

M&S Uniform Timeline

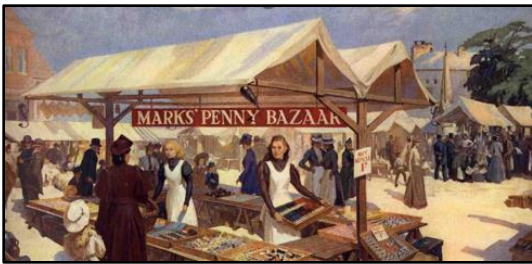
How M&S has dressed generations of colleagues



Oldham Street Store team,
Manchester, 1898

1884-1920s

In the early years there was no set uniform. Employees wore black dresses, often with a white high boned collar. The store manager was responsible for ensuring sales assistants were smart and tidy.



Artist's impression of Kirkgate Market,
Leeds

1884-1920s

This artist's impression of the first Marks' Penny Bazaar, painted in the 1950s by artist Van Jones, represents two early employees Laura Cowburn and Esther Brown, both employed by M&S in the 1900s. It suggests employees wore white aprons over black long-sleeved dresses as their uniform.



Employees from Neath store,
1935

1930s

With the shift from Penny Bazaar market stalls and shops to superstores, employees wore an embroidered M&S logo on their uniforms. On some uniforms the logo could be seen on a cravat, while on others the logo was placed on the right-hand side of the overall.



Café colleagues, 1935

1935

In 1935, Café bars opened in some of our stores. Colleagues serving in the café wore white overalls with a halo-style hat presenting a fresh and clean appearance.



ARP badges, 1940s

1939-1945

With the outbreak of war additional safety measures were put in place by Chief Air Raid Precaution (ARP) officer Ralph Salaman. Gas masks were carried and colleagues trained in ARP were required to wear a badge that reflected their role, rank and responsibility. This included first aid and fire wardens.



Marketing booklet,
1940s

1939-1940s

We continued to use an embroidered logo, but the design was now a roundel. Female colleagues wore green heavy-weight cotton belted dresses.



Marketing booklet,
1945

1945

'A Girl's Future' recruitment brochure showed the image of a female colleague wearing a blue sleeveless revere collar overall with a blue check blouse underneath.



Staff Management News, Nov 1950

1950

We released 'Dressed for the Job' a leaflet engaging employees on how to wear and care for their uniform.

We highlighted that 'care and thought' had gone into the design of the uniform to make it 'comfortable' and 'easy to put on and off.'



Employee uniform, 1950-1968

1950-c1968

Employees wore blue dresses with a button down front and smart collar. These garments were made from polyester, its easy-care properties making them more durable.

Practical features included ventilation holes under the arms and a pen pocket.



Employee uniform badge, 1950-1968

This new look uniform was completed with a belt and a gold pin badge worn at the centre of the collar showing the brand logo.



Staff Manageress uniform, 1950-1968

Staff Manageresses dressed in royal blue with a white blouse underneath, complete with the gold brooch on the collar.



Employee uniform, c1968-1979

c1968-1979

We introduced a blue and white gingham dress with blue piping detail.

All colleagues at different positions within the store including Manageresses and Management Trainees wore a gold brooch with the M&S logo.



St Michael News,
Nov 1970

1970

Our November issue of St Michael News reported employees being invited to swap their uniform in favour of 'midi pinafores and pants suits' to promote the new Young St Michael range, complete with a distinctive new badge.



M&S Career News, 1970s

1970

Our careers newsletter advertised M&S uniforms as 'easy-care', 'attractive and comfortable.'



Wine Shop, 1974

1973

With the launch of the Wine Shop, colleagues began to wear a sash as part of their uniform to highlight their expertise in the wine department.



M&S colleagues, 1975

1975

In September, we announced a new uniform for Supervisors that was 'chic, comfortable and easy care.' Made with 100% woven polyester the dress was a navy, red and white check design and could be worn with a coordinating navy jacket.

Food Supervisors had the option of a trouser suit with a matching blue jumper due to the chilly conditions they were working in.

1979-1987

In July, we introduced a distinctive lattice pattern to our uniforms and varied the colour ways, depending on the role of the employee. Blue name badges were also introduced.

