

Section 4

Good morning. Now, we've been asked to choose an aspect of European (1) and to talk about its development over time.

I decided to focus on a rather small area of clothing and that's pockets. I chose pockets for two reasons, really. We all have them – in jeans, jackets, coats, for example – and even though we often carry (2) as well, nothing is quite (3) being able to pop your phone or credit card into your pocket. Yet, I suspect that, other than that, people don't really think about pockets too much and they're rather overlooked as (4)

It's certainly very interesting to (5) and see how pockets developed for men and women. In the 18th century, fashions were (6) the way they are now, and pockets were too. If we think about male fashion first ... that was the time (7) Trousers were knee-length only and referred to as 'breeches', the waistcoats were short and the jackets were long, but all three garments were (8) and pockets were (9) by whichever tailor the customer used. The wearer could then (10) such as pencils or coins on their person and reach them through (11) Coat pockets became increasingly decorative on the outside for men who wanted to look stylish, but they were often (12) if the wearer was someone with a profession who needed to carry medical instruments – (13) for example.

The development of women's pockets was (14) For one thing, they weren't nearly as visible or as easy to reach as men's. In the 18th and 19th centuries, women carried numerous possessions on their person and some of these could be (15) Women were (16) theft and wealthy women, in particular, worried constantly about pickpockets. So – what they did was to have a pair of pockets made that (17) The pockets were made of fabric, which might be recycled cloth if the wearer had little money or something more expensive, such as linen, sometimes featuring (18) Women tied the pockets (19) so that they hung beneath their clothes.

Remember, skirts were long then and there was (20) to hide a whole range of small possessions between (21) that were commonly worn. They would have an opening in the folds of their skirts through which they could (22) , like their perfume. Working women, of course, also needed to carry around items that they might use for whatever job or trade they were involved in, but their pairs of pockets still (23) of their clothing, they just got bigger or longer sometimes (24) their knees! So (25) went well into the 19th century and only changed when fashion altered towards the end of that period. That's when dresses (26) , and the pairs of pockets became very noticeable – they stood out too much and detracted from the woman's image. Women who had been used to carrying around (27) – and still wanted to – needed somewhere to carry these items about their person. That was when small bags, or pouches as they were known, (28) and, of course, they inevitably led on to the handbag of (29) , particularly when (30)