

Fashion on the Ration

Clothing was rationed in Britain from 1st June 1941 to 15th March 1949. This allowed manufacturers to focus on producing military uniforms, ensure the fair distribution of garments across the UK and safeguard raw materials such as leather.

New clothing could be purchased during the war through the coupon scheme with every civilian issued with a coupon book. Each type of garment was appointed a points value e.g. 11 coupons were required for a dress and 8 coupons for a man's pair of trousers. At the start of rationing each adult was given the allocation of 66 points per year, but coupons shrank every year as the war progressed.

During the war a special all-in-one garment called a 'Siren Suit' was worn by men, woman and children during air-raids. These garments were often worn over night-clothes in the event of an air-raid and were designed to be easily taken on and off with button and zip closures. There was even a panel in the rear of the garment to make trips to the toilet easier for the wearer. Winston Churchill was particularly fond of the 'Siren Suit' and he wore several made-to-measure designs throughout the war.



Knit for Victory

Knitting was hugely popular during the war and contributed to the war effort. With materials scarce knitters had to be creative in their designs, often using mismatching wool to finish garments resulting in unusual patterns and colours. Magazines encouraged civilians to make the most of worn jumpers and scarves and provided details of how knitters could repurpose old worn out jumpers by unwinding them and using the wool to knit a new garment from scratch.

DID YOU KNOW?

Children were encouraged to 'knit for victory' in schools with young boys and girls knitting socks, scarves, hats and gloves in Army colours as part of the war effort.

DID YOU KNOW?

Thanks to the Blackouts, sales of white coats were on the rise during WW2 as they increased the visibility of the wearer. Retailers sold accessories such as handbags and brooches with high visibility features like reflective buttons on them to help British civilians be seen.

Make Do and Mend

Activities

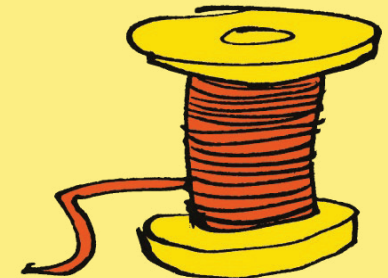
- 1 Get creative and make your own 1940s style 'Rag Rug' – all you need is old T-shirts, scissors and a shower matt (with holes). See how to create your own classroom rag rug here:
[youtube.com/watch?v=6XWqhyS9W8k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XWqhyS9W8k)
- 2 Make Do and Mend sessions – make your favourite clothes last longer by learning how to look after them properly. Learn basic sewing skills like repairing holes and tears, attaching buttons and fixing hems:
[loveyourclothes.org.uk/blogs/make-do-and-mend](https://www.loveyourclothes.org.uk/blogs/make-do-and-mend)
- 3 Start your own 'Knitting Circle' in class and learn how to knit a simple scarf using old remnants (check your local charity shop for odd balls of wool):
[youtube.com/watch?v=lsrAA4djRIAVIDEO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lsrAA4djRIAVIDEO)

Activity

Each child had 48 coupons to spend on clothing each year during WW2.

Using the template, imagine your family home had been bombed during the Clydebank Blitz and you had no clothing except what you had on. How would you spend your clothing coupons for the year? Think about what you would need for the colder months as well as school. How would this affect your daily life?

ITEM	COUPONS
Waterproof coat	11
Overcoat	4
Jacket	8
Shirt	3
Jumper	3
Trousers	6
Shorts	2
Skirt	6
Shoes/ Boots	3
Pyjamas	6
Underwear	2
Socks	1

