remember that summer trousers tend to be thin and easily-wrinkled, and pick your wallet accordingly.

You want something small and neat that won't make a big bulge in your trousers. It's often best to just use a money clip with a credit card and ID of some kind clipped in alongside the bills.

## Skin Protection

Suntan lotion isn't exactly an accessory, but for a lot of men it's a necessity. The sun is hard on your skin, and your skin is part of your presentation. Use the SPF you need and don't be macho about it.

Men who are really dedicated to looking their best should go ahead and use a moisturizing lotion during the summer as well, especially in dry heat.

Some companies make skin lotions with UV protection, doing double-duty with your suntan lotion.

Not every outfit needs all of these accessories, of course.

But one or two in each outfit will help keep you looking like a guy who put everything together deliberately, rather than just a man trying to escape the heat any way he can.



## Chapter 3. 5 Tips When Buying Hot Weather Shirts

Summer dressing can come with its own set of challenges.

For one, there's the matter of options.

Besides your standard t-shirts and polos, what else is out there that makes you look good, feel great, fits you well, and also shows that you care about how you look and want to present a professional appearance?

Besides that, you also want this item of clothing to be casual enough, while still allowing you to look clean and feel great.

If you ask me, for this tall order, the best option that you have is the summer shirt!

The perfect casual summer shirt is what we'll be talking about today, and I'll give you a breakdown of important shopping tips to remember when picking one out.

However, before we really dive into that, I want to reiterate that for this section, we will be talking about the ideal casual shirt, and not the dress shirt.

The truth is, not many men actually know the difference between the two.

Fortunately, if you'll check the Real Men Real Style Archives, you'll find a post that's solely dedicated to dress shirts.

With that out of the way, let's continue to talk about the casual summer shirt.



## Tip #1: Pay Close Attention To The Fit of Your Casual Shirt

The main thing to remember for this first tip is that casual shirts are supposed to fit differently compared to dress shirts.

When shopping for a casual summer shirt, you'll want to start by looking for something with a looser, more relaxed fit.

Specifically, look for something that has an extra inch in the waist and the chest, and about a half an inch extra in the shoulder area.

The reason for the looser fit is that you really don't want to have any "hot spots".

The "hot spots" that I am referring to are areas in a tight shirt that may be prone to irritation and sweat, especially in the summertime.

Trust me when I say that you do not want to be sporting this look, as hot spots will never look good.

In addition, do remember that you will probably not be wearing a jacket over your casual shirt, as the summer weather may not permit you to.

Therefore, there is no way to hide or cover any hot spots that may develop, or a general bad fit of a shirt.

This is why you need to fit a casual shirt that sits well on your shoulders, and doesn't have excess fabric in the chest area.

If you find that your summer shirt of choice does tend to have these flaws, you definitely want to take it to a tailor to have it adjusted.



## Tip #2: Go With a Fabric That's Light & Breathable

Having a shirt with a looser fit is not the only thing that can prevent hot spots.



Fabric choice also plays a part. So, how can you tell if a fabric is light and breathable?

Besides the obvious, which is feeling the fabric, you can also try to put the fabric of a shirt against your mouth and attempt to breathe through it.

If you have trouble pushing air out through the fabric, then it is most probably not breathable.

When shopping for a casual summer shirt, I advise you to pick out two to three different shirts and perform this "breath test".

This is a really easy and quick way that you can use to determine which shirt is most breathable, and have air move through it quite easily.

Another quick tip closely related to this is to never assume that a lightweight fabric is automatically breathable.

Take note that there are lightweight fabrics that have very tight weaves, like twill. Air doesn't easily move through twill, despite it being lightweight.

Wearing a shirt that doesn't "breathe" could present a lot of problems during the summer time.

You can pretty much count on this shirt functioning like a plastic bag, which if you're not familiar with, will definitely make you start sweating profusely.

Again, this is something that you do NOT want, so definitely make sure that you pick out a fabric that's both lightweight AND breathable.

If you're not too familiar about weaves, I invite you to check out another blog post that I put up dedicated to weaves.

That should cover the basics and provide you with a general idea on the differences and nuances between different fabric weaves.

If you're still not sure if a fabric is light or breathable despite conducting the "breath test", then there is another way to figure out if it would make for a good summer shirt.

Hold the fabric up against the sun or a light and check to see if you can see little holes within the weave.

If you do, then that is good indication that a fabric will breathe well.

Should you want to narrow it down to specific fabrics, here are my personal recommendations;

Chambray is my top choice, followed by End-on-end. You can even take a gander at some cotton choices, provided their weaves are light and breathable.



Also, it is worth mentioning that I've actually found some good options in the athletic wear department for fabrics that wick away sweat.

When picking out shirts here, be careful that you don't choose something that looks too sporty, as you may not be able to use this for your original purpose.

## Tip #3: Narrow Down The Style of Your Casual Summer Shirt

There are certain styles that give off a more casual feel to any shirt.

A great example of this is pockets. A shirt with two pockets up front is a detail that was actually borrowed from the military.

There was a time when these pockets were actually put to use, to place different things in, which may have helped to contribute to their casual feel.

Generally, pockets found in shirts, be it on the chest area, or even on the sleeves, denote a casual look, so they are perfect for casual summer shirts.

Epaulets are another shirt details that have come out of the military. Used to place rank and even awards in, epaulets served a genuine function.

Recent trends though have allowed epaulets to be used in a more casual setting, so I also encourage looking for shirts with epaulet details, provided that they lay well.

