The Verge’s favorite summer gear for 2023

Summer is finally here, and we’re hoping that we can, at least for a few days, take a breath (at least, as much of a breath as possible with wildfires blanketing Canada and the US with smoke), step out into the sunshine (hopefully, not too much, what with climate change and all), and enjoy a nice, restful vacation (assuming you’re not attacked by a drug-crazed bear).

Sorry. It’s been that kind of year.

In fact, because the year has been so… interesting, we asked the staff of *The Verge* to talk about what type of gear they plan to use to slow down and enjoy their summer. Hopefully, you’ll be able to put aside some time to relax and take a break as well.

a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin dark:[&>a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin [&>a]:shadow-underline-black dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-white”>A super sun hat

Emma Roth, news writer

Doing yard work in the summer sun can be brutal, and when you’re looking for sun protection, your typical baseball cap might not cut it. That’s why it’s always nice to have a sun hat on hand, which

offers a bit of shade around your face and neck — but it's still not exactly ideal if you have long hair.

Wearing a standard sun hat leaves my sweaty ponytail plastered to my neck, and as you can imagine, that's not exactly pleasant. After months of suffering, I decided to do the smart thing and buy a sunhat with a cutout for my ponytail. **This particular sun hat**, which comes from a company called Pogah that I've never heard of before, is far cheaper than the **Columbia-branded sun hat** I've been sporting. It also comes in a variety of color options and has an adjustable chin strap, but most importantly, it features a ponytail hole that I now use to keep my hair up and away from my neck while spending time in the sun.




SunShade



$ 8

Wide brim foldable hat with an opening for a ponytail.

a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin dark:[&>a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin [&>a]:shadow-underline-black dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-white”>Best pack for biking

Helen Havlak, publisher

We have very cold winters where I live, so I try to bike as many places as possible when the weather allows. The **Baggu fanny pack** has been a great summer addition. I wear it on my waist when biking, but I have the matte black, and it also looks fine as a simple cross-body bag. My folding bike lock and my wallet neatly fit in the larger pocket, and my phone goes in the smaller outside pocket. I haven’t had to launder it yet, but it is washable when the time comes.







$ 52

This versatile fanny pack can be worn around the waist or over the shoulders.

a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin dark:[&>a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin

[&>a]:shadow-underline-black dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-white”>Yes, you need sunscreen

Jess Weatherbed, news writer

In the now-famous words of Baz Luhrmann: wear sunscreen. I’m something of an expert on the subject myself. Not in terms of actual academia or qualifications, sadly — however, I am tragically very, *very* ginger. This

means I've spent all 29 years of my life attempting to prevent my skin from burning to a shade that matches my hair. I'm also afflicted with ADHD because the universe knew I'd be too powerful if it let me have melanin *and* any kind of memory retention, so the whole "remember to reapply your SPF at least every two hours" thing is far easier said than done.

