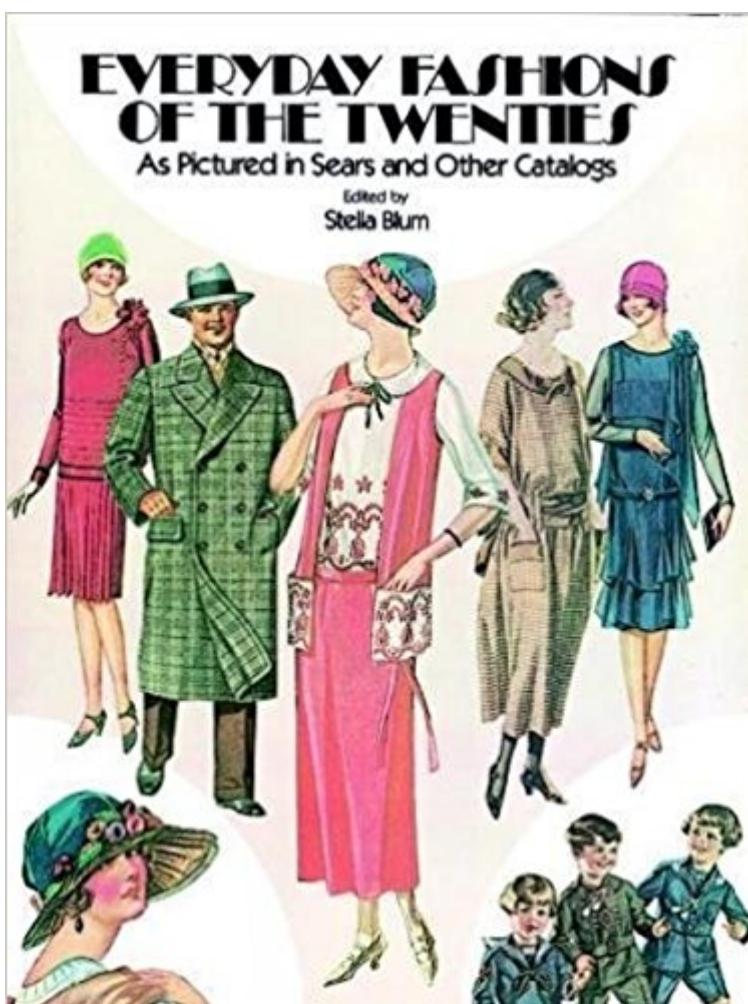


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Everyday Fashions Of The Twenties: As Pictured In Sears And Other Catalogs (Dover Fashion And Costumes)



