

Costume collection

Fashion and costume at Chelsea Library

Chelsea Library has a unique collection of books about fashion and costume, and a large archive of magazines. The collection covers past, present and future.

Read about our full collection:

[PDF booklet](#) [1] [PDF] (file size 273Kb)

We have books on:

- the history of costume
- international historical and national dress including tribal costume
- special occasion clothing such as weddings, coronations and festivals
- occupational dress
- military dress
- stage costume
- 20th century designers
- accessories such as jewellery, fans, shoes, buttons, gloves, hats and glasses

We also have a range of books about:

- the history of twentieth century dress
- fashion during different historical periods
- male and female costume

View the collection

We can't display all our books because the collection is so large. We have many hidden treasures in our stores which are all available to view, so ask a member of staff if you're looking for a particular book.

Fashion magazines

The library also holds magazines dedicated to contemporary dress such as:

- Vogue - issues from as early as the 1920s
- Vanity Fair
- L'Officiel
- Tailor and Cutter
- Manufacturing Clothier
- La Belle Assemblee
- The Ladies' Cabinet - depicted contemporary fashion of the day in the nineteenth century

Useful resources

If you're a researcher or student of dress, other useful resources include:

- [The V&A](#) [2]
- [Berg fashion library](#) [3]

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Links

[1] https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/pdf/Fashion_and_Costume_Collection_2011.pdf

[2] <https://www.vam.ac.uk/>

[3] <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/node/1348>

[4] <http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/az/az.aspx?searchletter=A&orgid=858>