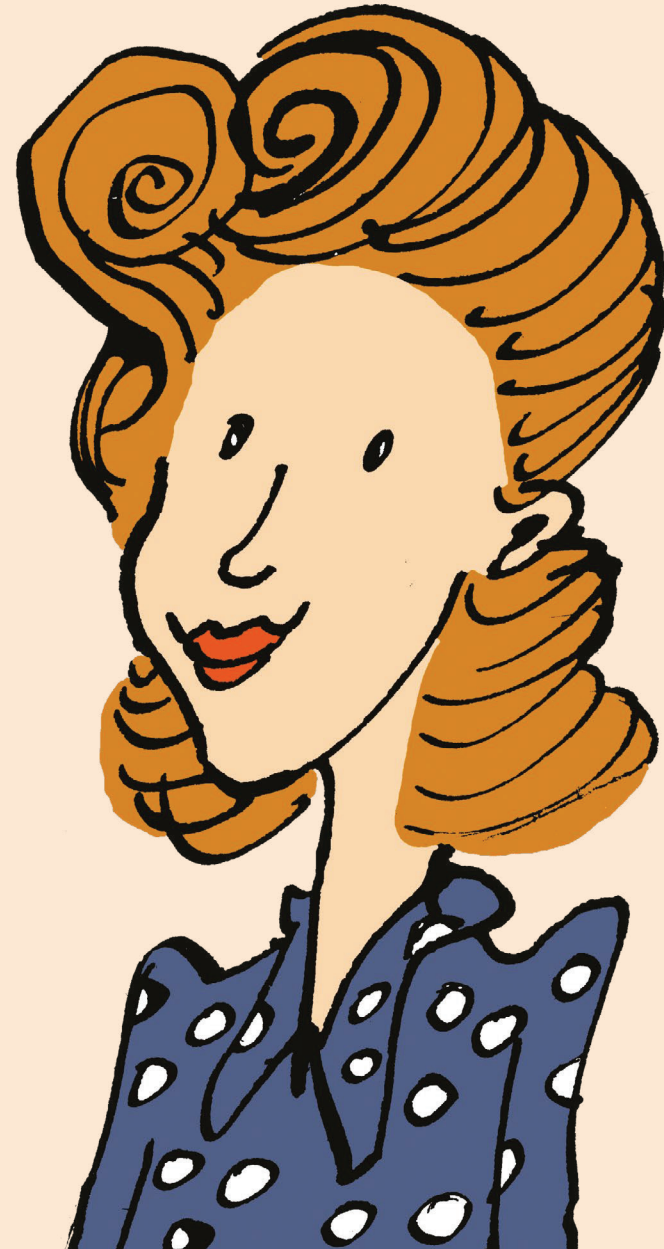


Hair & Beauty in WW2

'Victory Rolls' are one of the most iconic hairstyles from the 1940s. The hairstyle is often associated with manoeuvres performed by fighter planes in WW2. Planes would spin horizontally as a sign of victory or celebration, so this style is perfect to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE Day. As more women were enrolled in the workforce the victory roll was a practical style that was suitable for working in factories — it kept their hair out of their faces and away from the dangerous machines.

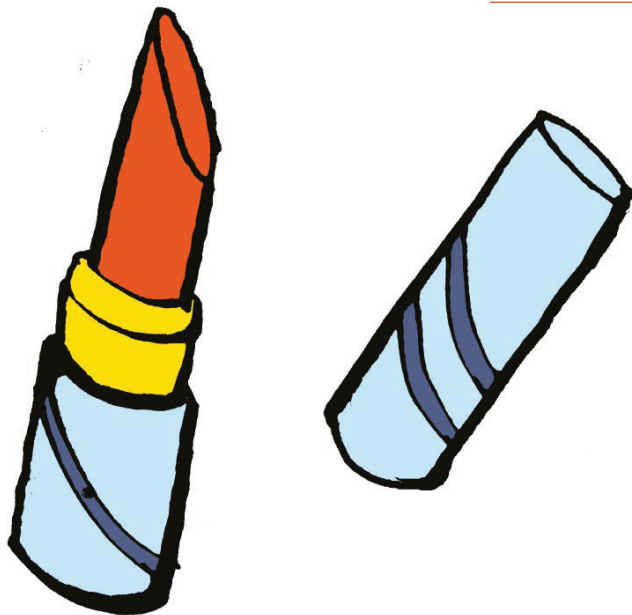
The war also affected men's personal grooming. Many men wore haircuts typically associated with the military like the crew cut and undercut. These styles were easily maintained, practical, and most importantly, would not get caught up in any of the helmets or weapons in the men's uniforms. Hair tonics and styling creams like Brylcreem were used to create shine and provide definition.

During WW2 makeup was still manufactured in the UK but in limited quantities. Makeup was never rationed but was subject to a luxury tax and very costly. Lipstick was seen to be important for overall morale. Brands created patriotic compacts, lipsticks and powders with spirit-rousing names like 'Auxiliary Red', 'Victory Red' and 'Regimental Red' to encourage women to support the troops and keep up appearances.



Pop-Up Parlour

Turn your classroom into a vintage style 1940s Pop-Up Parlour and get ready for your VE Day Street Party with your classmates. Why not try a dapper slick back? There's a style for everyone – to learn how to create perfect Victory Rolls follow these instructions: [wikihow.com/Do-Victory-Rolls](http://www.wikihow.com/Do-Victory-Rolls)



DID YOU KNOW?

American film star Veronica Lake famously cut her trademark peek-a-boo long hairstyle in the favour of a shorter style that was more reflective of the styles worn by female factory workers. Long hair was often considered unsafe within the work environment with the risk of longer locks getting caught in dangerous machinery.

[youtube.com/watch?v=mgpvKXLtwr8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mgpvKXLtwr8)

Activities

What you'll need for your 1940s Pop-Up Parlour:

- 1 Hair tools – backcombing brush, vent brush and comb.
- 2 Kirby grips - all colours to compliments everyone's hair.
- 3 Spray - add two tablespoons of sugar to hot water, mix and pour into a reusable spray bottle. Add your favourite essential oil for scent.
- 4 Some pomade - to smooth away fly-aways and give shine to your new do. You can buy different brands of pomades in most chemists or supermarkets.
- 5 Pre-curled hair - sleep in pleats or foam rollers for lots of vintage waves.
- 6 Accessories – flowers, headscarves and snoods to dress up your up-dos.