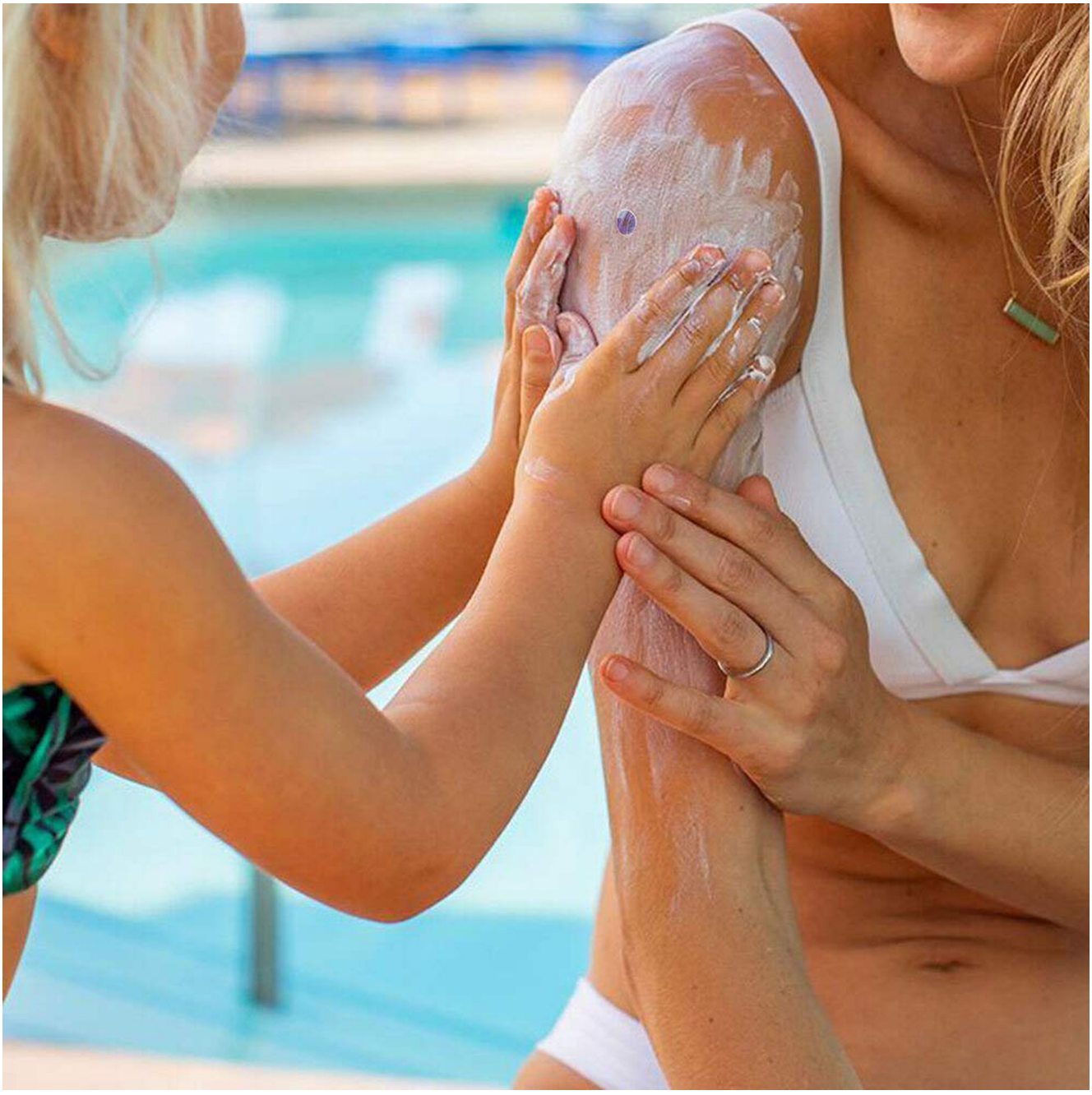
Luckily, I found an idiot-

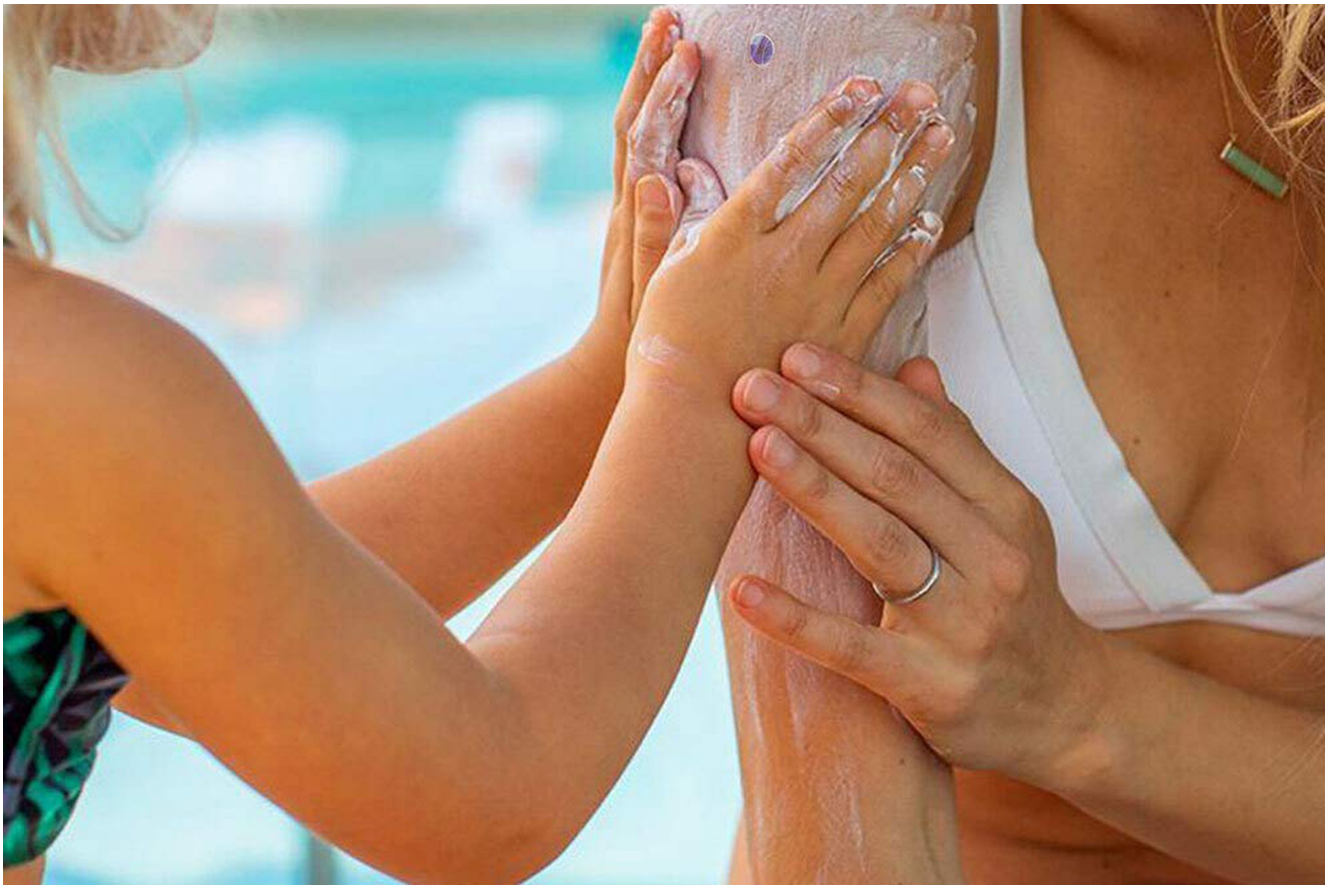
proof solution. **SpotMyUV** makes UV-reactive skin-safe stickers that you apply to yourself before slathering on the sunscreen. When coated with SPF, these small, dot-shaped stickers turn translucent and then revert back to their original purple color when exposed to UV light — indicating that your sunscreen has worn off and it’s time to reapply.

I place a single sticker

where I’m most likely to spot any changes (such as my lower arm), and that will last me all day, even while swimming! Which is important because I’m lucky enough to live in one of the few seaside resort towns in the UK that does actually get rather warm. I don’t experience the *extreme* heat of some of my US colleagues, but considering I can get sunburnt during the soggy British summer, I’ll take

all the reminders I can to stay protected.





$ 16

Stickers that fade into your skin until your UV protection stops working.

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highlight-franklin dark:[&>a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin [&>a]:shadow-underline-black dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-white”>Let’s play bat the bug

Antonio Di Benedetto, writer, commerce

The summer season is peak bug season, and my favorite method of ridding my home of the occasional flying

nuisance is a big, dumb, glorified electric tennis racket. There are lots of electric fly swatters out there, but this one – hilariously named "**The Executioner**" – seemed to have just the right amount of insect animus to convince me to buy it nearly nine years ago. It's served me well over that time, as I've used it to rid my space of many mosquitos, house flies, moths, and more. There's

something sadistically satisfying about gently waving this thing around in the air and hearing that loud “ZAP!” sound as you rid yourself of a winged pest that would happily feast upon your blood if given the chance.