Another perk to wearing a shirt with epaulets is that they can actually help to beef up the shoulders, and for men with larger mid-sections, epaulets can actually help to draw attention away from the problem area.

The third style detail that is worth paying attention to in a casual summer shirt is in its sleeves and cuffs.

Before buying a shirt, find out if the sleeves are actually meant to be rolled in.

Never assume that all shirts are made like this as shirts with French cuffs, for example, are NOT made to be rolled up.



Generally speaking, shirts with softer cuffs, as well as those that have a button up the sleeve, along with a little strap, are meant to be rolled up, and are ideal for warm weather dressing.

Now, just because your shirt comes with a button and a strap doesn't automatically mean that you have to use these little details.

My advice on the matter is this: If you have toned and muscular arms, then you can definitely use this strap, but if you don't want your arms to appear small and puny, then don't use them and simply roll your shirts, stopping right below the elbow.

## **Tip #4 Don't Forget About The Length Of Your Shirt**

While a shirt's length is supposed to fall under the category of fit, I thought that it was important to discuss this at length, which is why it separated here.

Summer shirts are meant to be worn untucked so every man must make sure that his casual shirts do not end up too long.

A shirt is too long when it fully covers your backside.

In addition, if your shirt is covering all of your crotch area, then it is probably too long.

In saying this, you definitely do not want your shirts too be too short either.

A simple way to determine if it is too short is to raise your arms with the said shirt on. If your midsection ends up exposed, then your shirt is too short.

Longer shirts can actually be taken to a tailor to be readjusted.

So do consider doing this if you've found a shirt that is perfect in every way, except the length.

## Tip #5 Pay Attention to the Collar and Button Placement

My last tip for your summer casual shirt has to do with the collar.

Even if you are wearing a casual shirt, it is still important to make sure that the collar looks good, lays well, and isn't too sloppy.



Button placement will also determine if a shirt will look good or not. For casual shirts, it is perfectly acceptable for the top two buttons to be left unbuttoned.

Some men may prefer to have one extra button unbuttoned, and this is acceptable too, just as long as your shirt doesn't expose too much of your chest.

While button placement can be adjusted, I want to point out that this is necessarily not an easy job, and that it may be better for a qualified seamstress to do it.

In closing, I just want to leave you with quick tips on how to buy a great summer shirt. Always keep in mind that great deals are always out there, provided you know what you are looking for.

If you know what goes into a great summer shirt, then it will be easy for you to make smart purchases.

Another option, although not necessarily cheaper, is to consider having a custom made shirt. Of course, the choice is dependent on you, and your budget!

Here's a video about buying summer shirts. [Click here to watch.](#)



## Chapter 4: 5 Principles For Hot Weather Clothing

Summer always comes with a relaxed and laid-back vibe.

When the temperatures start to rise – men everywhere start dressing like they're off to the beach.



The temptation to dress in shorts and t-shirts with flip-flops is strong.

Which is cool for casual days at the beach or in your back yard – but what about when you go out to meet people?

Gentlemen – the rise in temperature is no excuse to let down your sartorial standards.

Instead of using the summer heat as an excuse to relax your dress code – see it as an opportunity to incorporate color, new fabrics and styles into your wardrobe.

I have readers sending me emails from all over the world – from hot climates like South Africa, India, Australia, and... South Texas, where the temperature get HOT.

A common question from tropical countries is, “I want to dress sharp and take your advice but it's hot and I can't wear a jacket – it's much easier to slip into shorts and a t-shirt.”

It is possible to be stylish in warm weather? With the help of the five principles and the clothing items listed below – your style will be relevant and smart for the summer months.

These principles apply in climates where the sun is unrelenting throughout the year and to every single item in your wardrobe.

Ready? Let's get started with the basics – selecting the right fabrics for hot weather.

## 1. Choose Lightweight Clothing & Fabrics To Stay Cool In The Heat

As a general rule – the best fabrics for tropical climates are lightweight and made from natural materials such as cotton or linen.

- Feel the weight of the cloth – it should feel light.
- Hold it up to light – if you can see through it a bit – that's a good sign.
- Natural, light fabrics tend to dry faster – a bonus when you sweat.

Lightweight 100% wool is a great option too. There is a general misconception that wool is better in winter.

Lighter weaves of wool are suited for hot weather.

Heavy fabrics tend to cling to your skin and trap sweat – adding a layer of heat between the fabric and your body.

Instead of wearing heavier versions of cotton – such as twill, which is what your jeans are made of – opt for poplin, seersucker and madras cotton.

Broadcloth cotton dress shirts will be cooler than dress shirts made with the heavier oxford weaves.

Innovations with lightweight synthetic fabrics have come a long way. Synthetic fabrics are suited for performance gear.

If you are buying a dress shirt or jacket made from these fabrics – ensure that the garment is specifically engineered for hot weather.



## 2. Breathable Fabrics Are Best For Hot Weather

High temperatures combined with high humidity can make life uncomfortable – especially for people not used to tropical conditions.

Humans maintain a cool body temperature by perspiring heat away from the body.

It is important to allow air circulation to maintain a cool body temperature.

Fabrics for hot climates should maximize the flow of air through the clothing, allowing heat and moist air to escape.

The fabrics should be breathable.

Fabrics that trap moisture tend to create unpleasant odors.

Natural fibers are generally better at soaking up moisture from the skin and allowing it to evaporate from the outer surface.

Cotton is extremely comfortable and allows your body to breathe with ease. It absorbs excess sweat. Linen and other natural fibers also breathe and are good at absorbing moisture.

