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What 8 Workers Wore to Their Wall Street Construction Site

"You do not want to have something penetrate the bottom of your foot."

One Wall Street, a 50-story Art Deco skyscraper completed in 1931, is being carved into 566 condos and retail space. With prices averaging \$3 million, it will likely draw bankers, tech executives and members of the New York's swelling plutocracy.

But until its doors open in 2020, it is the temporary home for some 400 workers, most of them in construction, who spend their days feeding the city's building boom. Here's what eight of them wore under their hard hats.



Nathan Bajar for The New York Times

Joseph Petrone

Age: 42

Occupation: shop steward

Why is there a “no rat” sticker on your hat?

In the basements of the buildings and stuff. I'm not a big fan of them.

It has nothing to do with rats, like non-union labor?

You could take it both ways, but it's not really for that purpose.

Tell me how you suit up for work.

You always dress warm in renovation projects because the of the open areas. I wear Timberlands, which is standard.

Jeans?

Typical work jeans. Gap or Levi's. These are insulated so you don't have to wear long johns underneath. And then a vest and a sweatshirt, from Carhartt. T-shirt and long-sleeve shirt.

That's a lot of laundry.

It's a lot of laundry for the wife, not for me.



Nathan Bajar for The New York Times

Jose Villanueva

Age: 19

Occupation: apprentice carpenter

What have you built?

Different stuff. I built a table, doors. I've protected windows.

Are you wearing two sweatshirts?

Yeah. The outer one is high-vis clothing, so anyone can see me coming.

Your T-shirt underneath is orange too. Did you do that on purpose?

Yeah, so if it gets hot I can take my sweatshirt off and still have high-vis underneath.

What's under your hood?

It's a do-rag, to keep my head warm. You can get them at any pharmacy where I live in the Bronx.

Are your Carhartt pants for warmth, too?

And they have a lot of pockets that I can put my tools in. My knife, pencils, snips.



Workers going over blueprints. Nathan Bajar for The New York Times



Nathan Bajar for The New York Times

Michael Beras

Age: 36

Occupation: laborer, Local 79

What's your job?

As a laborer, you got to make sure that everything is tight, clean. See there's nothing in your way that you could fall and crack your head open, nothing like that.

What do you wear on your feet?

These are Wolverines. Steel toe. You want to step on them? Go ahead. Jump on 'em.

How do you dress for work in the winter?

Layers, layers, layers. You can't put on a big bubble coat and come to work.

What are your shirt layers?

I got an Under Armour shirt, I got a long john, I got a flannel with the wool inside, and I got a hoodie. I got them from Amazon. It's the easiest.



Nathan Bajar for The New York Times

Do you prefer to work in the winter or summer?

Doesn't matter.

Why not?

You've got to get paid.



Nathan Bajar for The New York Times

Majorie Alvarez

Age: 36

Occupation: laborer

Does your jacket keep you warm?

Sí.

And where do you get it?

Macy's.

How many layers total?

Three. And a hat.

And are you gloves for warmth, too, or protection?

For work.



Nathan Bajar for The New York Times



Cary Levy

Age: 47

Occupation: assistant superintendent, J.T. Magen & Company

How do you dress for work?

I think about comfort, warmth, somewhat professional looking.

Where do you get your nice gingham shirt?

I have to say, my wife got it for me.

Do you know where she gets them?

I'm not sure. Maybe J. Crew or Banana Republic.

Where did you get your shoes?

I don't know.

Your watch is not subtle.

It's a G-Shock. It can take the punches on a construction site. I can smash it into the brick. I might injure myself, but the watch will be fine.

What do you put in your little notebook?

It's a large construction site. There's a lot going on, a lot to remember.



Billy Murphy

Age: 51

Occupation: construction superintendent

What does a super do?

We direct the trades and bring the job in at a particular time, and really manage the job from start to finish. Before this, I was in the computer field for 15 years.

How do you get dressed for work?

You have to have proper shoes, pants, warm jacket. Our company gave us these Helly Hansen ones. Under that I wear a hoodie and two or three layers. Today it's 50 degrees so I leave the hoodie hanging up in my locker.

Where do you pick up your cargo pants?

Modell's. They're cheap, they're lined, 20 bucks. When you're finished with them, just throw them out.



Nathan Bajar for The New York Times



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Lilla Smith

Age: “Over 50”

Occupation: architect, properties director, Macklowe Properties

How’s everything going?

I’m glad to say we’re making some forward progress.

What do you wear on site visits?

The most important thing on a construction site is what you wear on your feet. Today I went with Italian boots. They’re Gravati. You do not want to have something penetrate the bottom of your foot.



Nathan Bajar for The New York Times

Where did you get your jacket from?

The one underneath is Akris. It's like a biker jacket.

What about your scarf?

It's Paul Stuart. The jacket too. It's old, like 25 years old. My whole paycheck back then. And then some.

What's your watch?

It's a Rolex. Simple. Very architectural.

Was that your second paycheck?

Yes.



Nathan Bajar for The New York Times

George Roundtree

Age: 52

Occupation: head of security

Your look is almost paramilitary.

Actually it is paramilitary. This is a protective vest. Level 3 Kevlar.

Who's going to shoot at you down here?

You never know. We're posted out front. These guys outside the stock exchange, they're dressed the same way.

Where do you get your boots?

Tactical boots, ordered from paramilitary sites. I don't want to promote anybody, but I do use Condor.

And a thermal under your vest?

This is dry wear, pulls sweat off, retains body heat. On top is a shirt that salutes my favorite football team, the Patriots.

Is it tough being a Pats fan on a New York City construction site?
Absolutely. All day I get nothing but Jets and Giants fans coming at me.



Nathan Bajar for The New York Times