Synopsis

The Roaring Twenties, age of jazz and flappers, Model T Fords and Hollywood movie stars, was also a time when for millions the bulky catalogs of Montgomery Ward or Sears, Roebuck were a substitute for the window displays of Paris or New York fashion shops. Buying clothing through the mails had become an American institution, and entire families were often dressed via the U.S. Post Office. More conservative than the up-to-the-minute fashion shops, mail-order catalogs nevertheless offered surprisingly much of the haute couture. But, above all, they accurately record what men, women, and children were actually wearing in the 1920s. Now Stella Blum (Curator of the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) has distilled into this volume the essence of the fashion pages of the Sears, Roebuck and other mail-order catalogs of the Twenties. Her informative text and selection of over 150 representative catalog pages — comprising over 750 illustrations with original captions — gradually trace the evolution of dress modes from the vogue of stodgy postwar fashions to the impact on costume of the crash of '29. In a year-by-year survey, Mrs. Blum's introductory texts relate the trends in fashion to the social changes of the dynamic and restless era, assessing the influence of war and technological developments on the high hemlines, flattened busts and hips, geometric patterns and "bobbed" hairstyles of the boyish flapper look. And as she notes, it was through the Sears catalogs that Parisian designers like Coco Chanel, Jeanne Lanvin, and Madeleine Vionnet made their influence felt on Midwestern farms and in urban ghettos. You'll find here a marvelous panorama of "smart," "modish," "chic," "stylish," and "ultra fashionable" apparel, as well as more traditional garments: for women and "misses" there are Middy blouses, Russian boots modeled by Gloria Swanson, "Bob" hats modeled by Clara Bow and Joan Crawford; coats, suits, dresses (including the first maternity dresses), sweaters, capes; silk and rayon stockings, corsets, chemises, camisoles, negligees; and accessories like necklaces, belts, combs, headbands, umbrellas, gloves, compacts, hand bags, wristwatches, and powderpuff cases. You'll see slower-to-change men's fashions — shirts, ties, suits, sweaters, and sports clothes — become trimmer, brighter, smarter. And you can follow the trends in children's fashions as well. For historians of costume, nostalgia buffs, and casual browsers, these pages afford a rare picture — unspoiled by recent myths about the Roaring Twenties — of how average people really dressed in the jazz age.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is a fantastic resource on 1920s fashion, starting with "everyday" as indicated in the title, but edging on into the "dressy" showing us "every-evening" worthy dresses, shoes, and so forth. There is a nice introduction including brief year-by-year overviews of how things changed, and lots of charming examples. Unfortunately, although the summaries are year-by-year, the book itself is broken into only two sections, 1920-24 and 1925-29. Because the reference in each description is given in page numbers and "real page numbers" are not enabled for the kindle edition, it's nearly impossible to tell which illustration belongs to which year. Another problem with the Kindle edition is that the graphics are low resolution. To be able to read the catalog descriptions, you have to blow the image up (not easy on some Kindle devices) and even once this is done the text is fuzzy and hard to read. I'm a steadfast Kindle reader and love to see publishers migrate their books to electronic versions, but it needs to be done with a little sensitivity and savvy. Fifteen minutes of cross-referencing would have changed this barely usable ebook into a pleasure, and a little strategizing as to how to present readable image text could have made it a delight.

These "Everyday Fashions" books are great. You not only get an idea of the types of clothing people wore during any particular decade, but in a few cases, you even get some pricing (too bad it's not all the time, but I digress). The reason I've been getting these books is different from others who have posted here. I don't try to get ideas to sew clothes either on a personal or professional basis (like for a play or something). The reason is that I'm a writer, and I like to see what my characters should be or might be wearing for any particular decade, as I tend to write stories set in

the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s. What's nice is that the books do a year-by-year thing, so in this instance, you can see what a woman wore in 1919 as opposed to 1925 - and what a difference in women's clothing in just 6 years! Yes, they're in black and white, but I remember a reviewer for one of these books stating that the Sears catalogs were typically in black and white anyway. Besides, I can just as easily imagine different colors for different outfits (and a lot of times, they will tell you what colors are available, as part of the ad). The preface/forward for the 1920s (also includes 1919) is split among pre-flapper, flapper, and nudges into the Depression (1930). Utterly fascinating. And I felt there was enough of men's clothing included here, too, though this was a fairly conservative era for men's fashions, so IMHO the suits, hats, and coats, etc., would necessarily look pretty similar.

an excellent edition for anyone who wants to understand the styles that dominated the first modern decade of the 20th century. Far from Paris fashion, the clothing depicted in this volume is the stuff of our grand and great-grandparents' lives. The everyday clothing of the housewife and the banker, the bobbed co-ed and the dapper auto mechanic. If you want to learn more about the look of the 20s and how to add a 20's flair to your personal style, this is a great book to add to your library.

I enjoyed the historical info, but am glad it was short. The illustrations are very interesting and informative. They are clear enough that I may try to copy some details for my own sewing and millinery.

Very informative!

Exactly what I was looking for and expected

The content of this book demands better technology. The pages are not numbered and when viewing on a device, you cannot determine the corresponding catalog page that the text refers to. Sad and missed opportunity. Needs to be fixed so younger readers can learn about this important book.

I love these books and have several! I get for costuming ideas and they are perfect as they are actual reproductions from the Sears Catalogs. Just wish they were even bigger! You'll laugh at the prices! The introductions are excellent. They discuss the cultural changes as seen in the ready to wear apparel, the style changes from the previous decade and the nuances of the current decade.

This is not haute couture, these are the style everyone wore on a daily basis!

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