These fabrics tend to breathe more than synthetics such as polyester.

Just because a fabric is lightweight does not guarantee that it is breathable – a trash bag is lightweight but not breathable.

Some fabrics trap heat by creating an insulating layer over the skin. Synthetic and fabrics that are of thicker weaves tend to reflect heat back to the body and inhibit the outward flow of warm, moist air.

Synthetic fibers tend to be water-repellent; they allow sweat to build up, reducing evaporation, and causing discomfort and irritation.

Silk is not a good choice as it tends to retain heat. Silk can lose some of its strength through exposure to strong sunlight and perspiration.



With its natural ability to breathe, wool is better than polyester fabrics – especially in tropical weight wool suits.

### 3. Clothes That Offer Protection Are Better In Summer

While it is important to look your stylish best in the heat – protection from the sun’s harmful UV (ultraviolet) rays should be a priority.

Clothing is the most basic form of protection against the sun.

The more skin covered – the better. Long pants cover better than shorts. Long sleeved shirts are better than t-shirts.

A walk of an hour or more will give you lots of sun exposure on your head, shoulders, neck, back and cleavage.

Hats protect your head from the sun.

Wearing a hat means you’re going to keep more of your hair – the protection from the sun’s rays

Polo t-shirts don’t cover your arms and short-sleeved henleys leave your upper chest exposed to the sun. Opt for long sleeves and t-shirts that cover the sensitive area at the base of your neck.

### 4. The Construction Of Your Clothes Is Crucial In Hot Weather

The construction of a garment – the way it is made – is just as important as picking the right fabric for men’s clothes in hot weather.

The lightweight and breathable properties of a fabric can be rendered useless if the garment is constructed in a way that doesn’t emphasize these properties.

A polyester lining on a 100% lightweight wool jacket restricts the breathability of the wool – making it a poor option for hot climates.



Blazers are usually lined with polyester, satin or silk – none of which breathe well. This traps heat in the layer between the fabric and the lining.

Unlined blazers or half-lined jackets are your best options in the summer months.

You have the option of slimming the bulk on your blazer by opting for one without an inner lining.

A looser fit on clothes helps in the circulation of air. Baggy or oversized won't look flattering – a linen shirt fitted slightly looser than a dress shirt will keep you feeling breezy.

## 5. Lighter Color Clothes Are More Suited For Hot Weather

Basic physics – dark colors absorb more light. Therefore they are going to be hotter.

Light colors reflect light – making them cooler to wear in the summer.

Dark shades of blue, purple and green generate thermal energy when exposed to intense sunlight. Lighter colors generate less thermal energy under the same sunlight conditions.

Light reacts to colors in different ways, depending on how much is absorbed or reflected.

Since black naturally absorbs more light than it reflects, more consequent heat is retained. Light reflects more off of white than is absorbed, so white retains less heat.

Since people associate the summer time with sunshine and heat, light-colored clothing may enhance moods in keeping with the season.

Perhaps fashion designers traditionally produce summer season collections in shades of white, beige, pink, and yellow, and people seeking to appear fashionable follow those trends.

Whites, baby blues, grays, creams, yellows and tans will keep you feeling cooler than blacks, navy blues, or any other dark colors.

Brighter colors will also make you easy to spot in a crowd. Take advantage of the bright weather and rock some color....



Get 5 tips on hot weather dressing. [Click here](#) to watch the video.

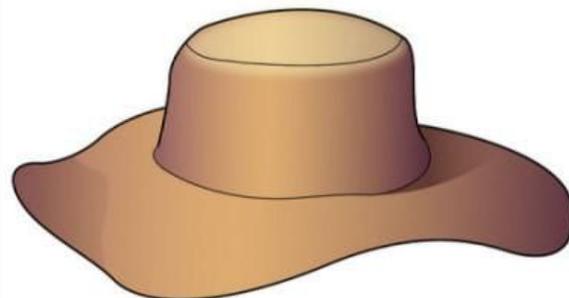
## Items That Will Keep You Looking Cool In Hot Weather

Hats are a classic and stylish option for men to protect their head and face from the sun.

Body heat escapes most easily from the head – you want that heat to escape while protecting your head from the sun’s rays.

A wide-brimmed straw or felt hat is lightweight and is constructed to allow air circulation through the venting holes on the sides of the hat.

Guide To Hats  
**SUN HAT**



## Summer Jackets Must Be Lined Properly

An unlined or half-lined hopsack jacket is lightweight, breathable and appropriate for summer.

A lightweight and light colored suit in cotton, linen or tropical wools works well in the heat – linen wicks away moisture from your body keeping you breezy.

Ensure that the lining of your jacket is breathable. If you want to step it up a notch – pair a knitted necktie and colorful pocket square with your jacket.

## Linen Shirts Will Keep You Cool In Hot Weather

Linen shirts are lightweight and comfortable. The only drawback is the amount of ironing necessary.

For cotton shirts – stick with 100% cotton and lightweight fabrics. Oxford cotton is a heavier fabric and if you have a choice between plain and twill – opt for plain cotton rather than a tightly knitted twill.

Herringbone is a poor choice for summer. Although it is a lightweight cotton fabric – it is not breathable.

## Trousers – Skip The Jeans And Choose Chinos For Summer

Despite the popularity of jeans in any weather – they are a poor choice in the summer.



If you are still keen on wearing jeans – stick with lightweight jeans like the ones made from high quality supima cotton.

