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EC56-409 Hats...Accessories for Dress

Gerda Petersen

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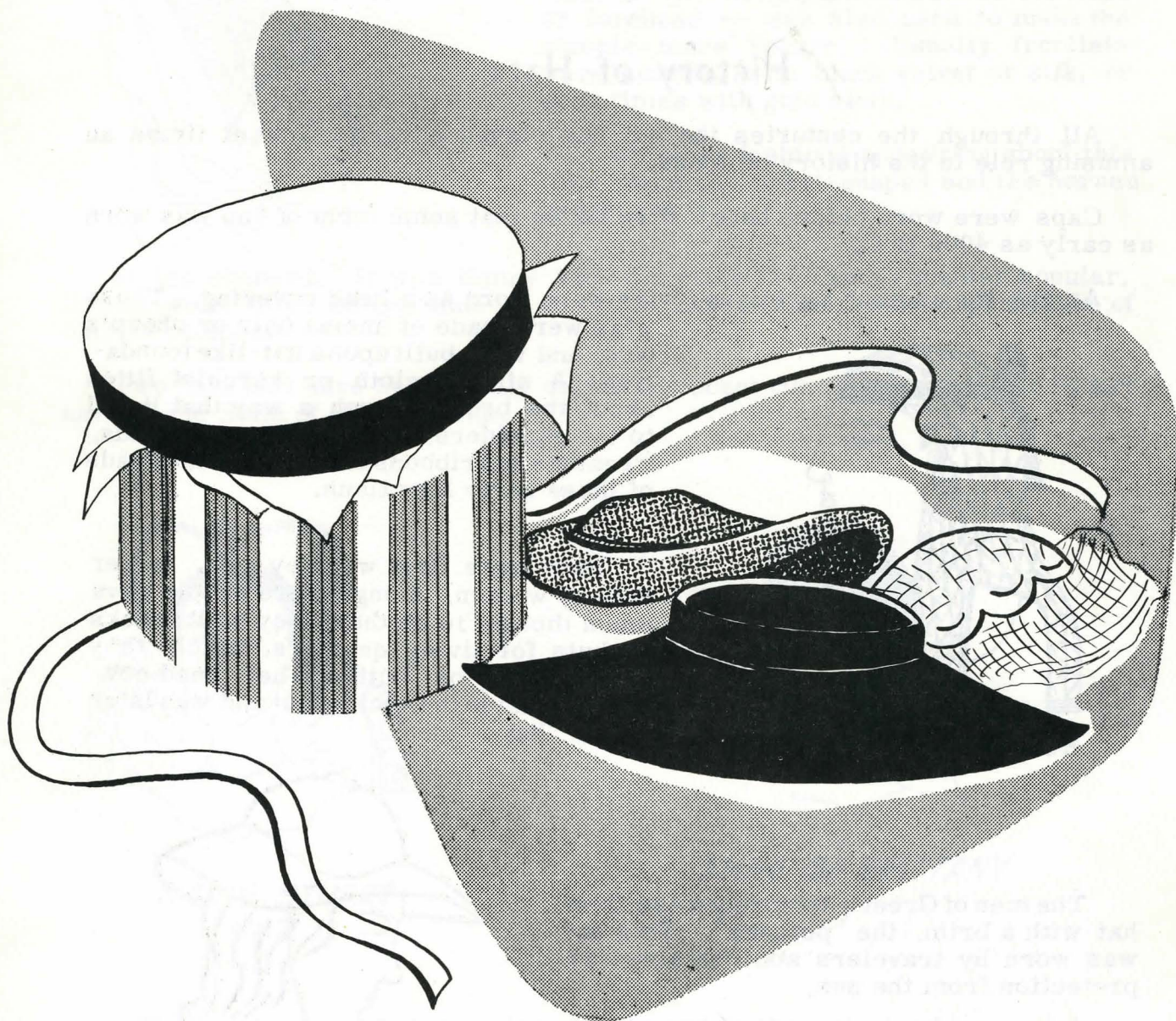
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HATS...

accessories for dress



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Hats - Accessories For Dress

Gerda Petersen

The most important part of a woman's appearance is her head -- her face, her hair, her hat!

A hat is more than a protection. It is a frame for the face, a trim for the dress. It is the one most important accessory to a smart appearance.

History of Hats

All through the centuries the hat has played a varied and at times an amusing role in the history of dress.

Caps were worn before hats. It is known that some form of cap was worn as early as 4000 B. C.

Among the ancient Egyptians, wigs were worn as a head covering. These wigs were made of human hair or sheep's wool and were built upon a net-like foundation. A simple cloth or kerchief fitted about the brow in such a way that it fell to the shoulders, was also worn. Bands, wreaths and ribbons ornamented the heads of these early Egyptians.



EGYPTIAN HEADDRESS

Hats were first worn by men, rather than by women. Long before people gave much thought to clothes, they built shacks or huts for living quarters, which they called "haet" or "hutt". Their head covering imitated the ancient hut and was later called "hat".