Warehouse colleagues were now colour coordinated with the addition of a short, modern jacket.



M&S colleagues, 1979



Food Supervisor,
1979

1979-1987

Male Food Supervisors wore a polyester trouser suit paired with a cream polo neck jumper, and trousers had a straighter leg.

Female Supervisors wore a three-piece suit including skirt, waistcoat and blazer worn with a white cotton blouse.



Deputy Supervisor,
1979

1979-1987

Deputy Supervisors wore a navy polyester pinafore dress with a silky polo neck under a lightweight print blouse.

1979-1987

Female sales employees wore a red and blue lattice design with navy piping and button-down front. This design came in the form of a dress or blouse to be worn with trousers if working on the Food department.



M&S colleagues, 1979



Catering uniform, 1979

1979-1987

Colleagues in the catering unit wore a cream polyester uniform dress in a green and ochre lattice pattern, with a zipped front as an extra safety feature.

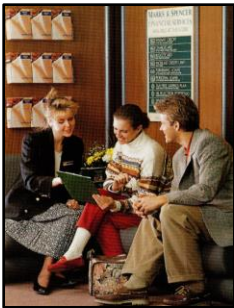
Other details included a green fold down collar, and green trim on the sleeves.



Cleaner's uniform, 1983

1983

Based on the design of the catering uniform, we introduced a female cleaner's uniform dress in blue polyester with a green and blue M&S lattice pattern.



Chargecard colleague, 1992

1984

We launched M&S Chargecard. Our Chargecard team wore clothing taken from the sales floor to set them apart.



Colleague at York
Coppergate store, 1985

1985

In April, we opened our first separate satellite store for kidswear in York. A specially designed uniform was worn as part of the new venture. The fun use of yellow and spot design on this uniform contrasted with the beige, red and blue design being used across all stores.



M&S colleagues, 1986



Colleague uniform, 1987



M&S colleagues, 1987



M&S Supervisor, 1990

1986

In March, we announced a trial for a completely new style of uniform. This was successfully introduced a year later to coincide with a new, modern look being implemented across stores.

1987-1994

We introduced contrasting tones of grey stripes throughout uniform clothing design.

Name tags were enlarged to make them easily readable for customers and names were embossed rather than printed.

New styles included sleeveless pullovers for male employees with a tie that matched the women's dress.

The new uniforms are made with woven fabric to make them more comfortable to wear in the Summer.

The Supervisor uniform included a grey striped dress with a plain reverse collar.

1990

In April, we announced a new structure to our management system including a new role of Department Manager, with a tailored suit worn as part of the uniform.

We recycled more than 45,000 of our old M&S colleague uniforms by donating them to charities overseas.



Supervisors and catering uniforms, 1993

1993-2000

In March, we introduced a new ivory jacquard print design with navy or white backgrounds and gold badges. A poll of colleagues suggested navy as being the smartest colour to wear, and so it formed the core of the uniform colour scheme.

Female catering colleagues wore a navy tabard with a zip front dress to conform to safety standards.



Sales Assistant and Deputy Supervisor uniforms, 1993

The majority of uniform for male staff was taken directly from the sales floor. Supervisors wore smart navy blazers paired with a blue shirt and club tie with M&S motif.

Sales Assistants and Deputy Supervisors dressed in navy trousers with a navy lambswool pullover, blue shirt and club tie. Dresses were partnered with tailored navy jackets.



M&S colleagues, 1993

All uniforms were machine washable, with dresses available in standard and long lengths, with female supervisors having a choice of three different skirt lengths. Deputy Supervisors continued to be identified by their badge.



M&S colleagues, 2000

2000-2004

As we entered the new millennium, our uniform maintained a smart, tailored look, but with a simplified design.

Consultation with employees highlighted the importance of corporate uniform being cost effective, available in a larger range of sizes, easier to wash and dry and being more durable.

A wider range of formal and casual outfit combinations including cream blouses and a new trouser option became available.

A later introduction to shirts and blouses was our green Marks & Spencer branding embroidered on the chest pocket. Guidelines showed colleagues where name badges should be placed on garments.

c2000s

We began to promote offers and deals in stores on t-shirts worn by colleagues.