What's the alternative? 100% cotton chinos in different colors. Roll up the bottom, air circulates – loafers, have fun. Tropical weight wool and linen trousers highly recommended.

Requires ironing but looks sharp and is COOL. Shorts are an overplayed and easy option for summer.

Going without socks is a summer look – but be careful because there are enough sweat glands in your feet to produce and fill a quarter cup with moisture every day.

All that moisture stuck in your shoes can ruin the leather. For hot weather – I prefer lightweight slip-ons from Paul Evans or moccasins from Jay Butler.

Wear shoes that are breathable along with lightweight cotton or wool socks in fun and bright colors. Other options are boat shoes and driving shoes worn with hidden socks.

This is definitely not the season for boots.

Sandals are acceptable for social events, but flip-flops are strictly for the beach.

A vest (or waistcoat in other parts of the world) is the summer equivalent of a formal jacket. With a breathable inner lining – vests are your best option to layer your outfit in hot weather.

You could choose to leave the jacket out of a three-piece suit and wear a waistcoat with a bow-tie or a necktie and roll up your shirt sleeves.

A cotton or linen waistcoat will complement your chinos and add extra color to your outfits.

In hot weather – being comfortable is a priority. But with the right mix of colorful, lightweight and breathable fabrics, constructed with the right elements – you won't have to sacrifice style for comfort.

It is possible to get a good mix of both – classic style is timeless and not restricted to seasons either.

## Chapter 5: Dressing Sharp In Hot Weather

The story goes like this.

About three hundred years ago a farmer's wife took a needle and thread to her husband's work shirt.

She sewed four large pockets onto the front of the shirt, enabling her husband to easily pick and carry guayabas (guavas).

Past this – well, that's where the arguments start.

The Cubans claim it originated near the Yayabo river in Sancti Spiritus, Cuba.

The Mexicans believe the Yucatan invented the shirt and the Cubans copied it.

Then there are other stories of it originating in Thailand or the Republic of the Philippines, and then making its way to Central America via Chinese slave traders.

I will only say this: The guayabera is a functional and stylish hot weather garment that should be in more men's wardrobes.

The purpose of this section is to introduce you to this classic men's shirt – and hopefully help you see it's something you can wear on those sweltering hot summer days.

What Is a guayabera?

The guayabera is a traditional Latin American garment.

Most of the guayaberas in the United States originate from factories in and around Miami, Florida, which are often owned by Cuban-Americans.



The basic features that define a guayabera:

- Either two or four patch pockets on the shirt front
- Two vertical rows of either small pleats (actually called tuxes) and/or embroidery
- Straight hem meant to be worn untucked

Different artisans over the years have taken the liberty to create variations of the garment, such as adjustable buttoning slits at the sides of the shirt, french cuffs, short sleeves, and even no pockets.

For the purposes of this section, I will include them all.

As for color, white and light pastel colors are the most common and traditional, but like any shirt, guayaberas now come in both traditional and brighter colors as young men have asked for more variety.

100% cotton or 100% linen are used to make the highest quality guayaberas. Light weaves are prized in hot, humid climates.

A thriving tourist market has led to production of lower-cost, part-synthetic guayaberas that are sold as affordable souvenirs; depending on the weave, they are fine for most men, but if you can, try to find one made from natural material.

## Wearing the Guayabera: Casual Style

In the United States, the guayabera is mostly used for a casual shirt, worn without a jacket. The long, even hem is meant to hang over the trouser waist and belt.

There are no real rules on what you can and can't wear with a guayabera. Jeans or other tough work pants are a nod to its working-class origins. Cotton slacks are typical dress-casual antecedents.



Shorts look a little touristy, but it is a popular tourist shirt. You can do that look if you're comfortable with it.

The kind of guayabera you buy will affect which pants and other garments it goes well with. You can loosely break guayaberas down into three broad categories:

### Practical working clothes

These guayaberas are meant for field work or made to look like they're meant for field work.

The color is light to reflect the sun, the vertical embroidery is often pierced to let more air in, and the base fabric is very light and gauzy.

The patterns are usually simple and in light-colored thread, or in many cases in the same color as the base material itself.



### Festive clothing

This is where we get the "Mexican wedding shirt" style of guayabera, which can be long or short-sleeved.

The vertical bands are typically embroidered in more than one color, and the base color can be anything from white to black, with bright pastels a common compromise between festive color and light reflection.

### Tourist clothing

Very brightly-colored guayaberas with loud, contrasting colors are the Latin American version of the Hawaiian shirt. They're meant for vacationing Americans and are usually made cheaply from synthetic fabrics.

Working guayaberas complement jeans or cotton slacks. Festive guayaberas do as well, but can also be paired with more colorful pants or with dress slacks made from tropical weight wool or linen.

Tourist guayaberas can go with anything you wear on vacation – they're going to look loud and silly no matter what, so go ahead and wear them with shorts.

The overall theme here is versatility: men have been wearing guayabera-style shirts for centuries. At one point or another they've been paired with everything.

Be assertive and wear yours with whatever looks good. Here's a great example of guayaberas being worn in a more fashion-forward way.

And age? Doesn't matter if you're seven, seventeen, or seventy. They look great and are incredibly comfortable.

## The Guayabera as Business and Formal Wear

It's not widely known in the United States (at least outside of Florida), but several Latin American and Caribbean island nations have adopted the guayabera, formally or informally, as a form of national business wear.

Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Cuba (where it is the official dress garment as of 2010) all recognize the guayabera as a form of "national dress."