Just be careful where you swing this thing, as unlike other electric fly swatters, The Executioner has no plastic guards to prevent friendly fire /

ill-advised drunken dares. But, to be fair, I think that’s key to why it works so well – and hey, those arm hairs will just grow back anyway.



The Executioner
The Executioner
The Executioner



$ 29

An electronic bug zapper that will get the pests every time.

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highlight-franklin dark:[&>a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin [&>a]:shadow-underline-black dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-white”>Keep the water flowing

William Poor, lead producer, development

Summers are glorious in Seattle, but the much-needed break from rain does mean that I need to water

my garden regularly. For years, I've tried to make do with hand-me-down garden hoses, but they drove me nuts. Old hoses can be bulky, stiff, and impossible to stow neatly; they're a pain to haul through the yard, and it's far too easy to accidentally wipe out a flower bed as you yank them around. So this season, I broke down and bought a new expandable hose. It's magnificent. When it's

drained, all 75 feet of it shrinks down into a tidy little pile, and even when fully expanded, it's so much more flexible than a standard hose – no kinks, no stiffness. The common knock against expandable hoses is that they have a shorter lifespan, so I found this one that has a lifetime warranty. There are definitely cheaper standard hoses out there, but if you have a smaller yard with a lot of nooks

and crannies that need attention, an expandable hose is definitely worth considering.




FLAT



$ 41

A garden hose that quickly expands and contracts for easy use and easy storage.

a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin dark:[&>a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin [&>a]:shadow-underline-black dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-white”>Listening to music

Brandon Widder, senior commerce editor

For the longest time, my go-to portable speaker for camping and backpacking was the . It was small and efficient, but

it didn’t mesh well with the rest of my audio setup, especially on those sweltering summer days when I barely made it beyond the confines of my own backyard.

A couple of years ago, however, I splurged on the **Sonos Roam**. The rugged, pint-sized device is on the pricier side when compared to other Bluetooth speakers, but it

produces solid sound for the size, offers wireless charging, and can automatically jump between my home Wi-Fi network and Bluetooth, a convenience I've

come to appreciate when strapping the speaker to my bike and heading out the door.

And while I might not be able to fire off my usual quips at Alexa when I take it

into the backcountry – the Roam only supports voice commands when connected to Wi-Fi – I certainly can still do it poolside with a drink in hand.

$ 179

The Sonos Roam is a truly portable Sonos speaker with a rugged design that's built to withstand the elements. It also features wireless charging and

supports AirPlay 2, Alexa, and Google Assistant.

a:hover]:shadow-highlight-franklin dark:[&>a:hove

r]:shadow-highlight-franklin [&>a]:shadow-underline-black dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-

white”>Lovely lights

Brandon Widder, senior commerce editor

I’m a big fan of ambient lighting, even when I’m 50 miles from the

nearest outlet. And while I've long been a proponent of MPOWERD's solar-powered Luci lanterns, I recently picked up the company's like-minded string

lights for car camping and overnight jaunts in the backcountry when I don’t mind toting a little extra weight with me. The 18-foot string is certainly not the

brightest you can buy — it packs a series of 100-lumen LEDs, whereas your average headlamp might offer 400 — but it can swap between six different colors

and features a 2,000mAh battery for when your phone needs some emergency juice. Best of all, you can charge the lights via USB or solar, meaning you can spend less

time worrying about how to keep them going and more time taking in the vibes.







$ 55

If you want to add color to your campsite, this 18-foot cord contains

20 LEDs that transmit six colors: violet, turquoise, green, blue, pink, and white.

https://www.theverge.com/23774412/summer-gear-recommendation-

sunhat-sunscreen-bug-blaster