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GENTLEMAN

A Timeless Guide to Fashion

Photography Günter Beer

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THE GENTLEMAN'S VISITING CARD

One thing should be clear: clothes do not make a man a gentleman; and, by the same token, a real gentleman is always a gentleman, even without his clothes. However, it would be a mistake to conclude from this that our appearance is not important. Clothes are the visiting card of a personality, and should therefore be chosen to match it.

This book is an attempt to provide a comprehensive description of the proper style of attire for a gentleman. By this we mean a dress code that has its roots in England, and that is accepted around the world today as classic style. Anyone who dresses as described in this book can be sure that he will look well-dressed, whether he is in London, Paris, Brussels, Düsseldorf, Rome, Milan, New York, or Tokyo.

Dressing like a gentleman means mixing tailored garments and mass products, exclusiveness and modest practicality. A pair of Levi's jeans with a tailored, made-to-measure tweed jacket is just as acceptable a weekend outfit as good-value boat shoes from Sperry with chinos by Polo Ralph Lauren and a blazer from Gieves and Hawkes. Dressing like a gentleman is therefore not to be equated with a stubborn conservatism. Innovations which prove their worth and look

good gradually find acceptance in the international style canon of London, Milan, and New York. Jeans are a good example. Although it took a while, these blue cotton trousers eventually established themselves, and are now familiar and accepted leisurewear items almost everywhere. Or there is the Husky jacket, which was invented at the beginning of the 1960s but only became well known around the world in the 1980s. Or Diego Della Valle's Tod's shoes, which have only been on the market since 1979. Combining pieces of clothing and accessories of the most varied origins to assemble a harmonic, interesting whole demands a thorough knowledge of the history of the individual garments. Naturally, this knowledge may also lead to the quite conscious creation of new and unusual combinations, which may occasionally even be the products of intuition and chance. But someone who does not wish to rely on these imponderables should learn about the individual components of his wardrobe. Only by doing so will he eventually understand how to wear them properly.

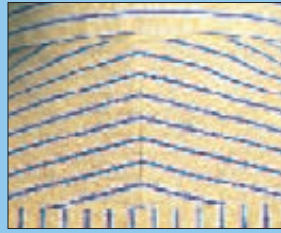
Of course, it is not by chance that English clothes and English style are discussed so much in this book. London



GOOD SHIRTS AT A GLANCE



A good shirt has removable collar bones where required by the shape of the collar. This is particularly the case with turndown and cutaway collars, but collar bones would be out of place in the soft collar of a button-down shirt. Most collar bones are made of plastic, but some gentlemen's outfitters offer brass collar bones as well. Whatever they are made of, they give the collar the right curve and prevent the collar tips turning up. This can be particularly important when the shirt is worn with a necktie.



The origins of the split yoke lie in traditional shirtmaking. As people generally have shoulders of different heights, a split yoke can be used to adjust the fit of a shirt precisely to the customer's stature. On ready-to-wear shirts the split yoke is just a detail which suggests more expensive work; it is a costly detail, though, because every additional seam is a not inconsiderable cost factor when shirts are produced in large numbers. Such details may be unimportant for many, and an unnecessary expense.



Unfortunately, patterns are only matched exactly on very good ready-to-wear shirts, though this is always done on custom-made shirts. For example, stripes or checks should match exactly where the shoulder joins the sleeve. Raised (or "French") seams are used on those parts of the shirt that are subject to particularly hard wear. For a raised seam the two pieces of material are sewn together, turned over, and sewn again. This procedure is expensive, but ensures that the seam will be durable.



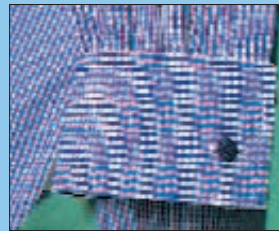
The more stitches a seam has, the more durable it will be, with about 20 stitches per inch (8 per cm) on a good shirt. Seams, even parallel double seams, are always sewn with a single needle. The advantages of this are that the seams are more precise, and the material in between them does not go wavy after washing. On less high-quality shirts a machine with two needles is used for double seams. This can sew a parallel seam in half the time. Material is used generously when good shirts are made, so that they do not slip out of the pants at the back or sides. The back is usually cut somewhat longer than the front to ensure it fits well even when the wearer bends over. The length is right if the front and back parts can be brought together in the crotch. Shorter shirts are best avoided, to save embarrassment.



