

MODS & MINISKIRTS

The 1960s saw a revolution in fashion, as a new generation made its voice heard in a world once dominated by the mature elite. Transformed by the emerging London pop scene, garments became more experimental and less restrictive. By the mid-sixties, waist lines were no longer controlled by girdles and corsets, and with the invention of tights, skirt lengths rose to the micro mini! We take a look at what influenced designers of the era and how seamstresses can recreate the iconic styles today.

Mary Quant

One of the most influential designers of her time, Mary Quant was apprentice to a milliner, when she opened Bazaar, her first boutique on the King's Road, London in 1955.

Her clothes were relaxed, young and modern and 'suited to the actions of normal life' compared to the female fashions that had gone before. Her window displays also became know for their eclectic nature. Some of her garments were sourced from art students and the mini shift dress synonymous with the 1960s soon became her trademark.

"Snobbery has gone out of fashion, and in our shops you will find duchesses jostling with typists to buy the same dresses"

Mary Quant



REX/Courtesy Everett Collection



REX/Zdenko Hirschler

Twiggy

It's impossible to comment on 1960s fashion without mentioning the face of the decade, Twiggy. But did you know she is a keen seamstress?

"I've always made my own clothes; my generation all learnt to sew. I grew up in the 1950s and my mum made most of the clothes for me and my elder sisters. I think it was economic apart from anything else. When I was a teenager, I was a Mod and you couldn't buy Mod clothes, so we'd make them. We'd put them together ourselves and it became a passion!"

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STITCH the LOOK

Jax Black, seamstress and bespoke vintage dressmaker behind Mrs Bee Vintage, gives her top tips on recreating '60s style.

Any advice on using a vintage pattern?

This is a great decade to start your vintage sewing projects as often there are only three main pattern pieces, no sleeves, and a basic zip fastening. I think the most important thing to look out for is that your pattern is complete. A good seller will guarantee this, but if you're buying from a charity shop or boot sale, you have to take a chance that all the pieces are included. The later vintage patterns are very easy to follow and contain good printed instructions. Totally ignore the pattern size, it has no relevance to high street sizing. Go by measurement instead.