

Springtime hues you can use

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Pretty Ballerina Flats, \$159 at www.revolveclothing.com (Julia Ewan - The Washington Post)

It's hard to ignore the ever-louder drumbeat of the '80s fashion revival. At first, it was just a pair of leggings here and some bright plastic jewelry there. Then designers were seemingly unable to resist the siren song of exaggerated power shoulders (Balmain), bandage dresses (Herve Leger) and ankle boots (everyone).



Forever 21 Contempo watch, \$14.80 at Forever 21 stores and www.forever21.com (Julia Ewan - The Washington Post)

And now, perhaps the final frontier of '80s trends: searing, shocking fluorescents.

Yet there's no reason to once again top a shocking hot pink dress with a blinding yellow windbreaker. There's a more modern way to wear neon: by tempering smaller doses of acid brights with ample layers of subtle, quiet neutrals.



Forever 21 fedora, \$4.99 at Forever 21 stores and www.forever21.com (Julia Ewan - The Washington Post)

"You need to ground it. Otherwise, it's just too much," says shoe designer Ruthie Davis, whose headlong dive into "optic brights" (the word "neon" draws unfair judgment, she says) for her futuristic spring collection wasn't actually about revisiting the palette's last Big Moment. It was simply apropos for the times.

"I just wanted fun, pop art, plastic fantastic; I just wanted to make really pretty shoes," she says. "I lived in the '80s. I've been there, done that -- so I'm always moving forward."



Davis by Ruthie Davis High Line sandal, \$794.95 at www.endless.com (Julia Ewan - The Washington Post)

So how do you stay fashion-forward while referencing such a distinctively throwback trend? Try one of these tactics, which make sure highlighter hues do exactly that:

Accent. Take away the guesswork by donning a piece that features unexpected, pre-measured bursts of neon alongside understated shades, as seen on Doo-Ri's spring runways, where the designer trimmed cement-colored pants and dresses with bold neon piping.

Accessorize. Make the most of neon by layering minimal, simple pieces in subdued shades like beige, ivory, navy and gray, then ushering in flashes of neon through ultra-bright accessories.

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