




# Thriller Suits

Fitted skirts, chic jackets,  
proper pocketbooks:  
The heroines of  
Hitchcock's classic  
pulse-racers (think Grace Kelly,  
Tippi Hedren) look  
incredibly together  
even when they're  
seriously imperiled,  
thanks to some  
really beautiful suits.  
Try them as the stress  
mounts at work.

Photographs by Todd Marshard



A woman with blonde hair and sunglasses stands in front of a white house with blue shutters. She is wearing a teal cape over a plaid dress. A birdcage with two small birds is hanging from her waist. The house has a dark shingled roof and a window with blue shutters. The scene is set outdoors on a grassy lawn.

## Suspense & Sensibility

Live dangerously, dress decorously. Ladylike styling on this mohair topper (Moschino Cheap and Chic, \$1,465)—A-line shape, three-quarter sleeves, Peter Pan collar—recalls the fifties, era of respectable Republican cloth coats. A blouson skirt and top in scaled-up plaid (Andrea Karambelas) and sleek pumps (Via Spiga) prove that all your pieces don't have to match: Black-and-white with a bold shade like teal looks superb. Although gloves (La Crasia) and pearl studs (Agatha) are no longer required equipment these days, they're nice for extra polish. Dark glasses with an updated cat's-eye shape (Oliver Peoples by Larry Leight) create a tantalizing distance in Hitchcock's films—taking them off is an act of sexy self-revelation.



Sane, polished,  
and ready for  
anything—even if  
your office is going  
a little psycho.  
That's the beauty  
of a suit.







## Pencil Us In

Business trip? Beware spooky motels—and ennui-inducing ensembles. Instead, begin a day of meetings in a coral cardigan (New York & Company, \$35), silk jabot blouse (Milly, \$236), and narrow skirt (David Meister, \$215). At night go bare armed (the blouse is sleeveless), unbutton the skirt a bit, and add jewel-accented snakeskin heels (Dolce & Gabbana). A gold necklace (Chimento), flower-shaped earrings (Van Ness Designs), and upswept hair showcase the neck, Hitch's preferred erogenous zone. Department of win some, lose some: The new "top handle" bag (Salvatore Ferragamo) has shorter straps that won't go over your shoulder—but does it ever look elegant.

## Two Easy Pieces

*Opposite page:* It's murder having to reinvent the wheel, wardrobe-wise, every weekday morning. Matched pieces make it simpler to get dressed for work: This camel herringbone suit (Lauren by Ralph Lauren, \$399) partners a pared-down jacket with a skirt that's snug at the hip, flared at the hem. Gloves (La Crasia) and pearl studs (Majorica) affirm the value of the subtle accessory, as does the gold link bracelet (Tony White)—one of autumn's newly energized classics, it casts a handsome, burnished glow on everything from white shirts to black gowns.



## To Catch a Plaid

Trenchcoats are staples of crime melodramas; same goes for plaid capes, courtesy of Sherlock Holmes.

So this hybrid (Valentino Red, \$1,250)—double-breasted and belted in front,

sweeping and dramatic in back, with an unexpected (and delectable) floral lining—is true to the British mystery tradition. With

the cape as the base, build your own suit: A cashmere turtleneck (Manrico,

\$498) and wool pencil skirt (French Connection, \$118)

worked for us. Good sidekicks for chasing bad guys: double-handled satchel

(CeCe Cord), indispensable pearl studs (Agatha),

and short leather gloves (La Crasia). Red heels (Christian Louboutin) contribute a frisson of danger.



Left: Kim Novak, all wrapped up on the set of 1958's *Vertigo*. Right: Tiny-waisted Tippi Hedren and feathered companion. 1. Anne Klein gold link watch, \$150. 2. Christian Roth oversize sunglasses, \$275.



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## The Hitchcock Mystique

Kim and Tippi, of course. Grace Kelly and Eva Marie Saint. The legendary director's tall, slim, impeccably dressed blondes seem cool and well mannered, but there's heat—not to mention dark secrets—underneath: a tension between ladylike exteriors (suits, gloves, pearls) and sensual appetites. Except for bare shoulders or a glimpse of the nape of the neck, the body is largely covered. "Suspense is like a woman," Hitchcock once said. "The more she leaves to the imagination, the greater the emotion and the expectation." Even if we lead a quiet life compared to these stars' onscreen escapades (and even if we're brunettes), the principle of discreet sexiness holds true—especially this season, when there is a profusion of shapely yet refined skirt suits that show a fifties, early sixties influence. The point, though, is not vintage reproductions but modern adaptations. In place of sprayed hair and coordinated ensembles, there's a looser, more accessible version of the French twist and a freer definition of the suit. And we found willing accomplices to all this low-key glamour in updated accessory classics like silk scarves, status sunglasses, gold watches. For fall, anything obvious is strictly for the birds. —KATHERINE B. WEISSMAN



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3. Majorica faux-diamond earrings, \$145. 4. Moschino stitched pumps have a heart (literally); \$295. 5. The right silky fillip for a suit: Burberry scarf, \$225.



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This fur (it's fake mink) is above suspicion: Marc Bouwer jacket. J. Crew wool skirt, \$128. Hermès gloves, \$1,050. Van Ness Designs earrings, \$45. Alexandra Knight alligator clutch.





We're spellbound  
by a dress with jewelry  
built right in: We can  
imagine it taking us  
brilliantly through endless  
days, lavish nights.

### Dial M for Magnificent

Things are seldom what they seem in a Hitchcock film—unpredictable plot twists are his specialty—so he would have appreciated the witty surprise of an embroidered “necklace” on a dress in menswear tweed (Monique Lhuillier). The silhouette is demure (drop waist, self-belt, full skirt), down to the well-bred sweater in pale yellow cashmere (Tse, \$395). This sort of embellishment—a modern take on vintage beaded cardigans—is a natural for any day-to-night situation. And the dress is so decorative on its own that you can skip most accessories—pearl studs (Agatha) and a delicate link bracelet (Cartier) are enough. *For details see Shop Guide.*

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