

FASHION AND FADS 1920-1985

(Reference: Co-Ed 1984)

Why do Fads and Fashions come and go so quickly? Experts say it's because everything around us is always changing, and fads reflect how we feel about ourselves and our world. Let's check the year 1920 until 1985, and see how fast fads move into and out of style.

1920

- * Women won the right to vote
- * Girls bobbed their hair (cut it short)
- * Girls wore makeup for the first time
- * Hemlines rose to just below the knee!
- * Invention of the first button down shirt and zipper gave new freedom to clothes.
- * Teen age boys wore baggy pants that stopped at the knee. Men's bathing suits were wool and had T-shirt tops (any man with a bare chest would be arrested!)
- * Silent movies were very vogue, Hollywood stars were idols
- * Gloria Swanson made the "cloche" famous - a bell-shaped hat that no well dressed woman could afford to be without.

1930

- * The country was in a deep financial depression.
- * Teenagers found escape in "talking" motion pictures--Spanky and Our Gang, the Lone Ranger, and Shirley Temple provided the much needed laughs of the day.
- * Teenagers danced in marathon dance competitions--dance till you drop--for cash prizes.
- * Clothes had a "droopy" look
- * The clothing industry began new ways of making clothes cheaply. It was the era of mass-produced or ready-to-wear merchandise.

1940

- * Practical and conservative describes the clothing of this era.
- * World War II created shortages of fashion items.
- * Silk stocking were very rare, seams were drawn down the back women's legs to create the illusion of hose.
- * Clothes were recycled from bedspreads, curtains.
- * Men's in fashion after the way was "zoot suits" --loose jackets with wide lapels worn with baggy cuffed pants.
- * Denim jeans were the rage, teens stood in long lines to buy them and then wore them with bobby socks and saddle shoes.
- * Families listened to radio shows like Fibber McGee and Molly

1950

- * The 50's was a time of prosperity and the decade that defined the teenager as someone separate and apart from the adult.
- * Hollywood stars like Marilyn Monroe, Jane Russell, Steve McQueen, Marlon Brando, and James Dean created a new dress style teens loved and imitated.
- * Poodle skirts, mohair sweaters, pop-beads, bobbysocks, halter backed dresses (similar to those of the 40's) and knee-length capri pants. "Ratted" or "Teased" hair was swept into beehive hairdos, eyes were lined with dark liner.
- * Guys took their look from Brando and Dean - combing their hair into "duck tails" and wearing black leather jackets with straight-legged jeans.
- * Fads also included 3-D movies, drive-ins, cramming into cars, hula hoops, and the latest in entertainment was television. The biggest fad was rock and roll.

1960

- * The Beatles, Make Love Not War, Peace, Flower Power, all symbolized the mood and spirit of the 60's.
- * Teens were doing the "twist" to Chubby Checker.
- * Girls hemlines moved from thigh-high "mini skirts," and "hot pants" to "midi-length" dresses and skirts and "maxi" coats and cardigan sweaters.
- * Buys wore flower-printed shirts and bell-bottom pants, leisure suits and lots of Polyester double knit pants and jackets.
- * Men's shirts fashioned in jersey type knits were chic, collars were long and pointed.
- * Unisex (styles worn by both sexes) were popular.
- * Natural looks were in, jeans - patched or torn, embroidered shirts, gauze cloth, love beads, tattered clothes and second-hand clothes from thrift shops were very chic.

1970

- * Individuality was "in"- anything from the wildest hippie fashions to classic preppie dressing of a combination like bright patterned knee socks with rolled up jeans and wild looking platform shoes.
- * Fashion advice was "anything goes!"
- * High speed plastic skateboards replaced wooden scooters. Frisbees which were first a fad during the 1940's returned-- now made of cheaper, more durable, and flashier plastic.
- * The biggest rage of all was designer jeans. Second to a knit shirt with an alligator on it.
- * In 1978 Hollywood introduced a new movie, Saturday Night Fever, and with it came a whole new style of sleek, colorful clothes just right for disco dancing!
- * The 70s burst into a physical fitness craze that dramatically changed athletic clothing. Tennis shoes (sneakers) went high tech and from plain white to any color you might want.

1980

- * Clothing mixes - different fabrics, corduroy and canvas. Layers of color and textures.
- * Street looks such as rags wrapped and knotted and tied in ponytails that look like the 50's style.
- * Denim in acid wash, stone washed etc. fashioned into jackets, pants, and skirts.
- * Hanging earrings, rings on many fingers, friendship bracelets.
- * Michael Jackson teen idol, inspired the one white leather glove look.
- * New Wave, punk, crazy, was an outrageous way to look. Spiky hair, pink reflector sun glasses, straight-legged jeans and an oversized jacket loaded with safety pins and buttons are all a part of the look.
- * T-shirts in any color, printed with silk screened designs or hand designed spatters with acrylic paints.
- * Overalls returned! Layer them over bright sweaters and shirts with lots of accessories.
- * Tennis shoes made in leather extended up past the ankle, and were worn unlaced.
- * Leather is very trendy, but expensive.
- * Short denim skirts, GAP casual styles, oversized shirts, T-shirts and pants were big student looks. Fads are defined as a fashion of a sudden burst of popularity. It's easy to see using this brief historical sketch, how fast and furious fashion changes. What is considered to be the latest style, a style that we would give anything to have is tossed aside a year later as out of date and undesirable. In theory, this is a very wasteful, expensive way to dress. The reality is consumers seem to enjoy, even demand, the changes and updates in fashion.