Traditional buttons made of mother-of-pearl are obligatory features of a good shirt. Mother-of-pearl buttons are so hard that they will break the needle of a sewing machine. The button facing used to be an additional piece of material sewn onto the shirt, but today it is made by folding over the material at the edge of the shirt. A placket front facing is more stable, but can also look a little rustic, so more refined shirts tend to have a single button facing.



A gusset, a triangular piece of material, is usually added for reinforcement in the corner between the breast and the back. You will find this detail on all good shirts. However, there is only one manufacturer that uses this little detail as a marketing tool. The gussets on shirts from Thomas Pink are always pink. This is intended to remind the owner of the shirt of the maker every time he wears it, and would not work for Turnbull & Asser or T. M. Lewin.



On good shirts the cloth of the sleeve is pleated several times where it meets the cuff. In addition there is often a small button above the cuff that prevents the sleeve opening up to reveal the arm in an unflattering way. It can also be unbuttoned to make rolling the sleeve up easier. On very good shirts this buttonhole is horizontal, and not vertical. On the very best shirts it is hand sewn, of course, just like all the other buttonholes.

FROM NECKCLOTH TO ORNAMENTAL NECKWEAR

Many works discussing the origins of the necktie mention Trajan's Column in Rome as the earliest recorded evidence for the predecessor of this item of ornamental neckwear. However, the cloth worn by Roman legionaries around their necks at the beginning of the second century AD bears only a very distant resemblance to today's necktie, being just a piece of fabric wrapped around the throat. The real predecessors of the necktie are the neckcloths or cravats that were part of men's clothing from the middle of the seventeenth century. Even the most expensive handmade necktie of our time is cheap compared to the lace cravat worn by King Charles II of England in the year 1660. It cost 20 pounds 12 shillings - and that at a time when a couple of pounds sterling was a good annual salary.

The first real prototype of the modern necktie is to be found in eighteenth-century America. It was called the "bandanna" and was a large patterned cloth wrapped several times around the neck and tied with a bow. Bandannas were popularized by the American boxer James Belcher. In early nineteenth-century England an entirely new mode was introduced by George Brian Brummell. A legendary dandy and style-setter, he condemned all exaggerated fashions and pronounced that a gentleman's clothing should never be conspicuous or over-elaborate. He created a look consisting of a blue tailcoat, beige vest and trousers, black boots, and a dazzlingly white cravat. "Beau Brummell," as he was known, always had a large quantity of starched white linen cravats ready to hand. If he was not pleased with the knot he had just tied, he would take a fresh cravat and repeat the process,



continuing until he was satisfied. It could take a long time - and his stocks of linen cravats, like his laundry bills, were enormous. The modern necktie does not call for this kind of thing.

The immediate forerunners of today's necktie were the first school and club ties. In 1880 the members of Exeter College, Oxford, tied the bands of their straw hats around their necks with a simple knot, thus inventing the first club tie. On 25 June of the same year they ordered neckties in the appropriate colors from their tailor, setting an entirely new fashion that was enthusiastically copied by other English clubs, schools, and colleges. The precursor of the patterned necktie was the "Macclesfield tie," so called after the town in northwest England where raw silk from India and China was woven. Around the year 1900 Macclesfield was

producing an unprecedented variety of neckties for members of the expanding middle class, who wanted to announce to the world, through their neckwear, that they had succeeded in life.

The modern necktie has existed in its present form since 1924, although neckties that look quite modern are featured in photographs predating the First World War. Before 1924, however, they were usually cut in the direction of the weave of the fabric and then lined with a different material. Made by this method they soon wore out, and the knot left unattractive creases. Jesse Langsdorf of New York found the solution when he cut cloth for neckties on the bias at an angle of 45 degrees to the weave. He also cut the silk not in a single piece but in three sections that were then sewn together. He patented this innovation, and later on sold his invention all over the world. Most good neckties are still made in the same way today.

The modern necktie is usually regarded as formal wear, but that does not mean it cannot be fashionable. Television presenters and other men in the public eye often set the scene for what is regarded as fashionable in necktie wear. Politicians, however, tend to be more conservative in their choices of necktie, the better to suit the seriousness of their offices.

Trajan's column, in Rome, shows men wearing the focale, a neckcloth or kerchief worn as protection from the cold.

TYING A BOW TIE



Adjust the bow tie to the right size before putting it around your neck. Unlike standard long neckties, bow ties need to fit the width of the neck exactly.



Put the end on the left over the end on the right so that both ends cross at the narrow area behind the oval curve.



