

Legs

Think of the shortest hemline in your closet. Hell, think of the shortest hemline in your past. Now lop off a good four inches. Welcome to spring, people.

It's no accident that the miniskirts and minishorts and mindresses of the season are being juxtaposed with shoes that can make the ground tremble with every stomp. In fact, that's the whole point. The real look of the season, the real accessory, the real "must-have"? Two things you already own: your legs.

There are a few ways to get your gams in fighting form. First you'll need a razor with a hundred blades—or, say, five. We like the Gillette Venus Swirl Razor and EOS Shave Cream. Shaving is exfoliating, so no need to use a scrub. If your legs aren't blessed with a healthy dose of natural melanin, you probably already know that self-tanner is a friend. But here's what you don't know—or at least keep forgetting: The amount of DHA in your self-tanner, not how much you apply, determines how deep the color will get. So lay it on thick. The more you apply, the more even your skin will look. Trust. You currently have 14,367 self-tanner options, so we're happy to share three of our favorites: The new Jergens Natural Glow Wet Skin Moisturizer goes on damp skin as soon as you turn off the shower, Vita Liberata Ten Minute Tan has express formulas beat by 50 minutes, and Clarins Self Tanning Instant Gel has never let us down.

Now for the real insider's hack: Once your self-tanner is completely dry, rub on a moisturizing serum. We highly recommend NYDG Luminizing Skin Essence. It's a toner-serum hybrid for face and body, but here's why you really care about it: It was

the insider trick of Victoria's Secret Angels, who used it on their legs (and arms and faces) before walking the runway last November. It makes self-tanner look more natural, it makes the skin look soft and smooth, and it makes the legs look, you know, just, damn.

To be fair, the beauty of this look is not just in legs that are smooth, defined, or the length of tree limbs. (Though admittedly that doesn't hurt.) The real beauty in showing off our lower appendages is the feeling of empowerment that results. There's history here—a profound, hard-fought history. With every passing generation, what we cut off our hemlines, we added to our backbones. Showing off our legs was never just about showing off our legs. It was about our freedoms. Our bodies. Our stance. It was about standing up and looking out. Our legs carry us through the world. Celebrating them has always meant taking pride in them—and in ourselves.

And a hemline whose length is best measured in millimeters makes us stand taller. It makes us walk prouder.

It makes us unstoppable.

—DANIELLE PERGAMENT

BOOT CAMP

Opposite page, left: Leather top by Hermès. Silver bracelet by Jennifer Fisher. Right: Cotton jacket by Marni. Leather shorts by 3.1 Phillip Lim. On both: Airbrush Legs Leg Makeup in Medium Glow by Sally Hansen. Details, see Shopping Guide.