Their political leaders often wear them at public events. Just type in Summit of the Americas and you'll see dozens of Latin American leaders wearing guayaberas alongside counterparts wearing full suits and ties.

Obama: "I'm hot in this jacket! Where can I get a guayabera?"

Outside of beach weddings, it's unlikely that most North Americans will need to wear the guayabera in a formal or business setting.



However, if you're interested in doing so, the standard formal style is:

- Long-sleeves – short sleeves are casual
- Plain white or cream/off-white base color – darker or brighter colors are very casual and worn more by young men
- Low-contrast (often same-color) embroidery – flashy embroidery does make the guayabera more casual, although this is the one area you can be a bit more flamboyant in a formal setting to add a dash of personal style
- Typically two pockets rather than four for a dressier look – no pockets and it is technically no longer a guayabera
- Tailored fit – loose-fitted guayaberas are more casual

Like all things pertaining to style, there will be the occasional exception, but leave them to men who wear guayaberas regularly and need a little variety in their lives.

Most of us will look better sticking to the conservative white long-sleeved style in business settings where we would normally wear a suit.

A few cultures have their own specific expectations for dress guayaberas.

Zimbabwe, for example, adopted the guayabera from Cuban teachers and missionaries, and it is now typical to wear a white short-sleeved guayabera with black slacks at weddings, and a black short-sleeved guayabera at funerals.

## Buying a Quality Guayabera

So what makes a high-quality guayabera?

More than anything, the material. Guayaberas are hot-weather clothing. (You can't really get away with wearing them outside of summer in places like the United States or Western Europe.)

For comfort's sake, that means either 100% cotton or 100% linen, or something very much like it.



A small percentage of synthetic fiber can help with mildew resistance, but anything more than 5% or so of the blend is a cost-saving measure rather than a sign of good construction.

Synthetics don't breathe well and become sticky quickly in humid weather, so stick to natural fibers.

A few South Asian countries make guayabera-style shirts from plant fibers like bamboo, ramie, or hemp.

While sometimes heavier than cotton, they do typically hold up well in humid weather, and are very resistant to mildew and the bad-smelling bacteria that colonize human sweat.

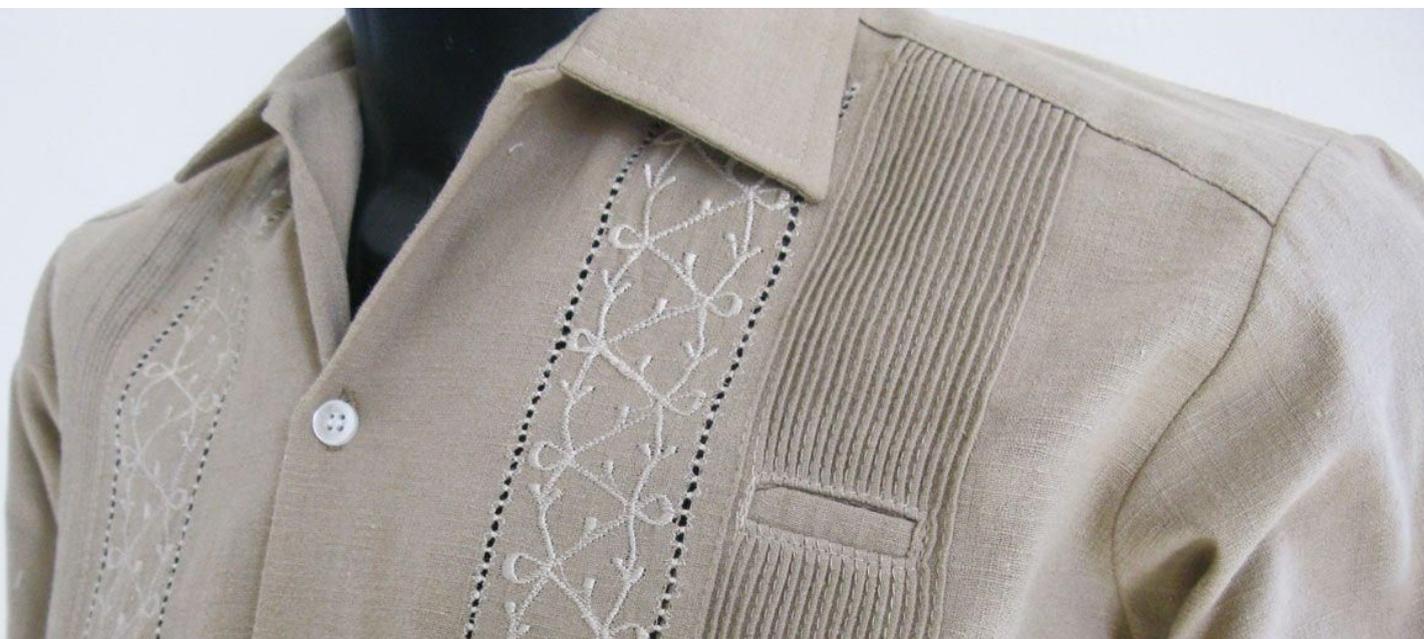
Other considerations beyond the material to look for include:

### Pleats (tuxes) on the front

A quality guayabera will have 12 or more (see picture above). Larger & less pleats are an indicator that the guayabera is made for the tourist market. Nothing wrong with this – just make sure if you're paying a steep price for a handmade garment you get your money's worth!

### Quality embroidery and stitching with no loose threads

Look at the details. Is the stitching tight? Is it the same on both sides?