Take the left end through the loop now surrounding your neck, and pull both ends to make a loose, simple knot.



Take the end now on the left in both hands and fold it to the right in the middle of the oval.



Hold the folded end in the thumb and forefinger of your left hand.



Take the right end and place it exactly in the middle of the left end, which is held in your left hand, so that the right end hangs down over the knot. Hold both ends with the thumb and forefinger of your left hand.



Now pass the right end of the bow under and around the folded left end of the bow. You now have a loop.



Take the right end around the folded left end again and pass it to the left through the loop you have made – preferably folding the part of the bow on the right first. Press the part on the right with your thumb and fold it at the same time.



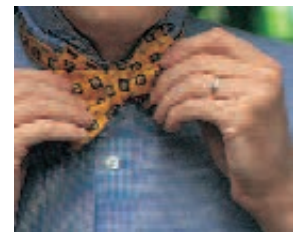
Push the folded right end far enough through to stay in place. Now let go with both hands, and you will see the final form of the bow materializing.



Hold the part of the bow on the right firmly in your right hand, and using your left hand take the end of the bow that is already halfway through by the fold in it and pull carefully. Now you will see the reason for the curved shape of the bow tie in its untied state.



To adjust the bow, take the ends lying opposite each other – the two open ends and the two folded ends – and pull carefully until the bow is firmly tied.



The finished bow will look slightly different every time, but at least the fact that it may not be perfect shows everyone that you tied it yourself. But always make sure that in the first step you place the left end over the right end, or the operation will not work.

STYLE IN THE SUIT

The suit is still the most elegant item of clothing a man can wear so long as its cut, color, and fabric are correct - meaning that they suit the occasion, the time of day, the season of the year, and the climate. There are good reasons for listing cut, color and fabric in that order, since cut is really the most important factor. If you are in any doubt, then it is better to buy a well-cut suit in a fabric that may not be of the very top quality than a poorly cut suit in a better fabric - although the suit above all is not an area where compromises should be made. By a good cut we mean the basic pattern that has been used again and again since the 1930s, irrespective of fashions and trends, and is now regarded as the international standard by all good tailors and manufacturers of ready-made clothing. The cut of a good suit should look "natural," that is to say, it should bring out the best in its wearer, resorting to corrective measures only with real problem figures. This is an especially important feature in relation to the shoulders of the suit. A rather thin, small-boned man will look best in a suit with a narrow cut and little or no shoulder padding, narrow lapels, and

close-fitting trouser legs. An athletic, broad-shouldered man will not need shoulder padding either, and again, the suit can be cut to suit his natural measurements. If the wearer has a corpulent figure, it is even more advisable to avoid anything in the cut of the suit that would tend to make him look even larger.

The traditional colors regarded as correct for a suit are dark blue, dark to very light gray, and black. It should certainly be in one of those colors if it is to be worn for business in such fields as finance, the law, commerce, or politics. A brown or green suit will do only at the weekend or for sporting occasions - but more about that later.

Today's suits are made in fabrics of much lighter weight than in the past, when offices were either heated by coal fires or not at all. However, there are still considerable differences in the weight and thickness of the materials used, and you should start by thinking exactly where you will be wearing your suit: will it be in the chilly north or in a mild Mediterranean climate? Will you be driving to a stuffy office from your comfortable home in a heated car, without feeling



The two-piece suit is the most usual model today. It has two buttons and two side vents, and trousers with or without cuffs. There are variations on this basic model. It is possible to have either three buttons and a center vent at the back of the jacket, or three buttons and two side vents.

The double-breasted suit always has two side vents, never a vent at the back of the jacket. In continental Europe it may have no vents at all. However, a jacket without any vents will hang well only when you are standing and if you do not put your hands in your trouser pockets. As this habit is regarded as bad manners in Germany, many German suit jackets accordingly have no vents.

It used to be quite difficult to buy a well-cut suit with a vest off the rack. Luckily for men who appreciate this classic type of suit, some traditional gentlemen's outfitters such as Gieves & Hawkes have begun offering them again.

AMERICAN CLASSICS – SADDLE SHOES



Saddle shoes are the classics both for a weekend in New England and for the college look of the exclusive east coast universities. Professors and students are equally fond of these shoes; with their characteristic reddish soles they have hardly changed for decades.



Those who know and love the saddle shoe wonder why it has yet to make a breakthrough in Europe. Maybe it's because it came into fashion with the youth of America – particularly the girls – at a time when Europe took no great interest in the latest trends from America; saddle shoes were de rigueur for Frank Sinatra's female fans in the early 1940s.

