



CONVERSE PRODUCT HISTORY BACKGROUNDER

A Brief History of the Most Celebrated and Iconic Shoes

Chuck Taylor® All Star®: The most legendary and iconic shoe of all time. 1908: Marquis Mills Converse opens the doors of the Converse Rubber Shoe Company. 1917: the Converse All Star, one of the world's first performance basketball shoes debuts. 1918: Charles H. "Chuck" Taylor, an All American high school player who would later suit up with a number of early pro teams, puts on his first pair of Converse All Star shoes. 1921: Chuck Taylor joins Converse, becoming what may be America's first player endorser. 1930s: Converse adds Chuck Taylor's name to the All Star ankle patch to create what has become one of the first shoes bearing a player's name. 1950s: The Chuck Taylor All Star shoe becomes indelibly linked with an emerging cultural shift that combines fashion, music and youth culture with rebellious icons of film and rock 'n' roll who came to define a new casual style for generations to come. Early 1960s: Converse introduces the low or "oxford" Chuck Taylor All Star shoe. The cultural revolution continues to evolve youth culture and style with the Chuck Taylor All Star shoe as a staple. 1966: Chuck Taylor All Star shoes come in colors (only black and white had been available previously). The 1970s: The Punk movement begins and its most iconic bands adopt the simple, functional Chuck Taylor All Star basketball shoe as a badge of functional rebellion. This confirms the Chuck Taylor All Star shoe as a rock 'n' roll shoe. 1980s and 1990s: The Chuck Taylor All Star shoe continues its pop culture reign with the artworld's most luminary figures adopting the brand as well as and countless bands. 2008: Converse celebrates its 100th anniversary, a century in sports, music, fashion and pop culture, with the Chuck Taylor All Star shoe still serving as the brand's flagship, now an enduring American icon.

Jack Purcell®: Debuting in 1935, world famous champion badminton and tennis pro Jack Purcell designs an innovative and durable performance court shoe, with its iconic toe smile, that irrevocably changes both games by raising the level of play made possible by performance footwear. The shoes also become a "must-have" staple among young, aspiring Hollywood actors in the 1930s and 1940s, and west coast "beach boys" throughout the 1950s. The "JPs" also become similarly ubiquitous among "bad boys" as a statement of rebellion in boarding schools and country-clubs far and wide.

One Star®: Debuting in 1974, and quickly becoming a national phenomenon, the One Star shoe is a low-cut, suede version of the original Converse basketball "ox," or oxford, with the iconic Converse five point star design on its side. As a badge of honor and identity with yet another rapidly growing segment of America, the One Star shoe is adopted by the west coast surf and skate scene of the 1970s and 1980s, and later by the grunge scene of the 1990s, as a retro statement of their alternative and rebellious lifestyles.

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Pro Leather: Debuting in 1976, the Pro Leather shoe was a revolutionary advancement for Converse. True innovators of the game, wearing the best performance shoes yet made would go on to remake the game in a new image, performing aerial feats never before seen and punctuating them with powerful dunks. The Pro Leather shoe also becomes standard issue among the warriors of Rucker Park, New York.

Weapon®: Debuting in 1986, it immediately becomes the “weapon of choice” on basketball courts, almost universally favored by professional, college and high school teams throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Its “Choose Your Weapon” advertising campaign, featuring two of pro basketball’s marquee names, leaders of their respective teams representing the game’s most epic rivalry throughout the 1980s, ensures their instant success. The Weapon shoe is also adopted by burgeoning hip-hop subculture.

WADE: With the signing of Dwyane Wade in 2003, Converse cemented a marquee relationship with one of the NBA’s most talented athletes. Converse unveiled its first signature shoe for the three-time NBA All-Star, called simply WADE, in November 2005, which he later wore as he led the Miami Heat to its first NBA Championship, as well as his first Finals MVP title during the 2005-2006 season. Two more signature shoes have followed – the WADE 1.3 and WADE 2.0 – and an integrated apparel collection of athletic and casual sportswear was launched in early 2007. All the products in the WADE collection reflect Dwyane Wade’s own style of play, his personal design input, and significant aspects of his life and contributions on and off the court. Wade will wear his fourth signature shoe during the 2007-2008 NBA season, called WADE 3.

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