

Topping it off: short jackets required

by Sharon_Mosley

If there's one wardrobe staple that is a must-have for chilly spring days and nights, it's a jacket. Those sheer floral tops, tanks and camisoles just don't quite do the job. Let's face it, goose bumps are not attractive fashion accessories any time of the year.

SPRING STARTER - Start at the top this spring and add a shorter jacket to your wardrobe like JC Penney's grey linen cropped jacket teamed with a graphic-print blouse and black wide-leg pant. CNS Photo courtesy of JC Penney. Most of us need at least one or two jackets we can count on - and often even more - for work, for play and for dressing up. If you can find one jacket that is versatile enough to do all three, then you've really got a winner.

This spring the newest jackets are definitely on the shorter side.

Here's the spring lineup of toppers that will give your wardrobe instant style:

- The cropped jacket: The shorter "shrunken" looks are all fashion favorites this spring. In fitted one-button silhouettes or more slouchy, loose and swingy trapezes, this is a jacket that can easily go from casual with a T-shirt to dressy with a frilly blouse.

- The collarless jacket: Another ladylike style that complements this year's ruffle tops and tie blouses. Usually in a little longer length, the collarless jacket is a stylish frame for bold necklaces, too.

- The luxe parka: Take a shorter sporty windbreaker, add a silky fabric in a rich color and you've got a chill chaser that will dress up anything you wear from jeans to a cocktail dress.

- The jackets with sleeve details: Whether it's a puff-sleeved jacket that is belted, or a short bolero style with three-quarter (bracelet) sleeves, these spring jackets can make an outfit. They're also a great "cover-up" layer for a sheer printed dress or tunic.

- The shorter trench: Always a classic, the trench this spring is still going strong. You'll find this basic dressed up in soft metallics, bold colors and sophisticated neutrals. There's a trench for every occasion.

- The cardigan sweater jacket: Next to the trench, this soft solution to spring's breezy days and nights is always a classic way to top it all off. The latest looks have been updated with extra details like delicate beading, glimmering sequins or unique buttons.

- The belted vest: Another way to add a little something to the top for spring. In lightweight knits or linens, the vest, especially if belted, adds a modern touch of feminine masculinity to any outfit.

- The short jacket tip: Don't automatically skip wearing a shorter jacket just because you feel like you have a few figure flaws you'd rather cover up.

If you need to "hide" fuller hips and thighs, layer a longer length tee or tank under the shorter jacket. Coordinate with the color of your pants or skirt for a more flattering slimming effect.

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