Neither of these enthusiasms – for the singer or the shoes – has ever really made it across to Europe. After the war there was no longer any particular youth movement with saddle shoes as part of its outfit. The heroes of the 1950s wore penny loafers or cowboy boots. And so saddle shoes remained what they had always been: casual American weekend shoes, popular with high-school and college students (and with the faculty as well), favorites with a tweed jacket and chinos. Otherwise they are worn at the weekend like boat shoes or loafers, that is to say with a polo shirt, jeans, and a sweater or a windcheater. They also exist in a formal version for businessmen, and these go just as well with a dark suit as black Oxfords. Their closed lacing and plain, unembellished toecaps actually make them seem just as formal as a pair of plain Oxfords. But they only seem just as formal, because a pair of uniformly black saddle shoes will always stick out like a sore thumb among Oxfords and brogues, even if their wearer is not really improperly dressed. Devotees of the classic USA style as practiced at Brooks Brothers and Ralph Lauren should try combining a gray herringbone suit with horsehide saddle shoes. You can't get more American than that.

Some may say that if you can get away with wearing saddle shoes in Europe, you can get away with anything. It certainly requires a great deal of confidence to wear such shoes on almost any occasion.

Anybody wearing saddle shoes is almost sure to be an American. Exceptions – such as German film director Wolfgang Liebeneiner, pictured here – only prove the rule. These classic weekend shoes are particularly highly thought-of in the USA because the closed lacing makes them look just a touch more "dressed" than loafers or boat shoes.

THOSE LITTLE DIFFERENCES

Man does not live from bread alone, and neither does style depend only on clothes. It is the small "minor details," the "accessories," that round off and refine the total look, sometimes even adding a very special and personal touch. We shall be concentrating in this chapter, therefore, on the subject matter of accessories, in other words, those items that are carried around with us, either in the pockets of clothes, directly on the skin, or as a small piece of luggage. They can be useful items like wallet or pocketknife, decorative items like a dress silk handkerchief, or appetizing items, like fine tobacco. These are objects with which we are associated and which enrich our daily lives. It is these very small and apparently minor details that reveal so much information about their owners. This is especially so if the meticulous care devoted to the selection of their clothes leads one to suppose that this same meticulous care went into the selection of their accessories.

In films and literature it is minor details that often serve to define the character of a hero, whether it be a certain cigarette brand that he prefers, the way he arranges his dress handkerchief, or his tendency to fold and clip his currency bills together. You may debate the importance of whether an accessory has been consciously or unconsciously selected, and whether the unconscious selection of an accessory makes a greater statement than a conscious selection does. Yet the total look incorporating the accessory without fail reveals whether it is a consciously planned accent, or more of a coincidence. If, for example, a Belgian living in Brussels smokes the Spanish cigarette brand Ducados, he thereby not only expresses his penchant for the aromatic taste of this type of cigarette, but also an obvious and probably somehow biographically well-founded fondness for the Iberian Peninsula. If a Spaniard smokes

Ducados in Spain, he is simply smoking the popular strong cigarette. This is also making a statement, but one which is totally different. And it is not only cigarette brands that make such powerful statements. Small nondescript accessories are often also a focus of interest, because they convey unique regional traits. These can thus also be kept alive, whereas one's clothes are completely subordinate to international style. Irrespective of whether you are in New York, Tokyo, Hong Kong, London, Vienna, Cape Town, or Rio de Janeiro, you will find the same selection of clothes and shoes in expensive shops everywhere. Local specialties are practically of no importance. It is a different matter with the small items. They have stronger associations with our everyday lives, and from time to time express different regional and national preferences or dislikes that have been nurtured by innumerable historical connections.

Accessories are like local cuisine, which courageously holds its own everywhere against so-called international cuisine. It is thus the minor details that constitute the genuine attraction of a journey – just like typical regional specialties. When we leave our familiar everyday surroundings, we want to experience change and variety in well-calculated measures. The current international style of clothes leaves very little room for national variations; in this connection, it is accessories that therefore often dictate the decisive accent. Those who are familiar with the language of accessories are not only capable of creating a more individual look to this style, but can also interpret more from the outward appearance of those they are confronted with. The attention we devote to the relevant detail will improve our feel for the total look.