The men of Greece introduced the first hat with a brim, the "petasos". This hat was worn by travelers and huntsmen as protection from the sun.

Sometimes it was pushed back off the head and supported by a string about the neck.



PETASOS

During the middle ages women wore draperies to cover their heads. Square, oblong, or circular pieces of linen or cotton materials were draped over the head and fell to the shoulders or elbows.



**STEEPLE WITH
HENNIN**

In about 1380 a new and striking fashion appeared. It was a towering cone-shaped headdress called the steeple. Some steeples were worn with a veiled hennin. Because of its great height, the steeple was mounted on a little cap to hold it in place. A frontlet -- made of wire netting and fitted over the head or forehead -- was also used to make the steeple more secure. Usually frontlets were covered with black velvet or silk, or sometimes with gold cloth.

Two other fashions appearing about this time were the heart-shaped and the horned headdresses.

Styles changed. It was Henry VIII who made the Tam O'Shanter popular. It was worn tilted on one side of the head and trimmed with a profusion of ostrich plumes.

Two hats that have been widely copied in recent times are the Marie Stuart hat and the Anne of Brittany cap.



**MARIE STUART
HAT**



ANNE OF BRITTANY

The Marie Stuart hat was close fitting and is characterized by a point in front. The Anne of Brittany cap was usually made of black velvet. Anne of Brittany also introduced white for brides and black for mourning.



**EXTREME
HAIRDRESS
POWDERED HAIR**

In the 18th Century, during the reign of Marie Antoinette, headdresses rose again to great heights. Elaborate hairdresses assumed unusually large proportions. Hair was piled a yard high in some cases. False curls and pads were added and all was plastered and stuck down with pomades, so that they might stay for weeks without being rearranged. Usually the hair was powdered. Ostrich feathers, ribbons and other ornaments decorated the huge hairdresses.

In 1859 the Poke Bonnet became popular and appeared in various styles.

During the years immediately following 1908, the automobile revolutionized the headgear of women. An enveloping veil, 82 inches by 24 inches, was worn to keep the hat in place and add protection from the dust.

Later, small hats again became popular and the twenties brought the cloche.



**AUTO
VEIL**

The hats of the present day resemble the hats of earlier years. Fashions change from season to season, yet the classic styles - sailor, bowler, beret, turban, pill box, cloche, and bonnet - appear again and again. Seasonal variations are usually in height of crown, width of brim, or decoration.

Psychology of Hats

Hats can do strange things psychologically to people. Margaret Story writes, "There is no more blessed antidote for gloom than a hat. A hat will buoy up a woman's spirits, give her confidence."

Hats may express personality. A hat may be gay and frivolous, it may be young and ingenious, it may be dignified and sophisticated, it may be dainty and sweet.

The Face - The Hair - The Hat

If a hat is to be becoming, the shape of the face and the hair style must be considered.

Shapes of faces may be classified as oval, round, square, triangular. The oval shape is considered the ideal.

Hair styling and the shape of a hat may emphasize the shape or structural lines of the face or they may be used to disguise irregular features and form a softening frame. For example, lines that suggest circles in the shape of the hat or its trimmings make the round face look even rounder because there is a repetition of line. On the other hand, hats with lines that tend toward the vertical may make a round face appear longer and less round. Some suggestions for types of hats to choose or avoid for different faces or features follow:

Round Full Face

Avoid



Round hats. A straight stiff sailor hat is an example. Avoid off-the-face turbans or hats that fit too closely, because faces need a background.

Wear



Hats with brims turned up on one side or brims that tilt. Hats that give a suggestion of height.

Long Thin Face



Flat hats, stiff sailors, narrow brims, tall crowns, pill boxes, and close fitting turbans.



Hats with wider brim, irregular lines of softened edges. Hats with trimming massed near the crown or on the sides.

Small Face



Hats that are too large and overpowering.



Tiny sailors, pill-boxes, or hats with shallow crowns.

Oval Face with Regular Features

Almost any attractive shape. Closely fitted hats, halo, and heart-shaped. Can wear hats placed straight on the head.

Prominent Nose or Sharp Features



Turned up brims. Close fitting hats. Tricornes.



Irregular brims, to give the softening influence of shadow, or a brim that tends to throw back the features. Wear soft trimmings on the forehead or front of the hat.

Avoid

Hats with drooping brims and those that are lower in the back. Turbans and stiff straight hats.

Heavy Chin

Berets and sailors with a tilt. Highlight the forehead with heavier effects in turbans. Center the interest high on the head, preferably near the front.

Receding Chin

Drooping brims. A hat that repeats the slanting line of the profile.



Dashing lively hats with no drooping brims. Brims that are wider at the sides. Let the forehead show.

