

SIMPLE STYLE

SANDALS

Words: **CLARE GOGERTY**

Summer hasn't really arrived until you've worn your sandals for at least three days in a row. Those odd days when you optimistically whip them out only to have regrettably chilly toes by evening don't count. The constant wearing of sandals is a surer indicator of summer than the arrival of the first swallow.

Like autumn boots and winter coats, sandals are a key seasonal item. As such, they benefit from a refresh each year: slipping freshly pedicured feet into a brand new pair will put a bounce in anybody's step. (Providing they don't rub, of course.) As with any other item of clothing, however, sandals are subject to the vagaries of fashion. We've all padded around in Birkenstocks and clopped about in wooden-soled Hasbeens. And which one of us hasn't got a pair of gladiators, all leather straps and buckles, tucked away at the back of the wardrobe? Salt-water sandals, originally developed for post-war American children in the 1940s from leather scraps, have been the sandal *de choix* for the past couple of years, and show no sign of disappearing. Neither, unfortunately, do Crocs.

The popularity of flat sandals (high-



Sandals: so much comfier than sitting bare-legged on a haystack

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heeled versions are also available, but do not concern us here) is due to the simple fact that they suit hot weather. By leaving most of the foot exposed, they keep it cool and dry. Feet confined by leather and without ventilation run the risk of Athlete's Foot or simply becoming unbearably hot. Which is why sandals have always been with us – a pair discovered in Oregon, America, were estimated to be 10,000 years old, the earliest recorded footwear. It is why they were appreciated by Ancient Greeks of high rank who fashioned sandals from willow leaves that fastened up the leg, and by the Ancient Egyptians whose secured theirs with palm leaves and papyrus.

The only downside to wearing a pair of sandals is the state of the feet within. There is nowhere to hide calloused or grubby feet, and wearing socks with sandals although fashionable, is still best avoided. Fortunately, a cheery nail polish will distract most eyes away from any foot flaws. Nothing should come between you and summer's essential shoe. **S**

PHOTOGRAPHY: TOPFOTO

THE UPDATE



TWO GREAT TWISTS

90s T-Strap wedge | £139

The latest sandal style from the Scandi wooden-sole shoe company. swedishhasbeens.com



Mercy Platform espadrilles | £35

Glamour and comfort combine in this golden sandal/espadrille hybrid. missselfridge.com

THE CLASSIC



Shark Original rose gold sandals | £65

Authentic vintage styling will see these sandals trotted out all summer long. salt-watersandals.com