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Ice in hats, ventilated suits - keeping cool at work

By **Jasmine Andersson**
BBC News

🕒 3 days ago

UK heatwaves





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| A couple seen working on their laptops under the shade on a hot and sunny day London

Across the UK and elsewhere in Europe people are definitely feeling the heat.

But while many of us have the option to seek cover in the shade, others are tasked with spending their working week under the glare of the sun, leading to some innovative ways of keeping cool.

'I keep ice under my hat'



SPIKE ABBOTT

At the Tower of London, Yeoman Warder Spike Abbott is fully prepared for the hordes of tourists still wanting guided tours in the heat.

"Our uniform is from the Tudor period, and the Tudors would not have anticipated operating in temperatures like today. I think it is 32C in central London.

"As soon as you put on a Tudor bonnet the heat builds because the hat is quite heavy and insulated. Then you're wearing dark trousers and formal shoes.

That's why I put a small ice block under my hat during tours.

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"I use a small ice block that you put in a freezer and into your lunch box. They fit perfectly into the hat. But I don't do a full tour with it because it's not particularly safe to have an ice block sitting on top of your head.

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"Between tours I take the ice block out and then if you've got it in your hand and put it around your face and that it certainly helps if you're holding something that's cold.

"We have picked this up from many previous Yeoman Warders that have done this. It worked today anyway."

'I spent £180 on a ventilated suit'



Simon Barnes has looked after bees for 23 years. There's only one way to avoid bee stings - cover up.

"My father was a beekeeper, and he showed me how to care for them as a teenager, but I wasn't interested. But he must have had a long-term plan, because now I'm hooked, and I look after 40 colonies dotted over Cumbria.

"Beekeeping requires a thick suit to limit the risk of being stung. In this weather, wearing a thick suit is far from ideal. During visits at the moment, I press a damp towel to my neck and I have bought a ventilated suit.

"The suits are a new invention. They started appearing on the market last year in places like India, so I prepared myself and bought one at the start of this season.

"It's made up of three layers. The outer has the vents, then there's a thin membrane of material in the middle, with a third layer that wicks the moisture out, then the bees can't get their stings through.

"I've found there has to be a slight breeze for it to work, which has been a bit challenging at the moment. If there's no air, you get pretty warm and sweaty.

"I'll take on the heat if it means I can look after the bees."

'We jump into a paddling pool'



Performing in a costume holding a puppet panda is hot work but Luke Ansley and his colleagues at Chessington World of Adventures have found a way to face it.

"We perform to up to 600 people in an outdoor arena where the actors wear full body suits, capes, masks and wigs, and some have puppets. Shows are really high energy, with lots of dancing and stage combat, with the characters weaving in and out of the audience.

"The shows range from 15 to 25 minutes, so we're not onstage for too long, but it does get pretty boiling.

"A couple of years ago I had the idea that we should install some paddling pools for the actors to jump into after the show. We can take our costumes off and climb into the pool, and it is an instant relief.

"Luckily for the kids, we have a character that sprays a water pistol around the audience. They love it, and in weather like this, it has the added bonus of keeping them cool."

Additional reporting by Andre Rhoden-Paul

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