Sturdy buttons – mother of pearl is always better than plastic – although this is an inexpensive upgrade you can do yourself. After all, I just taught you how to sew on a button!

Fit – tailored if possible; tapered at the very least. Guayaberas are made to be worn a bit looser; however, most men in good shape can have their guayaberas brought in on the sides. Also, make sure the guayabera is long enough. Cheap manufacturers will try to skimp on fabric – you want at least 3-5 inches (depends on your height – taller, more).

The latter point is important in keeping the guayabera from flapping like a sail in the wind. You want it to hang off the body for comfort, but not very far. Slim men will need more of a taper than stocky men, and can look quite absurd without it.

Travelers to Miami, Cuba, or Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula can have a guayabera custom-made if they have a few days to spare.

Exchange rates favor United States or European travelers heavily, so it's possible to get high-quality, custom-fitted clothing for pennies on the dollar. Non-Spanish (or Portuguese in the case of Brazil) speakers can expect to pay the usual "tourist tax" mark-up from most merchants, but you still tend to end up paying less than you would buying off-the-rack in the United States or online.

For men who don't regularly travel to Latin America or South Asia, there are a few tailors selling custom guayaberas online.

Expect to pay much the same prices that you would for a custom-made dress shirt, and for the same reasons.

It's best to start with a plain white or off-white guayabera and build your collection from there.

The hotter your climate, the more reasons you'll find to wear them, but even men in temperate climates will find use for the guayabera's versatile style.

Here's a video on wearing the guayabera. [Click here to watch.](#)



## Chapter 6. Wearing Denim In Hot Temps

Jeans in summer?

Not always recommended – especially when the temperature climbs above 90 and it's humid outside.

Having lived in Corpus Christie, Texas & Pensacola, Florida.....I learned quickly as a young man that jeans are not always comfortable.

So what are your options? Should you give up jeans this summer?

Is there a way to wear denim in hot weather without sweating your b@!!\$ off?  
Well yes – there is!

### Big Tip: Choose The Right Fabric Weight

If you're buying from someone that knows what they're talking about, you can get pretty technical with your jeans.

In big box stores, this isn't so much of an option (it's one good reason to seek out a custom or boutique jeans maker, rather than a large retail brand).

But if you get the chance, a little research can go a long way toward picking out jeans that are going to stay comfortable even in the heat of summer.

First things first, take a look at what your denim weighs.

Denim is measured in ounces, like most textiles used in clothing. It's usually much heavier than wool or finer cotton weaves.

That gives it sturdiness, but also makes it warmer in the summer.



Traditional denim jeans usually use cloth that weighs between 12 and 16 ounces per yard. That's thick enough to be tough, but not too stiff.

Anything above 16 oz. is getting into one of two niche markets: truly rugged workwear for men who punish their jeans severely, and monstrously thick "raw denim" designed to fade and crease in dramatic patterns.

You don't want to wear either of them in hot weather if you can help it.

Below 12 oz., on the other hand, you're looking at jeans that can actually feel better than some khakis and chinos in the summer.

Denim is a fairly breathable weave. Trousers in a very tight cotton weave can actually be more stifling than jeans made from denim an ounce or two heavier, simply because of the airflow.

## Denim Blends and Treatments

Serious denim fans will talk for hours about the different ways to weave raw bolts of denim cloth.

You don't need to know quite that much, but there are a couple things worth keeping in mind for your summer wear.

First off, keep it 100% cotton. Summer is not the time for "stretch denim."

The synthetics that make denim stretchier don't breathe the way cotton fibers do, making the jeans more prone to trapping sweat and hot air against your skin.

Summer's also a time when you want looser, breezier fits that allow a little airflow, and if you're wearing your jeans comfortably loose they don't need to be stretch denim anyway.

Second, pay attention to how the denim was treated.

"Raw" or "dry" denim, in which the cloth is not washed after its dying, will be stiffer and less breathable until broken in.

On the opposite end of the scale "distressed" denim that's worn through in patches will obviously give you the most airflow.

For most men, the happy medium is in between: lightweight denim that's been washed before wear.

If possible, break it in while the weather is still cool, so that you don't have any stiffness fighting you in the hot and humid months.

Unless you're going for a specific look, there's no reason to go out of your way for either raw or distressed jeans.

### **Rolled Cuffs – Yes Or No?**

Rolling your cuffs in the summer is totally acceptable when you're just bumming around.

If you go into a sit-down restaurant or anywhere more formal than that, roll them down, but on the street or the beach or whatever the roll is fine.



It's a particularly popular style with guys who buy selvedge denim, as selvedge jeans tend to leave the distinctive colored stripe of the cloth's edge visible on the underside of the cuff.

You'll see some very careful rolls designed to flaunt those if you watch fashionably-dressed young guys in the summer.

A simple rule for cuffs and footwear, though: if you're rolling the cuffs, no socks. Wear slip on shoe styles like boaters or sandals.

Jeans with the cuffs worn down can be worn without socks as well, but generally look better if you've got a sturdier shoe and a pair of socks.

## Matching Your Jeans With Shirts

Jeans go with most things that aren't more denim.

In the summer, plain old jeans and a T-shirt works fine. It's about as casual a look as you can get, so don't expect to start any new fashion trends, but it serves its purpose.

To keep it classic, go with a tight-fitted white T-shirt and sturdy work shoes or boots – if it was good enough for Marlon Brando, it's good enough for you.