Tie pin, watch, cuff links, ring, or writing equipment ought to be selected with the same meticulous care as clothes. This is because the things we use daily not only say a lot about us, but, over and above the fulfilling of their function, are also capable of bringing beauty into our daily lives. In this connection, accessories provide the opportunity for the biggest understatement, even more than suit, shoes, and shirt. After all, apart from you, only the jeweler knows that the tiepin perhaps cost a small fortune. The selection pictured comes from the firm of Peter Pütz in Cologne, the internationally renowned specialist in antique jewelry.

THE BEST WATCHES IN THE WORLD

In 1790 *Abraham-Louis Breguet* invented the shockproof safety device for the storing of watches, and the tourbillon, a device that eliminates the influence of gravity on the accuracy of the watch, in 1795. These are merely the most famous of his numerous inventions. Breguet's clientele list reads like a who's who in world history. It included Marie Antoinette, Napoleon Bonaparte, the Duke of Wellington, Arthur Rubinstein, and Sir Winston Churchill, who all owned watches from the famous factory. Even today you can still recognize Breguet watches by the typical "pomme" hands (Breguet hands).

Audemars Piguet is famous for luxury watches with numerous complicated bits - that is, additional mechanisms like stopwatch features, supplementary time zone displays, chiming mechanism, and date or moon phase displays. Since 1972 the flagship model of the firm has been Royal Oak, a characteristic octagonal design that is available in many different variations.

William Baume, already a very successful watchmaker, joined forces with Paul Mercier after the First World War. At the start of the 1960s they were joined by Piaget, who brought fresh momentum to the traditional company. Today *Baume & Mercier* are particularly renowned for elegant bejeweled watches.

A pilot's watch by *Breitling* is a well-known prestigious item. The popularity of the label often makes people overlook the fact that Breitling originally became famous through watches that met the high professional standards of aviation. Anyone who is not a pilot is for the most part totally unaware of the possibilities of his *Breitling* pilot's watch. The famous Navitimer that came onto the market in 1952, apart from displaying the time and date, also displays ascending and descending gradients, and enables determination of fuel consumption and average speed.

The International Watch Co., *IWC* for short, was founded by an American and a Swiss in Schaffhausen in 1868. The American, however, pulled out of the business in 1876. The most famous watch by *IWC* is without doubt *Il Destriero Scafusia* from 1993, the "war-horse of Schaffhausen," a mechanical watch with 750 wheels and a total of 21 features, including chronograph with "Rattrapante" (see page 231), moon phase display, perpetual calendar, and details of year, decade, and century. Only 1,625 copies of this watch have ever been produced.

Watch collectors treasure above all the old mechanical watches with the American make of *Hamilton*. The firm was founded in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1892. Military watches from the Second World War are particularly popular. At that time Hamilton was supplying the armed forces of the United States with pilot's chronographs, marine chronographs, and watches.

If there is a make of watch particularly identifiable with one single model, then it is *Jaeger-LeCoultre*, which is always named in the same breath as the Reverso. The Reverso is a reversible watch; the case is mounted on the base plate in such a way that it can be folded down 180 degrees, thereby protecting the sensitive watch face from shock damage. Thus the Reverso was originally a sports watch that has since become the term for a classically elegant watch. Apart from the Reverso *Jaeger-LeCoultre* have other legendary watches in their range, like Memovox, the wristwatch alarm clock, and many different highly complex chronographs.

Longines rank with Breitling as the second biggest label in terms of pilot chronographs. In 1927, flight pioneer Charles Lindbergh had the duration of his flight over the Atlantic timed by a watch from *Longines*. In the same year, Lindbergh himself designed a special pilot's watch for the Swiss company - the hour angle chronograph.

Cartier have been making watches since 1898. Thus this make, that is synonymous with jewelry, also has a long watch tradition. The Santos was launched in 1908, the Tank in 1919, and the first Pasha was designed in 1932 for the Pasha of Marrakech. The most famous Cartier watch is probably the Panthère, in gold and steel. Many men, however, find Cartier's style too feminine, although if you examine the Santos design closely you will notice it has a somewhat warlike appearance with its screwed on, angular casing, and the modern Tank in steel or gold can be regarded as quite a sports watch.

The Omega make of watch has so far not achieved the reputation of the Rolex make. Nevertheless, it would be unthinkable to omit Omega from the list of prestigious legendary watches, because when the American Neil Armstrong took his first step on the moon on 21 June 1969, he was wearing a Speedmaster Professional. Since that time, Omega watches have participated in all NASA's space programs. Besides this,

Omega has particularly made a name for itself with diver's watches.

