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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

The History Of Handbags

By Amanda Pavis

The very first handbags were literally crude pouches fashioned from leaves and animal hide.

However, the first documented use of handbags is from the 14th century—Egyptian hieroglyphics which depict men carrying little sacks around the waist. Called "pockets", these handbags were hung by thongs at the back of the girdle, and were used mainly by men to carry flint or money.

By the 1400's both men and women were using handbags, which gradually became a status symbol. People would adorn their handbags with jewelry or embroidery to reflect their wealth, and use expensive materials such as silk.

Needless to say these fragile handbags were not very practical—although the mentality was that if you could afford those handbags, you could afford a servant to carry your things for you. Portraits of the most affluent and influential people of the time often depict what you could consider the first "designer handbags", prominently fastened to the dress with tasseled strings.

Then it became fashionable for women to wear their handbags under their skirts, and handbags literally disappeared for several decades with little development in design. Embroidery and jeweled accents were abandoned for practical, everyday materials like leather. Men also abandoned using handbags because of development of built-in pockets in pants.

It was only in the 1800s that handbags "reemerged". It was no longer fashionable to wear puffed skirts, and the streamlined clothes made it impractical to wear bulky handbags. This led to the development of the "real" handbags—held in the hand and seen as a complement to the clothes. Women had different handbags for different occasions, and used it to carry perfume, a fan, smelling salts and visiting cards. These handbags were called "reticules."

The term "handbags" actually only emerged in the 1900's, and was used to describe the luggage (similar to today's satchels or briefcases) that men would carry. Not to be outdone, designers of women's handbags made similar versions that would suit the feminine sensibility and needs, including tiny compartments for fans, gloves and makeup.

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Then in the 1920's, handbags really came into its own. There was more variety in terms of designs, materials, accents and colors—in fact, some of the most popular handbags from that period reflected Egyptian art, a tribute to the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun.

When it became fashionable for women to carry dolls wearing miniature versions of their outfit (a mini-me, so to speak), designers of handbags would make two sizes of their designs—capturing even the smallest detail in the dolls' tiny handbags.

When the Second World War led to a shortage of metal and leather, manufacturers of handbags began using plastic and wood. It was the beginning of many, many decades of exploring non-conventional shapes and material.

In the 50's, certain designers gained reputation for creating bold, beautiful and elegant handbags. This

signaled the emergence of important designer houses: Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Hermes. Up to this day, handbags carrying their labels command a premium price.

The last half of the century saw a leap in technology and the introduction of new materials and textiles for handbags (such as waterproof canvas, space age synthetics, faux reptile skin). Improvement of manufacturing processes also meant that handbags could be produced at a lower cost, allowing people to buy beautiful handbags at affordable prices.

The history of handbags comes full circle at the start of the century. At first, handbags were a men's accessory, which they abandoned until it became associated with women. But as men's fashion grows more streamlined, men's handbags are once again making a comeback. At least they're a little sturdier than leaves.

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Designer Handbags

By Amanda Pavis

The History Of Handbags

Shake off the guilt! Girls deserve designer handbags! It's true that they're more expensive, but the superior craftsmanship of designer handbags is something you can't find in any of its knockoffs. Consider the fine stitching, carefully selected materials, and tight quality control. Designer handbags are built to last a lifetime, or at least until next season's Fall Collection.

How can you distinguish authentic designer handbags from imitations? Look at the designer handbags' details. Imitations will only copy its shape, but may have crooked seams or substitute the materials for something cheaper and less durable. Designer handbags also carry signature buckles, trimmings, even zippers and lining. Examine the designer handbags carefully for the clear printed monograms. And if the workmanship is shoddy, put it down—designer handbags are carefully inspected at the factory for even the smallest misaligned threads. Some of the most popular handbags in the UK are:

1. Prada's designer handbags. They're known for unique materials and interesting textures, which add color and personality to even the most sober suit-and-heels outfit. A working woman must-have!
2. Gucci handbags. They're like the Porsche of the fashion world. Their monogrammed designer handbags are considered a classic, and come in the classic brown to sportier pastels and brights.
3. Louis Vuitton handbags are synonymous to high quality and fine leather. They're particularly known for luggage.
4. Fendi designer bags often feature breakthrough, colorful and trendy designs. They introduced the hotdog and baguette designer handbags —quirky but elegant pieces that should be part of any self-respecting fashionista's collection of designer handbags.
5. Christian Dior designer handbags are attention-getters. Their floral saddle designer handbags and Portabello designer handbags made raves.
6. Burberry designer handbags come in come in single color or the trademark checkered prints.

Other famous designer handbags are Hermes, Guess, Chanel and Balenciaga.

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