

1870 - 1879

CLOTHING TRENDS

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MEN, 1870 - 1879 MAJOR FEATURES IN CLOTHING.

Much is modified from Wikipedia. Full article at [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1870s in Western fashion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1870s_in_Western_fashion). It shows many

excellent images and illustrations with sources. Excerpts of the article are modified in each section below.

WORKING MEN:

Farmers still wore smocks & more rarely, old versions of middle-class clothing, well worn, or homemade, or bought 2nd hand.

City working men and specialized working men wore shirts, sometimes vests and coats, trousers, and overalls, and caps. Those were either old or bought 2nd hand from stores or carts. Sunday-best clothing was usually newer and cleaner for all working people. **Boots** were more common than shoes, as they lasted longer, and protected legs and feet during hard labor.

MIDDLE & UPPER-CLASS COATS:

Frock coats with waist seams remained fashionable. **Sack coats** were popular for business wear but had vertical fitting seams to provide a slight curve at the waist. **Vests** were generally cut straight across the front, with a variety of collars and lapels, or no lapels. **Three-piece suits** had a high-buttoned sack coat with waistcoat and trousers of the same fabric. The coat might be cut at an angle in front so that only the top button could be fastened, showing part of the vest and trousers.

Formal evening dress remained a dark tail coat and trousers. The coat fastened lower on the chest and had wider lapels. It was worn with a white bow tie and a shirt with the **new winged collar**, whose points were pressed to flare away from the neck.

Topcoats had wide lapels and deep cuffs, and sometimes velvet collars.

MIDDLE & UPPER-CLASS TROUSERS:

Trousers were full-length for most occasions and fell over the shoes to toe-height.

Blue jeans, patented in 1873 by Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis, began to be demanded by gold miners from the 50s-on who needed tough workwear. First sold in San Francisco, their popularity spread until now they are worn by the world.

MIDDLE & UPPER-CLASS ACCESSORIES:

Necktie fashions included the triangular four-in-hand knot, and later, the ascot tie, flaring over the shirt and bearing a jewel or stickpin. A narrow ribbon tie was an alternative for tropical climates and was increasingly worn elsewhere, especially in the Americas.

Hats included bowlers and soft felt hats in a variety of shapes for more casual occasions. The working class favored flat caps of the newsboy or pilot style. Top hats were for upper-class formal wear. Flat straw boaters were worn in summer, and on the water.

Shoes popularly had 1.5 inch-heels, with the hems of trousers falling to the top of the toe-portion.

NOTE- Images have been cropped to best show the clothing, rather than the overall portrait, photo, or illustration.

1870 – 1879 - MEN, WORKING-CLASS CLOTHING.



Farmer's wore work smocks from 1700 through 1900 in Europe, the British Isles, and North America.

Three farmers in traditional smocks sit on a wooden wheelbarrow. One wears a top hat, and the other two wear felt hats. All have rugged, trousers and well-worn boots for tramping through fields and barnyards. These are from Russia.

Russian and European smocks have much wider smocking and embroidery on the yokes than American smocks, which were limited to a width of 6 inches. But the purpose in all cases was to cover a man's clothing during work. If the day is hot, a farmer might wear nothing on his torso except his tough linen smock. On a cold day, he might wear several layers of knitted sweaters beneath, plus a coat.

Their facial hair shows them as living in the latter half of the 1800s, as does the top hat.

SOURCE – Photo from Russian la-gatta-ciara.livejournal.com.



1870s Workingmen in cities.

Almost all wear coats, high-buttoned vests, shirts, and wrinkled trousers with worn knees. Two have neckties, even during manual labor. All wear flat caps, newsboy or pilot style, and all smoke pipes, cigarettes, or cigars. These men all exude self-respect for their hard, expert work.

SOURCE, Online under 1870 Workingmen. The

only attribution is to “Bookworm Mama Co saved to Novel Inspo.”



A working man of 1870s views a monument.

With a coat, a short-billed cap, and a bag of tools on his back, this man reads the description on a monument. A light shirt collar possibly has a tie, but the shirt hangs untucked below a very short vest. Only the top button of his coat is fastened.

His wrinkled trousers are cuffed, and his shoes are worn. With hair at collar length, he wears a chin beard with no mustache. All of his clothes seem a little over-large, as if bought second hand.

Behind him, an old, lower-class blind man is assisted by a woman with a bonnet. The man has an out-of-shape felt hat, white hair, and chin beard, a light, rumpled coat, and a dark vest. He carries a cane to help him on his way.

SOURCE – Pinterest under “1870 Workingmen.”



Five laboring men of 1870s.

No occupation is mentioned for these men, although their hard work is manifest in their clothing.

We see a variety of felt or leather hats. They wear plaid or dark-colored work shirts, two with vests, and two with suspenders. All wear tough cloth trousers and worn boots or shoes.

All men wear the facial hairstyles of the 1870s, most with drooping mustaches and two with beards.

SOURCE – Pinterest under “1870 Workingmen.”



A Skilled Workman wears a plaid shirt and bib-overalls. A billed pilot cap is on his head, and tools are in his hands. 1870s.

We have no idea what his job is. It could be painter, plasterer, wallpaper applier or carpenter. He likely works indoors with jobs that could be messy, thus the overalls.

SOURCE -- Found on Pinterest under "1870 working men"



Young and old working men of 1870s.

The younger man on the left has a pilot's cap, a clean-shaven face, and very short hair. Under his dark coat is a colored shirt and a white kerchief, tied behind his neck. His lighter trousers end above well-worn boots.

The older man on the right has a tilted hat with a broader brim and a well-grown, but trimmed chin beard. Under his ragged, dark coat is a slightly lighter vest, not buttoned, but with a rolled collar. His light shirt is unbuttoned at the neck with no tie. His lighter trousers, beige or light gray, end above tied oxford shoes that have seen much use.

He holds some sort of tool, as well as a bottle of what may be liquor.

Below on the floor is a basket of work tools.