

Classics revisited The blazer

It has helped break glass ceilings, seen generations through school and been privy to countless knuckle-biting job interviews. The blazer is a stalwart staple that should be afforded space in every wardrobe.

Its qualities lie in its unique ability to elevate any outfit from shabby to smart, and to go with just about anything, be it jeans, a look favoured by Diana, Princess of Wales; slung over the shoulders of a floaty dress on a cool summer's evening in the manner of Kate Moss; or paired with tailored trousers for a failsafe office-appropriate look.

The etymology of its name is a preppy one. The first

sartorial 'blazers' were the distinctive scarlet jackets sported by members of the Lady Margaret Boat Club, the rowing club for students of St John's College, Cambridge, founded in 1825. The name stuck, becoming the universal term for a formal jacket that sits somewhere between a sports jacket and a suit jacket.

It has enjoyed numerous incarnations by way of high fashion, from Balmain's signature slim-cut, strong-shouldered style to Stella McCartney's season-after-season reworking in myriad colours and fabrics, but can be found faithfully on the high street in Zara, Reiss and Uniqlo. **Bibby Sowray**



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Diana, Princess of Wales, at Guards Polo Club, Windsor, in 2002

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How to wear it now by Victoria Bain

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| <p>The new Sloane Blazer and jeans are a King's Road classic; modernise with lace-up flats</p> <p>Stretch-ponte blazer, £390, Theory (theory.com); jeans, £40, Topshop (topshop.com); cotton shirt, £225, Margaret Howell (margarethowell.co.uk); silver and leather Kelly watch, £1,650, Hermès (hermes.com); snakeskin and leather bag, £1,585, Chloé (net-a-porter.com); shoes, £225, Russell and Bromley (russellandbromley.co.uk)</p> | <p>Dress up Mash up unisex signatures (blazer, plimsolls) with a sweet print</p> <p>Double-breasted club blazer, £300, Gant (gant.co.uk); crepe and lace dress, £488, Toga at Matches (matchesfashion.com); Liberty Inside Out bag, £850, Victoria Beckham (victoriabeckham.com); 22ct-gold earrings, £150, Dinny Hall (dinnyhall.com); Cotu Classic plimsolls, £45, Superga (superga.co.uk)</p> | <p>Get on board A striped skirt is a pleasing vertical take on the nautical Breton top</p> <p>Structured blazer, £69.99, Zara (zara.com); pleated midi skirt, £110, J Crew (jcrew.com); lace-back knitted top, £120, Whistles (whistles.com); D-Frame sunglasses, £245, Céline at Matches (matchesfashion.com); mock-croc leather bag, £49.99, Zara (zara.com); Gommimo loafers, £285, Tod's (tods.com)</p> |
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