

Units 4–6, Schularbeit B, Transcript

Track 12: The history of trainers

The history of trainers

Trainers have a long history. In the 18th century, people had the idea to put rubber soles on their shoes so they didn't get wet feet anymore. They called these shoes plimsolls. But the problem was that both shoes were the same; they didn't have a left foot shoe and a right foot shoe.

Then the US Rubber Company made the first comfortable plimsolls with a canvas top and a rubber sole. They called these shoes Keds.

About the same time, Marquis Mills Converse had a rubber shoe company and produced shoes for women, men and children. In 1917 he introduced the first sports shoes for basketball and called them Converse All-Stars.

At the same time in Europe

In 1924, two German brothers started a sports shoe company. They invented sports shoes with spikes, especially for professional athletes. The two brothers' names were Adi and Rudolf Dassler. Adi named the company after himself: Adidas. Athletes wore Adidas shoes at the Olympic Games and they soon were very famous. In fact, people thought they were the best sports shoes in the world. Unfortunately, the two brothers had a big conflict and Rudolf left the company. He then founded a new sports shoe brand, which we all know: Puma. From that time on, the brothers were in constant competition.

Trainers, not only for athletes

At the beginning of the 20th century people began to wear trainers not only for sports, but also in their everyday lives. James Dean, a young successful actor, wore trainers with jeans and a white T-shirt in his films, and soon people copied this cool outfit.

Innovation goes on

The popularity of trainers went on in the late 20th century. Nike produced a shoe called Air Jordans which were named after the famous basketball player Michael Jordan and became the most famous trainers ever. Soon other companies followed and developed new technologies to make trainers even more comfortable.

But these inventions had their price. Today, a pair of a popular trainers can cost over one-hundred pounds and more!

By the way, trainers are also called sneakers in American English because walking in these shoes is so quiet that you could sneak up on a person.