

Pant Lengths hit new highs and lows

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cropped trouser, to pedalpushers, knickers and Bermudas, all the way up to the sexiest short shorts and bloomers.

There's a style for every type of leg out there.

When a classic look is demanded, longer pants prevail, this season bearing straighter legs and narrowness descending from the hip.

To keep these voluminous shapes light-looking, designers are using featherweight fabrics like linen, silk, cotton and cotton poplin. Even ultra-thin wools and gabardines are surfacing for warm weather dressing.

ITALIAN designers are turning out roll up suede shorts and knickers for cool summer nights.

For a dressier look, pants look

terrific with detailed blouses and jackets.

"Short-cropped jackets work well with pants for the office and can be worn with split skirts as well," said Ken Dewey, fashion and marketing director for B. Siegel's Birmingham.

Many of the pants are turning up in watercolor washes of earth tones like pebble gray, rich red clays and subtler shades of gold and mustard.



Pant lengths are making news this season as they start at the ankle and crop up to the thigh. From left to right: A one-piece lycra stretch jumpsuit with exaggerated pouff sleeves (from the Today Store), a bubble short with plaid tank top teamed with gold sandals and ank- (from Hudson's) and a dirndl skirt with cord-tied (from Winkelman's).

So, you want to wear Short shorts

So you want to wear mini-skirts and bubble shorts?

If that's true, then you probably want to tighten your thigh muscles and tone your legs.

Fitness Exercise Co. of Birmingham offers the following leg exercises to help you achieve and better look.

• LUNGES

Starting position: Stand with feet a little more than hip distance apart, toes on a diagonal. Bend right knee into a lunge and straighten. Left leg remains straight. Do eight times. On the eighth one, hold the lunge and do small presses, moving knee back and forth. Do eight times, on the eighth one, hold the lunge, lift the heel and repeat

eight more presses. Repeat the whole sequence with the left leg. Do twice on each side.

• THIGH AND KNEE PRESSES

Starting position: Stand with feet a little more than hip distance apart, toes on a diagonal. Bend knees over toes going half way down. Keep back straight, hips forward, moving only thighs from the hip socket.

Press knees into center and out for 16 times. On the 16th, hold knees center, weight on inside of arch. Squeeze the inner thigh and try to press the knees closer together. Repeat eight times. Repeat whole sequence, gradually increasing repetitions.

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Adapt designs to your figure

Just because short pants are the hottest new fashion item that doesn't mean they look good on every body or every place.

It's important to adapt the fashions to your life style and figure. Women must remember that despite the cropped pants' sophisticated look, they are still play clothes and don't belong in the office.

If you just love the new split skirts but have slightly heavy legs,

opt for the below-the-knee version that are full and resemble skirts. Remember, white isn't for everyone, it makes the body appear larger, so go for the dark hues if you're on the larger side.

If you legs are bone-thin and without a shapely ankle, stay away from the 7/8 pant and the ankle wrap sandal. Those will only emphasize your weak points, so what's the use?

Heavy thighs and cellulite are

ugly, so don't bother showing them off in mini-skorts. Leave those for thin and young women, and let your outfits stretch to the knee.

If a thick waist is your problem, play it down. Forget the big waist bands and waist-grabbing belts. Instead, wear sweaters that don't tuck in and are close to the same color as the split skirt. Avoid contrasting colors, and if you must wear a belt, make it thin and the same color as the skirt.



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