Other good options include henleys and polos (similar to T-shirts, but they show a touch more style), light long-sleeve crew-necks, and casual dress shirts of both the long- and short-sleeved variety.

Most of these are worn untucked.

At the point where you're somewhere formal enough that you need to tuck your shirt it, you might as well wear a different sort of lightweight summer trousers – chinos, seersucker, etc. – and leave the jeans at home.

They're for casual summer street wear, not office potlucks at the picnic shelter.

## Matching Denim With Hot Weather Footwear

Ok, so your jeans are rolled and you have on a hot weather collared shirt. What to wear on your feet?

Sandals – yes, I know many of you all hate them.



**How To Dress Sharp In The Heat - Without Burning Up**

But I find a well-made, leather pair feels great in the summer.

Just make sure your feet are clean and your toenails don't look like claws from a science fiction horror movie.

Seriously – good grooming habits here gents. You don't have to get a pedicure but this isn't the time to show the world your inability to cut your nails.

Slip-on casual shoes, from boat shoes to espadrilles to something dressier like a double-strapped monk.

I wear my slip on Sperry boat shoes without socks – but I do clean them and if you expect to walk across Manhattan in the summer consider an invisible sock for comfort and making sure your shoes aren't ruined by drenching in sweat.



How do you wear denim in summer? [Click here to watch the video.](#)

## Chapter 7. What A Man Should Pack In Warm Weather

Golf courses? Beaches? Exotic deserts?

Sure, sign us up. A man should always be grateful for the chance to travel somewhere warmer.

And if you're a reader that happens to live somewhere warmer, don't panic – this advice will be helpful for you, too. A lot of your wardrobe may already look this way.

### Warm Weather Basics

A vacation abroad or just summer at home follow the same basic rules, as long as the sun's shining regularly and the mercury is creeping up past 75F.



If you don't wear the right clothes you're going to end up desperately seeking out climate-controlled rooms and staying in them as much as possible – not a very adventurous lifestyle or vacation.

Always stick to the cardinal rules of dressing for hot weather to keep yourself comfortable, active, and still stylish:

1) Light, natural fabrics allow your skin to breathe, air to circulate and your body temperature to remain comfortably low. Cotton, linen and silk are the best natural fabrics to wear in hot weather.

2) Light colors reflect the most sunlight and heat. Whites, baby blues, grays, creams, yellows and tans will keep you feeling cooler than blacks, navy blues, or any other dark colors.

3) A looser fit helps your body vent heat away from your skin. Baggy, oversized clothes don't look very flattering, but a shirt and trousers in your size and fitted more loosely than a dress suit might be will help keep you feeling breezy.

Avoid anything with enough excess fabric to fold over on itself and bunch up – that's just going to make you uncomfortable and unattractive as well.

4) Wear a hat and your brain box will thank you. The sun can be harsh in warm climates, especially if you're not used to it. A lightweight hat with ventilation (mesh webbing or punched grommets both work well) keeps the direct sunlight off without trapping heat or making you sweat too much.

## Packing for Warm Weather

If your summers are warm in general, you can take this advice for your home wardrobe as well.

We've written it specifically for a man traveling to a hotter climate, but don't let that stop you. All of these are good ideas for a warm climate:

## Breathable Underwear

The warmest parts of your body are the armpits and the groin.



Having these parts warm in winter is a godsend, but during hot weather an overheated crotch is hell.

Keep everything cool and avoid heat rash with lightweight underwear that wicks moisture away from the skin.

Athletic clothing manufacturers make excellent products out of cotton/spandex blends, often with other synthetics specifically designed to remove moisture, usually in both looser boxer styles and more fitted boxer-briefs or briefs.

Plain cotton works all right in a pinch, but doesn't deal as well with moisture as some of the newer synthetics – if you wear cotton underwear, be sure it's loose enough to sit a little bit off the skin.

That will keep sweaty underwear from clinging right up against you.

Underwear on the upper body serves the exact same function of keeping moisture off the skin and away from the body.

Invest in a quality undershirt to absorb perspiration and keep your dress shirt from getting sweaty.

The extra layer is not going to add a lot of heat, and it's well worth it to have something that's actively helping your skin stay dry and well-aired.

## **Shirts: Polos, Sports Shirts, Short-sleeved or Long-sleeved?**

There's a wide range of shirt choices for warm climates. Any of the options just listed can work.

So can a T-shirt, in terms of comfort, though they often have thick hems that gather sweat and add heat, but a T-shirt isn't really a good-looking guy's first choice.

If you do wear T-shirts in the heat, opt for very close-fitted ones, and then only if you have the body to make it work. Be honest with yourself!

The culture you're traveling to is worth researching.

People in the U.S. aren't going to care if you wear short-sleeved shirts for comfort in the summer.

We're casual here – as long as you're not going out to fancy night clubs, it'll be fine. European summer destinations can be less forgiving, expecting well-bred men to stay in collared, long-sleeved shirts, and Middle Eastern and African nations can be stricter still.

Do your research before you go, and don't plan on baring your arms unless it's done locally.

Polos and short-sleeved shirts are appropriate for the beach and other casual environments during the day.

If you are going out during the night to a restaurant, dancing or a walk along the beach, then make sure you pack at least one long-sleeved buttoned poplin dress shirt in a plain or simple pattern in a light color. You can always unbutton the cuffs and loosely roll up the sleeves to your elbows.

If you are going out during the night to a restaurant, dancing or a walk along the beach, then make sure you pack at least one long-sleeved buttoned poplin dress shirt in a plain or simple pattern in a light color.

