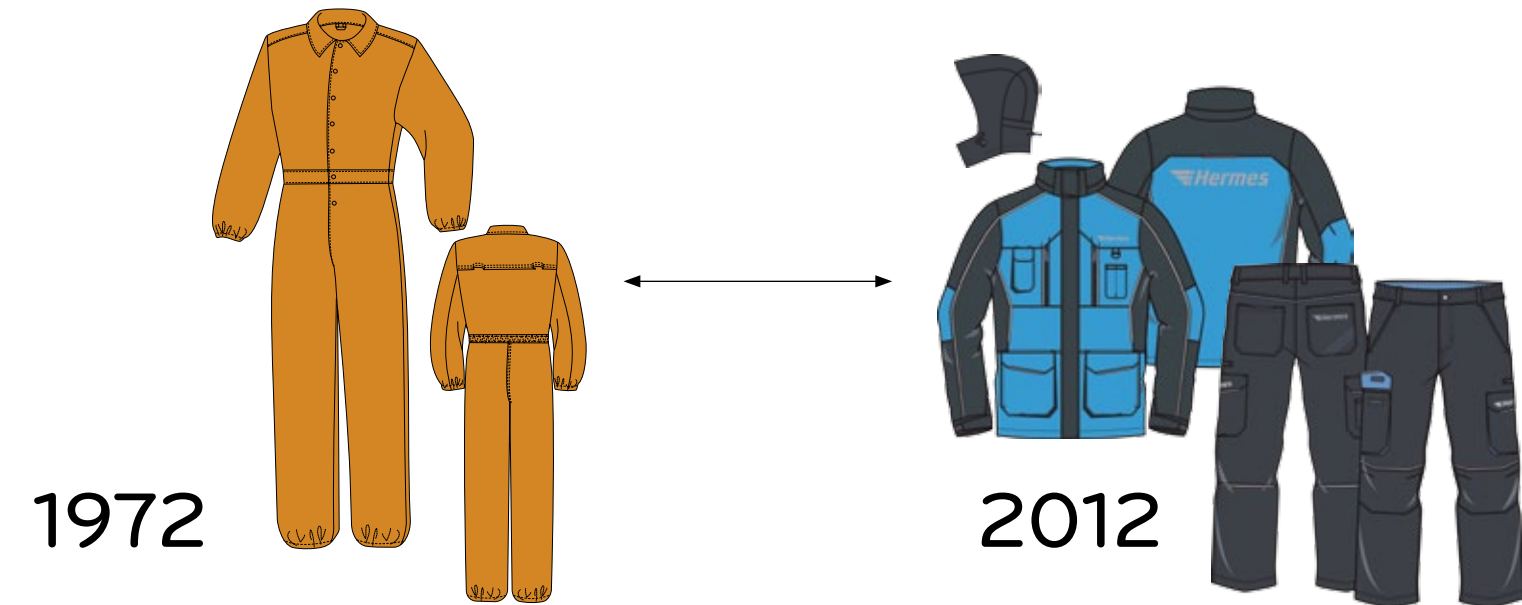




Orange does not suit everybody, but Hermes employees certainly stood out in their brightly coloured overalls

## THE RIGHT OUTFIT

As time goes by: the uniform



Fashion is a form of ugliness so intolerable” said British dandy and writer Oscar Wilde (“The Picture of Dorian Gray”), “that we have to alter it every six months”. Looking at certain fashion trends, one can’t help but to agree with him: The platform shoes of the seventies, for example. Or the rolled up jacket sleeves with pastel-coloured lining of the eighties. The buttock tattoos of the nineties. Or the way of wearing jeans that has persisted right to the present day so as to show off one’s boxers in their full glory – or perhaps not.

There are exceptions, however. Work clothing has long had the function of keeping you warm and clean – to be both practical and functional. Just like the orange or bright-orange overalls which Hermes issued to its delivery agents in the 1970s. This, as was also noticed, contrasted strongly with the blue and white painted vehicles.

From 1988 Hermes introduced blue uniforms, which presented a consistent and friendlier image, for its entire field staff. It had its own shirts designed, which were accompanied by summer and winter jackets. The outfit changed again and again over the years; sometimes the jackets were light blue with dark blue stripes, other times entirely dark blue with light accents.

The current collection comprises a baseball cap, T-shirt, polo shirt, trousers and matching jackets – all in dark blue with a brilliant white signet and reflector strips. Just for the 45,000 shirts that Hermes orders each year, the purchasing department ensures that no banned dyes or bleaching agents have been used and that the clothing is stain-resistant and colour-fast, including against perspiration and UV light.

Hermes plans, however to introduce a new uniform – just in time for its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is reminiscent of that bold and pragmatic outdoor clothing which is no longer shapeless and unfashionable but in recent years has come to appeal to more and more people as aesthetically pleasing. With their combination of Dresden blue, ebony and Arctic ice, the uniforms use new colour accents. The outfit comes in an outdoors and indoors version, is wind-proof, water-resistant and breathable. And the wardrobe is completed by a padded micro-fleece waistcoat with a high stand-up collar and a reflective 3D print of the Hermes lettering to provide visibility.

Admittedly, it is unlikely to be seen at the Milan or Paris fashion shows. But the outfit isn’t intended for the catwalk but rather for the street. Streetwear in the truest sense of the word. ■