Glasses

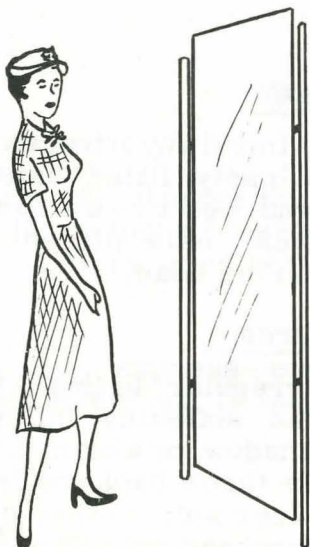
Turbans, pill boxes, sharply turned down brims. Lines that turn down close to the face focus attention on glasses. Too much decoration on the hat.



Brim that extend beyond the glasses. Soft, slightly drooping lines. Trimming at the front of the hat.

Milliners design hats with hair styles in mind. A styling guild has been formed of fashion representatives, such as costume designers, milliners, and hairdressers. These people meet before a new season to coordinate ideas and follow through on fashion trends. Women who have outmoded hairdresses may have difficulty in looking smart in today's hats; but those who adjust themselves to modern styling can look very smart indeed.

When Buying a Hat



When buying a hat study the effect of the hat in relation to your whole silhouette by looking in a full-length mirror. Does the hat go with your height, length of torso, width of shoulders and hips. For example, a tiny hat may make a large plump figure look "pinheaded", and wide hips look wider. High crowns add height. Yet, a high crown should not be exaggerated if you are short. Wide brims can modify the effect of height. Large, drooping brims make the neck, face and figure appear wider or shorter. Stout women should avoid beanies and brims that slant downward.

The mature woman usually looks better in hats with some brim or an effect of irregular, undulating lines and some brimming which softens and flatters. Picture hats, halo, off-the-face hats, small brow-revealing turbans and toques are not for the face with mature lines, but are better on young faces with placid brows. Veils flatter the eyes and help conceal lines. Crowns that stress the modeling of the head are better than deep crowns. A touch of color or white near the face compliments the skin. A hat that is slightly tilted on the head may subtract years from a woman's age.

Let the saleslady help you place the hat at a fashionable and becoming angle. Tilting the hat slightly toward the eyes is becoming to many women. The crown of the hat should be as wide as the face and should appear to be securely placed on the head, yet it should conform to the current fashion trend. View the hat from all angles - in relation to the contours of face, neck and profile. The hat and face should be a perfect composite. The appearance of the hat on the individual is what gives the hat distinction.

The amount to spend for a hat may depend on a number of factors such as type of hat, occasions for wearing it and community in which you live. You may want to spend more for a winter hat than a summer one because you may wear it more often. Perhaps you have a basic style of dress or suit that you plan to wear for a number of years and a new hat can give that outfit a "new look". Mabel Erwin suggests, "Make your own dress and pay more for your hats to secure a good costume". She also suggests that one good classic hat will probably look more distinctive, last longer and go with more things.

It is not so much the materials of which a hat is made that makes it expensive, as it is the work of the designers and fashion experts.

The manner of wearing a hat may give much style to the wearer. Unless a hat actually does something for a woman's appearance, she should not purchase it.

Hats Suited to the Occasion

A hat should be suited to the occasion for which it will be worn. Some hats, by the nature of their textures, lines or color, belong to afternoon or evening. Others may be right for a variety of occasions.

This hat suggests dressy afternoon or informal evening wear.



This hat is planned for sport or more tailored wear.



This hat is basic and may be worn for many occasions.



When selecting a hat, wear the dress or coat that you plan to wear with it. Try all of your accessories together to see if they create a harmonious costume. Christian Dior says, "The color of the hat must harmonize with the rest of your clothes but not necessarily match. In fact, it is better if it doesn't match. But other accessories like a scarf or gloves must go with the hat to team it with the rest of your appearance." Other present day fashion authorities believe that it is not necessary to have a scarf or gloves that match the hat.

Your costume can give you complete satisfaction only when all of its parts appear to belong together. Your hat should be a part of a well-planned costume design as well as becoming to your facial contours. The hat should also be suitable to your size, personality, and the occasion.

Care of Hats

If a hat is to remain fresh and new looking throughout several seasons you will need to give it some regular care.

Hats that are worn frequently should be placed on suitable hat standards to help retain the shape of the brim and crown. The hats will also need some protection from dust.

The natural luster of your hat will be retained if you do not allow dust and dirt to "settle in". Brush frequently with a soft brush or rubber sponge (not a whisk broom). Spots and dirt can sometimes be removed from light-colored felts with fine sandpaper. Cleaning fluids may also be helpful in removing spots.

Veils may be draped over the hat to prevent wrinkling. If the veil does become limp and wrinkled it may be pressed between two pieces of waxed paper.

Hats may be stored in hat boxes. Crushed tissue paper stuffed in the crown, in ribbon bows and around other trimming will help to keep them newer looking. Fur and felt hats should be protected from moths.

A hat treated properly will retain its lines and style. Reblocking and re-trimming is then a possibility for future use.