Germany too has contributed in a modest way to the fame of watchmaker craftsmanship for example through Ferdinand Adolph Lange, son-in-law of the Dresden court watchmaker Gutkaes, who in 1844 set himself up in business in the Saxon glassworks along with 15 journeymen. From this there emerged an extremely successful watch factory that had acquired an excellent reputation by the Second World War. Since the reunification of Germany the firm of *A. Lange & Söhne* has been able to start up again, producing top-quality watches. A typical Lange watch is the patented large-date display.

Patek Philippe has produced no more than approximately 600,000 watches since the founding of the make in 1851. Nevertheless Patek Philippe is synonymous worldwide with supreme craftsmanship. Calatrava, Ellipse, Gondolo, and Nautilus are names that express the entire broad range of the make, and can be elegant, luxurious, and casual.

There is probably no other watch make that is as controversial as Rolex, being simultaneously adored and despised. Some reject it because, as every child knows, Rolex is expensive and therefore is an unmistakable object of prestige. Others love this make because of this tag. Rolex has indisputably produced timeless classics, particularly including the first ever waterproof watch in 1926, the Oyster. Its design broke new ground and is still an absolute classic today. The worldwide enduring success of *Rolex* proves that watch connoisseurs also look beyond the image and see the quality.

Anyone wearing a watch by *TAG Heuer* is mostly also interested in fast two or four wheelers. There is hardly another manufacturer today that has such close links with motor sports. The make was founded in 1840 by Edouard Heuer and acquired by the TAG (Techniques D'Avant-garde) Group in 1985. *TAG Heuer* does not have the same prestige as *Rolex* and is not as well known as *Omega* or *Breitling*, yet the design of these watches is unmistakable. Zenith became famous particularly as a result of their chronograph El Primero, although the watch factory had already collected hundreds of awards by the time of the launch of El Primero in 1969. The watch mechanism of El Primero is an absolute pièce de résistance of Swiss watchmaker craftsmanship and is an established classic.

GLOSSARY

A

Adjustable Waistband

A pants waistband with an adjustable device inside it that can be used to vary the waist measurement. Pants with an adjustable waistband do not need to be worn with a belt. Adjustable waistbands are usually found on pants that are held up by suspenders.

B

Balmoral

In America the Balmoral, sometimes shortened to “Bal,” is a shoe with closed lacing. The most formal of all Balmoral shoes, the Oxford, is called the “Balmoral Oxford” in the USA.

Bedford Cord

A thick woolen material that makes extremely warm, durable jackets, suits, and pants. It is often used in shooting wear.

Beefroll

An American loafer.

Belt

A strip of material, usually leather, that is fed through loops on the waistband and is used to hold pants in position. It should match the wearer’s shoes. Belts replaced suspenders as the favored means of holding up suit pants after the Second World War.

Bemberg Rayon

The manufacturer’s name for a silky material made of cotton and used as a lining.

Bengal Stripes

Narrow stripes on a white shirt, usually dark blue, deep red, or dark gray. A classic pattern for business shirts.



Bemberg Rayon

Bespoke Tailoring

An English term for what is known in American English as “custom-tailoring.” One definition is: “a garment cut by an individual, for an individual, by an individual.”

Blazer

1. A dark-blue double-breasted jacket with two side vents and gilded brass buttons (the navy-blue blazer).
2. A single-breasted club jacket, usually with sewn pockets and brass buttons. Traditionally, club jackets were striped and came in the colors of a club. Today

they are usually single-breasted versions of the navy-blue blazer.

Blucher

An American-English term for a shoe with open lacing. The quarters of a Blucher are stitched onto the vamp. The vamp, the part of the shoe that covers the instep and the toes, is made of the same piece of leather as the tongue.

Boater

A hard straw hat with a flat crown and round brim.

Boat Shoe

A moccasin with leather laces and a non-skid plastic sole. The Sperry Topsider is the original boat shoe.

Bowler Hat

A stiff hat developed in the workshops of the legendary hat makers Lock’s, better known in the US as the “derby.” It was commissioned by William Coke, and intended as a form of headwear for gamekeepers. It was originally called the “coke hat,” and only became known as the bowler when the company Bowler & Son began producing the new hat around 1850. See also Derby.

Braid

A silk stripe along the outer seam of the pants leg. A single braid is worn with a dinner jacket, a double braid with tails.

Breeches

An English term for riding pants.



