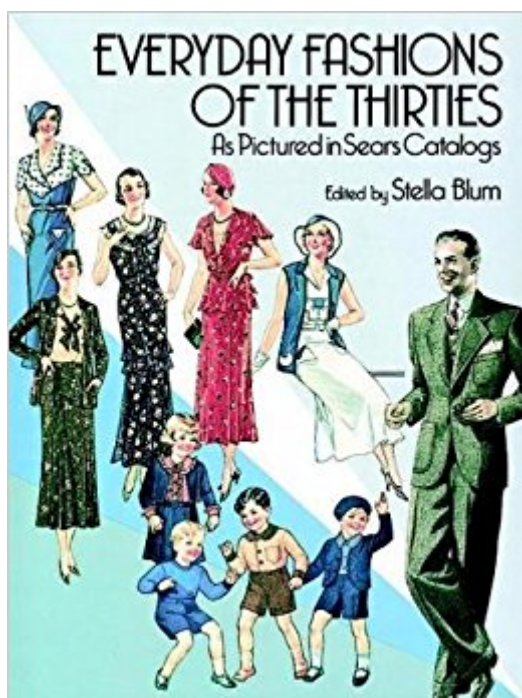


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Everyday Fashions Of The Thirties As Pictured In Sears Catalogs (Dover Fashion And Costumes)



Synopsis

For thousands of women across America, hard hit when the frivolity of the twenties ended so resoundingly with the Crash of '29, the pages of the Sears catalog became an essential resource in maintaining a wardrobe. An ambitious marketing operation, it could not afford to take chances on haute couture; its fashions were geared as closely as possible to the prevailing tastes of the American people. For this historically accurate sampling of authentic 1930s fashion, Stella Blum, former Curator of the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, selected for reproduction 133 representative pages from rare Sears catalogs of the period (fall and spring catalog for each year from 1930 to 1939). Hundreds of illustrations record what men, women, and children were actually wearing in the 1930s when, as a copyline from the Fall 1930 catalog proclaimed: "Thrift is the spirit of the day. Reckless spending is a thing of the past." You'll see here how simpler women's fashion designs — of more traditional, affordable material — recaptured the feminine form with a more natural waistline and lower hemlines than seen in the twenties. For evening wear, longer dresses replaced flamboyant beaded short gowns while cloche hats, another twenties trademark, were replaced by berets, pillboxes, and turbans. The seriousness of the accessories and dresses endorsed by such Hollywood legends as Loretta Young, Claudette Colbert, and Fay Wray. For historians of costume, nostalgia buffs and casual browsers, these pages afford a rare picture of how the average American really dressed during the thirties. It is an essential resource for study of the clothing of an important era which designers cannot afford to be without.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a great book, full of wonderful illustrations of period clothes. I'm looking for fashion details to inspire my own wardrobe and there's a treasure trove to be found in this book. Great source for costume events too.

The Last Decade Of Elegance: Everyday Fashions Of The Thirties: As Pictured In Sears Catalogs
This book depicts the clothes of everyday people as opposed to high fashion. But it gives you some idea of the elegance of the fashion world in those days, Coco Chanel vs Elsa Schiaparelli, etc and so forth. The middle-aged women of the 1930's were the debutantes of 1915 during the First World War when ladies' fashion began to suffer its greatest change in all of history --- the transformation of the long dress into baring the knee and the lower leg to all the world. They yearned for the peacefulness and order of the Edwardian era and tried to recreate it in the elegance of the clothes of the 30's which were also less innocent and far more sophisticated than the fashions of 1915. Since the the 1930's even the memory of such sophistication and utter femininity has faded into the ever far distant past. by Linda Cargill, author of Key to Lawrence.

This wonderful compilation of clothing and accessories available at Sears in the 1930's makes me want to go back in time. The book is very well thought out. Showing the clothing year by year was a great idea. We own a 1939 Packard automobile and enjoy wearing vintage clothing when we participate in antique car tours. I bought the book to get ideas for making a dress or two that would depict the era. This book gave me more than I expected. If you're looking for clothing ideas for men or women, or if you just like reminiscing, you will enjoy "Everyday Fashions of the Thirties".

Overall, the text captured the era well in showing the everyday dress of the Average American in the 1930s. I was disappointed that there were so few illustrations of men's outfits in the book, but when I thought about it more, I don't believe it a fault of the text, but a reality of the era that there wasn't that much variety to men's fashion in the 1930s. Most amusing to me was to see that one could even buy a "hoodie" in the 30s.

The Sears catalog is a guide, overview but also what mainstream America bought and wore for a good part of the 20th century. In this case, the 1930s -which has been overlooked fashion wise - is

shown. You can definitely see how Sears was heavily influenced by cinema or maybe it would be fair to say vice versa. Anyone looking for era thinking and fashion, this is a good illustration.

Showing the clothing offered by one of the biggest retailers in the US, this is a study in clothing for the era. It is focused primarily for the women's wear but the men's wear pages are worth their weight in gold for the vintage clothing aficionado. This type of book is helpful for collectors, re-enactors, film costuming and plays. It helps get the "look" of the period right. Style in this era was found in everyday life for middle America in the way people dressed and is a stunning contrast to today's sloth and slovenly life-styles.

This is the first book from this series I obtained. It is a useful reference tool not only for the major pieces of clothing but also how accessories were used and placed. (It's not always easy to figure out those crazy 30s hats!). The descriptions, being authentic to the time, are delightful as well. My only complaint, which is really more wishful thinking, is that the book could be a bit longer. However, no major clothing/accessory category was left out.

Love this collection. It's an entry into a dream world (I know it wasn't so dreamy for everyone).

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