

# "It" Factor - Iconic Fashion

Written by Written by Amy Strand and Emily Zarka

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What makes an article of clothing or accessory stand the test of time, moving it from the ranks of trendy to classic to eventually iconic? Although there are no set-in-stone requirements for making fashion history, one thing is for sure: it must be fabulous. Here, we present five timeless fashion statements and the stories behind them - so timeless, in fact, that you'll find just as many grandmothers sporting these pieces as their teenage grandkids.

## Christian Louboutin



When it comes to Christian Louboutin's fashion-forward footwear, the color red—which washes over the sole of every Louboutin high heel—has become a symbol of luxury since the creation of his brand in 1992.

It didn't take long for Louboutin to be drawn into the world of fabulous footwear—at age 11, while visiting a museum, he became fascinated by an image of a woman's high heel with a red line slashed through it. After stints apprenticing and freelancing for Yves Saint Laurent, Chanel, Maud Frizon and Folies Bergère—the famous French music hall—Louboutin branded his name and opened his first shoe boutique in Paris. However, what really set Louboutin apart was the creation of his attention-getting signature red sole, which was inspired by an assistant's crimson nail polish. Today, Louboutin is recognized for his fresh and sophisticated styles—from stars like Halle Berry and Jennifer Lopez to stay-at-home moms and their daughters, every woman covets the status-rendering red-soled shoe. —A.S.

*Available at: Neiman Marcus, Scottsdale Fashion Square; Saks Fifth Avenue, Biltmore Fashion Park.*

## Levi's 501 Jeans



What would you do without your weekend uniform - that comfy worn-in pair of jeans? While there are now hundreds of designer varieties to choose from, all of today's jeans are modern-day knockoffs of the original 501 Jeans. Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis received a U.S. patent to create the first denim work pants with rivets in 1873, becoming the first blue jeans, initially made for the working men of the American West.

Levi's 501 Jeans were first called "waist overalls," to differentiate them from "bib" overalls. Around 1890, lot numbers were used to designate the various Levi Strauss & Co. products. The number 501 was chosen for the copper-riveted waist overalls, though the origin of the number was lost when LS&Co.'s historical records were destroyed in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire. After various alterations were made to the pants during and after World War II, the name "overalls" was officially dropped in favor of "jeans" in the early 1960's, when teenagers in the 50's began using the term. While 501 Jeans have been a popular fashion statement for men for more than 136 years, LS&Co. introduced the first jeans for women—Lady Levi's—in 1934, and the first 501 Jeans for women in 1981. —A.S.

*Available at: Levi's Store, Tempe Marketplace. 480.829.0047.*

## Chanel 2.55 Quilted Purse



Created by Coco Chanel in 1955 - hence the name 2.55 - the famous quilted Chanel handbag remains as modern today as when it was first designed. The purse was introduced by Chanel 16 years after she retired and served as her reemergence back into the world of haute couture.

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Prior to the invention of the 2.55 purse, shoulder straps on handbags were used solely for soldier and bicycle messenger bags, but Chanel got tired of misplacing her small, strapless clutches and purses at parties. She introduced the 2.55 with a dainty double chain strap on top, and her signature quilting process on the exterior. Inside, the purse sported a reddish brown material, which was reminiscent of the uniform Chanel used to wear during her days spent in an orphanage as a child. Secret pockets for money and letters from Chanel's rumored lovers lined the handbag, while the signature front flap lock adorned the outside.

The purse has continued to see such high-profile success that Karl Lagerfeld released a redesigned version in 2005. —A.S.

Available at: *Neiman Marcus Chanel Boutique, Scottsdale Fashion Square.*

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### Louis Vuitton Luggage Trunk



After early success in outfitting royalty and Parisian high-society with hand-made travelers' trunks, Louis Vuitton decided to open his own business in 1854. He made the crucial choice to cover his trunks with durable, waterproof-coated canvas. In 1858, he released his unique trunk featuring grey canvas, a flat lid, metal corners and an interior with tray compartments not only for clothes, but other elegant accessories that needed careful transport. The trunk was so popular that Vuitton created a red and beige striped logo design to thwart imitators. In 1888, Vuitton's son, Georges, introduced a distinctive checkerboard print in brown and beige with "L. Vuitton" puncturing the design at regular intervals, a pattern now idolized by designers and consumers alike. This pattern inspired both the modern-day Damier line and the iconic Monogram canvas trunk, created in 1896, which is recognized globally as a symbol of posh travels —E.Z.

Available at: *Saks Fifth Avenue, Biltmore Fashion Park; Louis Vuitton, Scottsdale Fashion Square.*

### Ray-Ban Wayfarers



First commissioned by the United States Air Force in 1937, Ray-Ban created two of the most imitated sunglass designs known today: the Aviator and the Wayfarer. First available to the public in 1953, the Wayfarer gained fame from popular movies and celebrities, reportedly making it the best-selling style in history. First seen in the movie "Breakfast at Tiffany's" and on James Dean, Bob Dylan and Marilyn Monroe in the 1950's and 60's, the glasses gained instant followers. However, a drop in sales left the Wayfarer out of sight until a short revival in the late 1980's with appearances in movie and television classics, including "Risky Business" and "Miami Vice." It wasn't until the late 2000's with famous fans Chloë Sevigny and Mary-Kate Olsen that Wayfarers skyrocketed to cult status again. Ray-Ban quickly moved with the trends by manufacturing the original design in "colorized" versions, thereby bringing back an American icon. —E.Z.

Available at: *Barneys New York, Scottsdale Fashion Square.*

### Burberry Trench Coat



Commissioned in 1914 by the British War Office to create a coat for new battle requirements, Thomas Burberry expanded on his original waterproof, tear-proof Tielocken coat by adding epaulets and 'D' rings, and thus the trench coat was born. The trench coat gained favor with explorers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries due to its quality and longevity, but the trademarked Burberry Check didn't grace the inside of the coat until the 1920's. It wasn't until the 1960's that the coat gained mass popularity among civilians, mostly because of the Burberry Check's growing fame. Worn in the brand's ad campaigns by stars like Agyness Deyn and Kate Moss, this famous coat has become a closet staple, and has paved the way for many trench coat imitators. —E.Z.

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*Available at: Neiman Marcus; Burberry, Scottsdale Fashion Square.*