Bowler hats

British Warm

A short, sand-colored, double-breasted woolen coat with leather buttons and epaulettes. Originally a British military coat.

Budapests

Wingtip shoes. A version of the British brogue developed in Budapest.

Buffalo Horn

A material used for the buttons of suits and sports jackets.

Button-down Shirt

A shirt with collar tips buttoned to the breast. The original version is the button-down shirt with a soft-roll collar made by Brooks Brothers of New York.

C

Canvas

Canvas is used in traditional tailoring to give shape to a suit jacket. A custom tailor will sew it in by hand, but in industrial manufacturing it is stuck in with adhesives. Canvas that has been fused in stops the material of a garment falling loosely, reduces the breathability of the

suit, and is less durable than hand padded canvas.

Cashmere

Yarn or weave made from the fine hair found under the coarse winter coat of the Cashmere goat.

Casual Suit

A suit that is not worn to work in the city, but for leisure activities and days in the country. Casual suits are usually made of rustic woolen cloths in natural shades, often checked. A casual suit could be described as a sports jacket with matching pants.

Cavalry Twill

A warm, extremely long-lasting woolen material with a characteristic diagonal structure. It is mostly used in the beige and brown pants traditionally worn with sports jackets and blazers.

Chalk Stripe

A classic pattern used in suit-making, with white strips on a gray or blue background. It is often used for double-breasted suits.

Chesterfield

A city coat with a fly front. Traditionally, a Chesterfield is single breasted, comes in a gray herringbone pattern, and has a black velvet collar. The Chesterfield is also available in blue, black, or beige.

Cheviot

A robust, but very coarse, worsted fabric made from the wool of the Cheviot sheep. A typical material for English sporting suits.

Club Tie

Originally a necktie in the colors of an English club that was only available to club members. Today it is used as a general term for the striped necktie.

Coat

The word used in Savile Row for a sports jacket or the jacket of a suit.

Coat-maker

A tailor who specializes in making jackets.

Coke Hat

See bowler hat.

Cordovan

A term for horse leather, a rare and expensive raw material used in shoemaking. Only the leather from the hind parts of the horse can be used. One hide supplies two round pieces of leather, just enough for two or three pairs of shoes. The best Cordovan shoes are considered to be those made by the North American manufacturer Alden.

Cotton

The most important textile commodity. Cotton is even more widely used than natural wool. Underclothes, overshirts, jeans, chinos, and Gabardine raincoats are typical garments made of cotton.

Covert Coat

A single-breasted coat made of covert cloth, a medium twill, and reaching as far as the knee. Its typical features are a fly front and four simple parallel decorative seams above the cuffs and along the bottom hem.

Crombie Coat

A dark-blue single-breasted city coat with an open button facing.

Cuff Links

Two identical objects shaped so that they pass through the button holes of the cuff to fasten it. They are secured in place with a bar, a chain, or an elasticized ribbon.

Cuffs

A relatively recent invention, pants cuffs have only been worn since the first half of the nineteenth century.

Originally, pants really were rolled up to prevent the hem getting wet or dirty. Today most pants have cuffs. The pants worn with very formal clothes, such as the morning coat, tuxedo, or tails, are not made with cuffs. In British English cuffs on trousers are called turnups.

Cutaway Collar

Also generally known as the “spread collar.” The tips of the collar are “spread” far apart on shirts that have cut-away collars. It is a classic among shirt collars, and is second only to the broad turndown collar.

Cutter

In English custom tailoring the tailor who advises the customer, takes his measurements, drafts the pattern on manila paper, cuts the cloth, and fits the suit.

D

Deerstalker

A shooting cap with ear flaps. It is famous as the hat worn by Sherlock Holmes.

Denim

A blue cotton material used for jeans.

Derby

A term that has never been defined conclusively. It is commonly understood to mean shoes with open lacing, but is also the name of a brogue, or wingtip, shoe. In the US it is also the name for a bowler hat.

Dinner Jacket

An English term for what is known in the USA as a tuxedo, and in Germany as a *Smoking*. In German-speaking countries *Dinnerjacket* is used to refer to a white or ivory dinner jacket only.

Donegal Tweed

A coarsely flecked Irish tweed.

Double-breasted Jacket

A jacket with two rows of buttons, usually three pairs. The two upper buttons are purely decorative. A double-breasted jacket should always be fastened up when you are standing. Otherwise, the jacket opens out very wide, which does not look flattering.

