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Wet weather booty: from above left to right, on the catwalk of Marc at Marc Jacobs, Pucci and Burberry Prorsum

How to keep dry in a rainbow of colours

Fashion designers don't always consider the practicalities of our daily lives, but they have finally got to grips with the problem of how to stay chic in the pouring rain. For this winter, Marc Jacobs has transformed the Wellington boot into a coveted accessory. His boots, which come in Crayola-bright colours – including cherry red, green, blue and white – are unlike any other welly; their sleek silhouette and short, block heels mean we could actually wear them around town. Jacobs showed them on the catwalk with tucked-in, baggy cords, silk slip dresses and colourful, striped skirts and patchwork jumpers (Marc at Harvey Nichols; tel: 020 7235 5000).

Others have also given

this practical boot a makeover. Hunter, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, has produced boots in a rainbow of colours – from pink and yellow to black and Wedgwood blue, and, of course, its original bottle green (tel: 01387 269591). Paul Smith has designed cropped versions in his signature multi-coloured stripe, with pink kitten heels (tel: 020 7727 3553). Meanwhile, Issey Miyake has decorated Wellingtons with illustrations of space-age cartoon characters (tel: 020 7851 4620). Kurt Geiger has boots in colourful graphic prints (tel: 020 7646 1888), and mail-order firm Boden has pairs with big, colourful spots (tel: 0845 6775000).

Some of the best wet-weather clothing can be found at Fenwick. Orla

Kiely's autumn waterproofs in glossy, primary colours – including floppy rainhats and hooded macs with matching shoulder bags – make a stunning display. The store also has fun boots with animal prints, spots or Smarties patterns (tel: 020 7620 9161).

Mackintosh, which produces outerwear for Hermès, Marc Jacobs, Gueci and Celine, has relaunched its collection of waterproof macs (tel: 01236 723338). They come in every colour imaginable, and a selection of prints, which feature stilettos, floral prints from the Liberty archive, and an elegant paisley. The company, which has just opened a shop in London's Burlington Arcade, also has very chic waterproof capes, in beige and polka dots.

One of the newest and most inventive pieces of kit is the "skoody", which was designed by Benjamin Shine, a Central St Martins graduate. Inspired by the variable British weather, the skoody transforms from a lightweight-fleece scarf into a hooded top, and then into a waterproof jacket. It costs £30 and is available in nine colours – including pink, purple, grey and blue (see www.skoody.co.uk).

Umbrellas are also more distinctive this season; from leopard print (£12, at Topshop) and polka dots (£55, at Lulu Guinness; tel: 020 7823 4828) to chic checks (£49, at Mulberry; 020 7491 3900) and elegant versions in lots of pretty colours at Pickett (£82-50; 020 7493 8939).

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