

SIMPLE STYLE

SHORTS

Words: **CLARE GOGERTY**

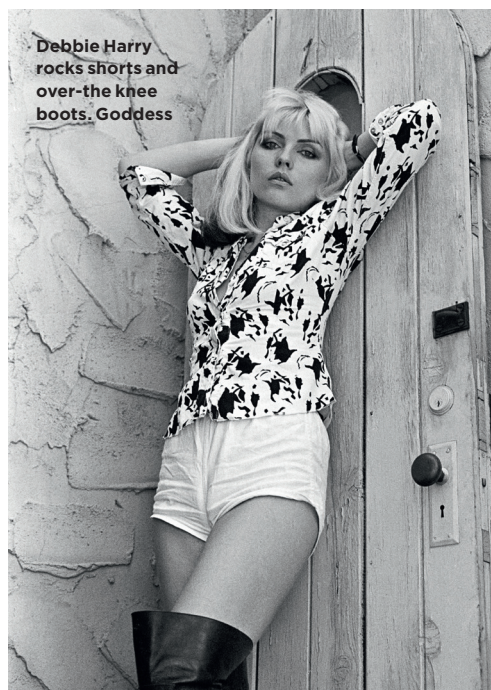
Forget the arrival of swallows, or the chime of the ice-cream van, you know summer has arrived the first day you put on your shorts.

British shorts-wearers, victims of the vagaries of the weather, know the perils that lie therein: unappealing goosebumps when a frisky wind whips up; damp legs that need to be towel-dried; general despondency generated by a bad clothing choice.

But when the sun shines, a pair of shorts is exactly what you want to wear – this is an item of clothing that offers freedom of movement, ventilation and optional sexiness (depending on how short and how tight you choose to wear yours). Also, importantly, unlike a skirt, you can climb a tree or turn cartwheels in shorts with your modesty preserved.

Shorts have been worn by women (as opposed to khaki versions sported by soldiers) since the 1930s. Hollywood stars such as Carole Lombard wore nautical-inspired versions for publicity photographs. The man on the street, however, was not happy about women revealing so much leg and a New York by-law (repealed in 1942) forbade them from doing so.

The secret to modern shorts-wearing is, as in all clothing choices, to buy a pair that suits



“You know summer has arrived the first day you put on your shorts”

your shape. The larger-bottomed, or those just feeling fat, might want to avoid short shorts, for example. But go too roomy and you stray into American tourist territory (don't even think about accessorising with a bum bag). Loose with wide-ish legs and an elasticated or drawstring waist is probably best for most summery purposes.

Shorts for work, on the other hand, are best tailored, high-waisted, above the knee and with pockets to slip your hands into. That way you can bring the spirit of summer into the office without looking like a surfbum.

The great benefit of wearing hot pants (as short shorts were known in the 1970s), like Debbie Harry, left, is that they make your legs look longer. Especially if the shorts are cut-off denims and worn with heels, like Daisy Duke or, more recently, Taylor Swift. Realistically, though, this is a look probably best reserved for the young and slender whose legs are still unmarked by the passing of time and the advent of cellulite. In all honesty, the rest of us will probably be happier, and more comfortable, in the longer-legged versions.

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES


THE UPDATE



 **Lovina shorts | £45**
Loose linen shorts, perfect for scampering about on the beach.
seasaltcornwall.co.uk


THE
CLASSIC



 **Sandwell shorts | £39.95**
Cotton chino shorts in a fashionable shade of soft coral and with a shorter leg.
joules.com

TWO
WITH A
TWIST



 **Sunny Days printed shorts | £29.95**
An elasticated back means these are easy to pull on and comfy in the extreme.
whitestuff.com