M&S colleagues, 2001



M&S colleagues, 2003



Uniforms for promotions, 2000



per una colleagues, 2001

2001

We launched per una as an in-house brand within womenswear, with 840 designated colleagues wearing items from the range. This later changed to a specially designed uniform including pink t-shirts and a black fleece carrying the per una logo.

2004

The new Your M&S branding was introduced and appeared as an embroidered logo on our uniforms.



M&S colleague, 2004

2004

Female options now included beige and black tailored shirts, and our Section Coordinators were easily distinguished by red shirts or blouses.



Colleague uniform, 2008

2008

We launched Shwopping, encouraging our customers to donate unwanted clothing in-store. This was extended to colleagues every time a new uniform change took place.



Shwopping, 2008

2012

M&S Money was rebranded as M&S Bank, with the first branch opening in Marble Arch store.

M&S Bank colleagues dressed in eye-catching fuchsia pink, with dark grey suits and flashes of brand green.



M&S Bank uniform, 2012



M&S uniform, 2013

2012-2015

To make our employees more visible to customers on the shop floor, a new design featuring core grey and brand green accents was trialled in November at Marble Arch, Kensington and Milton Keynes stores, with the aim of being introduced across stores by the end of 2013.



M&S uniform, 2013

The design was inspired by current high street trends, with the quality of materials used similar to those used for airline uniforms. All designs aimed to suit every size, shape and age of employees.



M&S uniform, 2013

This new range was designed as a 'Wardrobe Collection' giving employees a choice from a selection of blouses, shirts, dresses, t-shirts, jackets, fleeces, trousers, skirts, jumpers and neckerchiefs for female Managers, all designed to easily coordinate.



M&S uniform, 2013

Practical features included concealed pen pockets and key loops, and larger pockets on cargo trousers for employees working on Operations and VM.

We also added larger badges making them easier for customers to read. All badges were made from recycled material and had a resin finish to make them longer lasting.



Beauty uniform, 2013

2012-2015

A specially designed M&S beauty uniform was introduced for our beauty advisors, including a long sleeved option.



M&S uniform, 2015

2015

In 2015, we went back to black with hints of brand green and gold. Female uniforms included a compulsory neckerchief with an M&S logo design and dresses were worn with green belts.

We later added a wrap around and peter pan collar style dress to the 'Wardrobe Collection.'



First Aider badge, 2015

2015

Symbols appeared on name badges to show customers any additional skills or knowledge held by employees. This included first aid, suit advisory, bra advisory & sign language skills.

There was a switch to magnetic badges to avoid damage caused by badge pins to uniforms.



M&S face covering, 2021

2020

In response to the Coronavirus global pandemic colleagues were invited to wear visors, provided by M&S, as part of their uniform for added protection.

Later it became mandatory (unless medically exempt) for face coverings to be worn in shops and supermarkets. In response we introduced a black cotton mask with the M&S embroidered logo as part of our uniform.



Café uniform, 2021

2020-2021

As part of our food transformation plan, we rolled out a new Food uniform range in Renewal stores, later reaching all stores.

The range was designed to complement the fresh marketplace feel, along with the organic tones of the new Food sections, that were part of the Food Transformation programme.



M&S uniform, 2021

2020-2021

Feedback captured from colleagues through National BIG and Yammer identified the most important factors for uniform were breathability of fabrics, having pockets and the uniform being durable.



M&S uniform, 2021

2020-2021

We became a more inclusive team, with our Team Managers and Team Support Managers also wearing the same range, along with a Manager name badge if they wished.



M&S uniform, 2023

2023

We added 24 additional uniform options for colleagues, based on designs originally created by our M&S Clothing & Home team. The ethos was creating a work wardrobe that was stylish and practical and allowed employees to choose what felt most comfortable. New options included crew neck t-shirts, a blazer, jeans, sweatshirts and bomber jackets, which created a fresh and relaxed look.



M&S uniform, 2023

These new additions were selected to be inclusive, with no gender specific items - so everyone could pick items to suit their personal style.

Menopause-friendly items became available too. Items included tunic tops and drawstring trousers in light, breathable fabric. A new online sizing tool was created to help colleagues find the perfect fit.