

## Keeping Dry

Dripping trousers and rain-matted hair spoil any professional look, so the umbrella is a key accessory during rainy spring months. Be practical in your purchase, says Michelle Sterling, principal of San Francisco-based image consulting company Global Image Group. "Realistically, within our fast-paced and mobile lifestyles, who has time to make sure that we don't lose our hundred-dollar umbrella?" She suggests purchasing a sturdy, modestly priced (\$15-\$50) automated folding umbrella in plain black — the foolproof professional choice for everyone. But if you're looking to add some variety to your collection, this guide will help you keep dry in style.

Travelon, \$34.99

If you'd like to add color without attracting too much attention, choose a subdued plaid. And luckily for dog-lovers, this particular selection comes with a matching pet umbrella for the canine in your life — just don't get carried away and bring Fido to the office.

Coach, \$58

This umbrella is an option for those willing to spend more. "Generally speaking, blue is good in professional settings because it evokes trust," Sterling says. A brand logo does look chic, but Sterling suggests choosing a company known for making umbrellas.

Samsonite, ultra mini flat lightweight, \$22

This compact umbrella is perfect for stashing in your shoulder bag or briefcase. A noticeable departure from basic black, Sterling says it's especially "suitable for a woman who has some spark in her personality and wants to express herself, yet is also practical in convention."

Ahedrain, pro-reflect sport umbrella, \$34

Give black some bang with a bright yellow reflective strip and matching handle. Those worried about getting run over by speeding traffic on a rainy night may rejoice, but remember that "the strip would probably be more irritating than appealing to others," Sterling says.

Shedrain, jumbo automatic, \$19

You can relive your days on the sun-warmed shore as you stride down rainy sidewalks with this striped beach umbrella. It sounds tempting, but Sterling says it's not particularly professional, and is probably best left for use at a sporting event or in the sand.