

Men Working

By Melanie G. Whittington



1:Montgomery Ward & Co., Spring and Summer 1928

How does the Model A man dress when he isn't a suit and tie or overall wearin' kinda guy? There are plenty of choices to give your Model A excursion an era feel. *Tailored Garments* by the Women's Institute of Domestic Arts and Sciences states, "Shirts for men are really of four types – the dress shirt, the negligee shirt, the outing shirt, and the work shirt." Besides the bosom on a dress shirt, the main difference between the rest is the material used to construct the shirt. A work shirt will be used rougher, laundered often, and is made to be mended to save money. Your focus should be on the outing and work shirt. Long sleeved button up shirts made of cotton, flannel, wool, or blends of these fabrics are common. A flannel shirt in plaid or solid colors would fit in perfectly at the local general store around the checker board. A modern, long-sleeved button up dress shirt is a good start. Referencing the Fashion Guidelines, look for solid colors, striped or figured designs in harmonizing or contrasting colors. Ties were not a requirement, but don't forget you can also use bowties. One pocket, two pocket or no pocket shirts are seen in era advertisements.

[OverAttired Vintage Fashion](#) carries a variety of vintage clothing and are always adding to their inventory. If you are feeling adventurous, broadcloth short sleeved sport shirts were starting to come into existence at the end of the Model A era. Polo shirts made of knit fabric with 3 buttons also fall into this category.



2:National Bellas Hess Co. Inc. Autumn 1931, Winter 1931-31

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Trousers can be a little more difficult if you are looking for an authentic era look. As you begin, a modern pair of trousers with or without cuffs, flat front, or a single pleat with belt loops would be appropriate. As you add to your wardrobe look for a trouser with wide legs and a high waist. You can add suspender buttons to your trousers to enhance the look. Trousers were seen being advertised with beltloops and suspender buttons because fashion was transitioning between these styles. The most difficult to recreate is the button fly on a pair trousers. There are patterns available to make your own or see if a local tailor is willing to take the pattern and make you a pair. Zippers were a few years away from being commonly used on trousers. [Simon James Cathcart - SJC - \(simonjamescathcart.com\)](http://simonjamescathcart.com), is a high-quality modern brand making era appropriate men's clothing.



3:National Bellas Hess Co.
Inc. Autumn 1931, Winter
1931-31

Headgear for the everyday man was also diverse. Straw, sailor and boaters were worn during warmer weather with casual wear, according to the Fashion Guidelines. Boaters are still readily available in vintage shops if you can find your size. Caps are easier to find in modern men's shops and there are companies recreating them to have the correct look of the A era, [TheWellDressedHead \(etsy.com\)](http://TheWellDressedHead.etsy.com), is one example. A variety of patterns were used; tweed, checked, herringbone and plain. The fabric would usually be wool or linen. The *Fashion Guidelines* also list a variety of specialty caps including mechanics caps made of black sateen. The familiar blue striped engineer cap was also worn by mechanics.

Large straw hats including those with a green celluloid sun visor, or without the sun visor, are still available from garden and hardware stores.

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To add to your look, a sleeveless or long-sleeved, V-neck sweater could be worn. A shawl collar long sleeve pull-over or button up sweater could be added for a cool fall drive. Plaid flannel jackets and leather or duck jackets, falling short on the waist are still available in vintage shops. [Bozeman Vintage](#) carries a variety of vintage menswear for everyday dress. They also have a storefront in Bozeman, MT. Hunting and outdoor jackets made of



5:Montgomery Ward & Co., Spring and Summer 1928

khaki or duck are very similar to what you can find

today from



4:National Bellas Hess Co. Inc. Autumn 1931, Winter 1931-31

Carhartt,

Cabela's and other sporting goods stores. Red or blue cotton bandanas were popular during our era and are

easily purchased today. You could wear this around your neck or tucked into your shirt or back trouser pocket. Long underwear or union suits are in all the era magazines, usually wool, cotton or a mix. Cotton union suits in red or white are still easy to get from a variety of stores like Tractor Supply, Vermont Old Country Store and Hanes.

Lucky for you, men's era shoes have not changed much from those you can find in modern stores.



7:National Bellas Hess Co. Inc. Autumn 1931, Winter 1931-31

Low top, high top, cap toe and plain toed shoes and boots were available. Square and round toe shoes were seen in



6:National Bellas Hess Co. Inc. Autumn 1931, Winter 1931-31

era. Cowboy boots and hunting or hiking boots are also options you can look into. These shoes and boots

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would have been leather with leather soles, with some having rubber heels. Socks are an easier item since they may not be seen, but cotton knit or wool socks were worn with workwear. Leggings and puttees could be worn for a hunting or hiking look. These could be leather, wool or canvas and would provide warmth and protection for the lower leg.

Take a look in your closet or at your local second-hand store. You may find a suitable outfit for your next ride in the Model A. An era look does not need to include a suit or a tuxedo. You can even ditch the tie or add a bit of whimsy with a bowtie. Driving around dressed for the era will add to your enjoyment and the enjoyment of those you meet along the journey. I hope this helps you put together an easy and comfortable outfit. We look forward to seeing you on tour and posting pics to the MAFCA social media pages: [MAFCA - Model A Ford Club of America | Facebook](#) and [Model A Era Fashions - MAFCA | Facebook](#).

References:

MAFCA Model A Era Fashion Guidelines, 2015, Men's Era Fashions p. 2A-1 – 2E-7

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Websites:

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