

Clothes encounters can bare office tensions

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NEW YORK (AP) - With summer just around the corner, now's the time to make sure your hemline doesn't rise along with the temperatures.

Too much exposed skin is never appropriate at the office, even in hot weather, according to business etiquette expert Mary Crane.

"If you would even consider wearing any particular item to the beach or to a picnic or to mow the lawn, it's probably not appropriate to wear to the office," she counsels.

To make sure your summertime dress is more stylish than scandalous, Crane offers workplace wardrobe guidelines:

-Check the culture of your organization; what's acceptable at a hip Internet startup may not suit a blue-chip law firm.

-For women, skirts, dresses or shorts should rise no higher than five centimetres above the knee. For men, nothing above the ankle is acceptable.

-Plunging necklines have no place in the office, on men or women. The same goes for flip-flops. Women might get away with a strappy sandal.

-Sleeveless tops can be attractive on women, but anything with straps should be reserved for the weekend.

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