You can always unbutton the cuffs and loosely roll up the sleeves to your elbows.



## Pants: Khaki, Linen Trousers

Let's be very clear here: shorts are reserved for the beach only pretty much every place outside the US.

If you wear shorts in European cities, you will look like a tourist. Asian, African, and South American cultures will find it even stranger.

Leave the shorts at home and find fitted trousers made from light cotton or linen instead.

Make sure you find the lightest fabric weight (some cotton khakis are woven in a thick, canvas-like texture meant for cooler climates).

Linen is even lighter and has a very soft drape to it, but cannot be pressed as crisply as cotton – save it for your more casual trousers, and have a pair of cotton khakis on hand for when you need to look sharpest.

## Footwear and Socks

You will want to keep your feet as dry as possible. Fungus thrives in warm, dark and moist places.

A bad case of athlete's foot can ruin a week on the golf course.

The best footwear for hot weather are sandals – flip-flops are out, for the well-dressed man, but a good pair of sturdy leather sandals with broad straps will do just fine in most situations.



They're best worn without socks; some European styles allow for dressy sandals worn with socks as well. It's your call as to whether you can pull the look off or not.

A close-toed alternative is the traditional boat shoe. These are slip-on leather shoes with visible stitching and a simple lace tie, ideal for beaches, boats, and anywhere else that's warm but also somewhat hard on the footwear.

Boat shoes are expected to be a bit worn with use, so you don't have to worry about polishing them, though it's helpful to dust the sand and salt off after they've been on the beach.

If you are venturing out during the night, then bring along a pair of dress shoes and light-fabric dress socks.

Rules can be broken, yet the general consensus is that open-toed and casual footwear are reserved for the daylight hours; dress shoes rule the night.

Your socks should still match your shoes in warm climates, so bring some light khaki or white socks, if those are the colors you're wearing on your lower body.

## Hats: Proper cooling headwear

A good warm-weather hat needs a broad brim, a lightweight material, and plenty of ventilation. Baseball-style caps are fine for the golf course (though plastic mesh backs will be considered tacky), but a good straw or cloth hat with a full brim goes best in most situations. Pick a crown shape that works for you and

Pick a crown shape that works for you and make sure it has holes in it somewhere, either punched with grommets or woven in naturally. The white Panama hat is always a classic, and most outdoors shops sell collapsible broad-brimmed hats with mesh siding that you can crush down for easy packing.

Ideally you won't need much in the way of jackets for warm climates.

Southern gentlemen in the United States occasionally choose to sport a seersucker suit, but most men won't have enough use for one to warrant the considerable investment.

Light-colored suits in linen, cotton, or “tropical” wools work well if you happen to have one, and if you plan on spending considerable time in a hot climate we recommend buying one; otherwise, make do with khaki trousers and a blazer.

Sometimes called the “California suit,” the navy blazer with brass buttons worn over light khaki trousers is comfortable, classic, and acceptable at all but the highest levels of formality in warm climates.

Skipping the necktie and wearing it over an open collar is less formal, but more comfortable.

## Suggested Packing List for a Week in Warm Weather

The following list is a good starting point. Use your judgment and knowledge of the what you can expect in terms of weather, social environment and your activity level to fill in the details.

Remember that your goal is to pack light, pack smart and pack sharp.

<b>Clothing Item</b>	<b>Suggested Amount</b>
Underwear	6 pairs
Socks	4 pairs
Polo shirts / Short-sleeved shirts	2 pairs
Long-sleeved lightweight dress shirts	2 pairs
Trousers	2 pairs
Boat shoe or moccasins	1 pair
Dress shoes	1 pair
Activity clothing (e.g. beachwear)	-
Workout clothing	1 set
Suit / Blazer jacket (if necessary)	-
Lightweight cashmere sweater *	1
Dopp kit	-

\*Optional: Sometimes warm weather climates have warm days, but cool nights. Pack at your own discretion

Are You Ready to Take Action?

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## How to Pack Your Suitcase for a Week in Warm Weather

Self-vacuuming travel bags are your friend. You can stuff your underwear, socks, base-layers and beachwear into a travel bag.

This will allow more room for your sharp clothing: more room equals less wrinkles.

1. Put the self-vacuuming travel bag in one of the bottom corners.
2. Tightly roll your towel and put it in the other corner parallel with the short-side of the suitcase
3. Loosely fold a pair of trousers and lay them on top of the travel bag
4. If you have an extra pair of shoes, now is the time to put them along the top side of the suitcase (soles touching the suitcase)
5. Take a shirt and gently fold the sleeves (if long-sleeved) over the center of the shirt, then starting at the collar roll the shirt down to the bottom. Put this "shirt log" into the suitcase. Do this with all your shirts and sweater (if you decide to pack one).
6. Pack your workout clothing and Dopp kit last.
7. Put on the remaining clothes

## Closing Thoughts on the Warm-Weather Packing List

Being comfortable is the most important factor to consider when you pack for your week-long trip to a warm weather climate. Selecting lightweight natural fabrics in light colors is guaranteed to make you look sharp and keep your body cool. Make sure you rotate your clothing.

Hang the previous day's clothing on a chair or on a coat hanger to keep it dry and clean – the weather will be warm and sweat will most likely be unavoidable, so don't plan on wearing the same item two days in a row.



[Click here](#) to see what summer clothes you can interchange.

- The End -

...or is it just the **beginning of your style journey?**

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See you on the other side!