History of Overalls

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Statement

The material and structure of overalls changes continuously over time, which affected its function and its audience. Overalls were originally worn because of its durability and protection of the body but now this function has changed and is mostly worn for aesthetics and to make a bold statement.
Brief History

Spatterdash

- 1650
- 1750: part of uniform
- Trousers
Overalls originally started for soldiers when in war. It was strictly for protecting breeches and stockings as part of a uniform.
First Bib Overalls

1700s

“Slops” (pants)

Working men

Symbol of low class
pre-1874 overalls usually have a button instead of a buckle to secure the straps in place on front of the chest.
Denim

invented by Jacob Davis and Levi Strauss in 1873

Davis installed copper rivets at the places pants rip the most: pockets and the crotch.
“Modern” Looking Overall

- World War I
- Women were called to replace men in farm, factories etc.

1916 Dutch women wearing men overalls.
Large pockets for women mostly seen on overalls, but not any other attire until the 30s and 40s.

Large pockets were common on men’s clothing.
1920s

Dark blue denim with cut legs that folded over boots.

Square bib.
1930s - Overalls as Fashion

- Made for little girls
- Girls wore dark blue cotton with pockets in the front.
- Boys wore denim with pockets in the sides.
White stripes
Buttons
Stars
Anchors
By 1937 overalls became acceptable as a comfortable, casual attire.
1940s

World War 2 brought back the overall into the work clothing genre but this time they were designed for women.
“Rosies Overalls are designed to fit a woman's proportions and come in stylish colors. The high-grade cotton twill fabric is soft, breathable, and durable. Overalls zip off to convert into shorts, and are adjustable on the sides and straps.”
Working women wore denim.
- after the war women returned to their playtime overalls

- The bibs on these overalls took on the Pinafore shape with modest coverage around the bust to the back, only exposing the neck and shoulders.
1950s, the tailored jumpsuit

The pinafore bib overall paired with the slimmer fitting capri or cigarette pant resulted in the '50s jumpsuit.
1970s
1990s