Dress Shirt

A shirt to be worn with a tuxedo or tails. For a tuxedo it can have either a wing collar or a turndown collar. For tails it has to be a wing collar.

Dress Waistcoat

A white backless vest made of piqué and worn with tails.

Dry Cleaning

A cleaning technique using chemicals that dissolve fats and stains. Traditionalists reject it outright because it destroys the natural moisture of the material. They prefer brushing, airing, and steam ironing. If clothes are to be dry cleaned, only the best specialists available should do the work.

Duffel Coat

A short, single-breasted hooded coat with horn toggles.

Dusty Madder

A traditional technique for dyeing silk. It is also used to describe necktie patterns with a dusty, powdery look that softens what are, in fact, glowing colors. Dusty Madder and Heavy Dusty Madder neckties usually have Paisley or foulard patterns. The most important manufacturers of Dusty Madder and Heavy Dusty Madder are David Evans, a company based in England that supply all the major necktie manufacturers of the world.

E

Elasticized Waistband

The elasticized waistband is typical of pants that are worn with suspenders. When the wearer is standing, the pants are held in place and do not get any tighter where the suspenders are fastened. When he sits down, the pants fit snugly round his stomach. Elasticized waistbands are also found on pants that can be adjusted at the side to suit different waist measurements.

F

Fishtail

The rear part of a pair of pants cut specially for wearing suspenders. The rear is divided and pulled upwards so that the vest does not ride up onto the waistband of the pants when the wearer bends over.

Fitting

In modern custom-made tailoring three fitting sessions are usual and sufficient to make sure the necessary adjustments are made before a garment can be finished. Trying on ready-to-wear garments is not fitting because the clothes are already finished.

Flannel

The word comes from the Welsh *gwalen*, and means an object made of wool. The soft, smooth feel of flannel is created by a special manufacturing process, in which the wool is fulled until it turns felt. A pair of pants made of gray flannel can be worn with a sports jacket, or a shirt and pullover.

Four-in-hand

A simple necktie knot named after an English club that existed in the early nineteenth century.

French Cuff

Known in England as the “double cuff.” French cuffs are worn on traditional men’s shirts and fastened with cuff links. A French cuff is the perfect way to finish off a sleeve, and looks particularly good worn with a suit or sports jacket.

G

Gabardine

A waterproof, wind-resistant cotton weave with a characteristic diagonal structure. A British patent was taken out in 1879 by Thomas Burberry, who retained the exclusive manufacturing rights for the material until 1917. Gabardine is the material used in the raincoats made by Burberry and other manufacturers.

Galoshes

Rubber overshoes that protect the shoe and foot against wet and cold, and prevent the wearer’s feet skidding.

Gingham Check

A fine checked material used in shirts. The word derives from the Malayan word *ging-gang*, which means “striped.”

Glencheck

See “Prince of Wales Check.”

Guernsey

Island in the English Channel, home of the pullover of the same name that was originally worn there by fishermen. A popular and extremely hard-wearing pullover for leisure activities.

H

Hacking Jacket

A riding jacket. The name derives from the verb “to hack,” meaning to ride. Its typical features are its close-cut, high waist, long rear vent, and slanted flapped pockets. The hacking jacket is one of the precursors of the modern sports jacket.

Harris Tweed

One of the most famous varieties of tweed. Only tweed woven on the Outer Hebrides is allowed to bear this much sought-after label. It comes in various vivid colors and is particularly suited to robust sports jackets.

Herringbone

A type of diagonal weave, in which the yarn is woven into a diagonal structure. In order to create the characteristic herringbone effect, the direction of the weaving is changed at set intervals to create a zigzag pattern. Herringbone is used to make light and heavy fabrics. Fine gray herringbone fabrics are made into business suits, while heavy herringbone tweeds are used for sports jackets.

Homburg

A hat with a stiff, curved brim. It was discovered by King Edward VII in the German spa town of Homburg. The Homburg is now the most formal hat after the top hat and comes in black, gray-blue, and dark or light gray.

Horsehair

Canvas with horsehair is used to reinforce and shape a suit, usually at the breast and lapels.

Houndstooth

A casual pattern in two colors for woolen fabrics. A popular choice for sports jackets and coats.

House Check

A checked pattern that is only used by one brand and serves to identify their products. It is often used as a lining material. The most famous house check is the Burberry check.

House Style

Stylistic features that identify very different garments as the work of particular custom tailors. There is, for example, no mistaking the soft, rather shapeless jackets made by the Savile Row tailors Anderson & Sheppard.



House check

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