

Track 13 – Unit 4/11-15

Announcer: The history of trainers

Plimsolls

The first sports shoes, made over 100 years ago, were called “plimsolls”. They had a flat rubber sole and a canvas top and they were very simple – the left foot and the right foot were the same! In 1917, the U.S. Rubber Company made the first really comfortable plimsolls. They called them “Keds”.

Sports shoes from Germany

In 1924, two German brothers started a sports shoe company in a small village in Germany. Their shoes had spikes and they were for athletes. The two brothers’ names were Adi and Rudolf Dassler. Adi called the company Adidas. Athletes used Adidas shoes in a lot of Olympic Games and they were soon famous. They were the best sports shoes in the world.

Trainers and fashion

In the 1930s and ’40s people wore trainers for sports like basketball. Then in the 1950s a famous, young American actor, James Dean, wore trainers, jeans and a T-shirt in a film. Trainers were now “in” – and cheap. Soon, young people everywhere wore trainers (and jeans) too.

Hi-tech trainers

In the 1960s and ’70s, companies started making hi-tech trainers. The Nike company started in the USA in 1968. Nike, Adidas and other companies made trainers with air in the soles of their shoes. These shoes were very comfortable – but sometimes also very expensive. Today, the price of a pair of trainers can be over \$100.