

SIMPLE STYLE

THE TUNIC

Words: **CLARE GOGERTY**

When the weather is warm and the need to wear something comfortable but not frumpy arises, thoughts turn to the tunic. Worn by many of us practically all of the time, especially in the summer months, it is the go-to option for quick and easy dressing. Slip one over your head, pull on skinny jeans and a pair of trainers and you are good to go to the school gates, to the park to walk the dog and on to the shops. Dress it up with a scarf or a necklace, a pair of leggings and some flat shoes and it's fine for work, too.

The joy of the tunic is, of course, that it is loose. There's nothing fitted about this most simple of garments – at its most basic just two pieces of fabric joined at the sides and the top with holes for the neck and arms, that reaches mid thigh or below. There is room under its generous cut for the female form to exist peacefully, undisturbed by pinching or bulging. And should the desire for any extra helping of pudding arise, there is no waistband to prevent it. (Surrender any notions of having a waist when wearing a tunic – this is about comfort not hourglass silhouettes.)

The tunic's been with us since humanity first stitched cloth. Its loose-fitting design



Tunics: one of the few outfits to make line-dancing in clogs look easy

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was worn by the Ancient Greeks and Romans, generally as an undergarment, and adorned with embroidery and colourful hems depending on status and wealth. It continued to be worn in the Middle Ages, and layered with other items worn on top. More recently, Yves Saint Laurent kickstarted its popularity in 1965 with his Mondrian Collection – a tunic that replicated the Dutch artist's grid-like, colour-block paintings – that was copied by many manufacturers and worn by women ever since.

These days, there's a wealth of tunics in different colours, patterns and lengths to choose from. Some have useful patch pockets to store handy things, others have V-necklines or side vents. Generally, a tunic is at its most comfortable worn with slim trousers and flat shoes, but there is also the option to wear it with bare legs and sandals when the sun shines. It is the busy person's friend: a failsafe choice when time is too short for early morning wardrobe prevarications. Put simply, a tunic couldn't be easier to wear, which is why it will remain in our wardrobes for a very long time. **S**

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES

THE UPDATE



Sol Blaze tunic | £69.95

Simple shape with a colour test pattern in seaside shades.
seasaltcornwall.co.uk

Quinn short-sleeved tunic | £34.95

Short sleeves make this more of a long tee – wonderfully soft, too.
joules.com

Casual linen tunic | £70

This jolly little number is somewhere between dress and tunic.
boden.com