

The 1930s

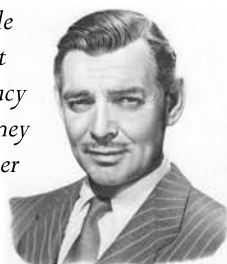
Prohibition in the early part of the decade meant racketeering gangsters controlled supplies of bootleg alcohol which were consumed in secret bars called 'gin joints' or 'speakeasies'. Police raids were frequent but couldn't effectively stop the organised crime syndicates.



Notorious American gangster Al "Scarface" Capone was boss of a crime syndicate in Chicago dedicated to the smuggling and bootlegging of liquor. Capone's gang bribed the mayor and was able to freely operate casinos and speakeasies throughout the city.

Hollywood's leading men of the 1930s

Clark Gable
Cary Grant
Spencer Tracy
James Cagney
Gary Cooper



Meanwhile, Hollywood glamourised the gangster persona and in the '30s many popular male movie characters were masculine 'tough guys' or 'strong silent types'. Suits (of all kinds) were the order of the day for men's fashion, and universally featured wide shoulders, wide legs and a fitted boxy look for maximum machismo.

SUITS AND FORMAL STYLES FOR MEN



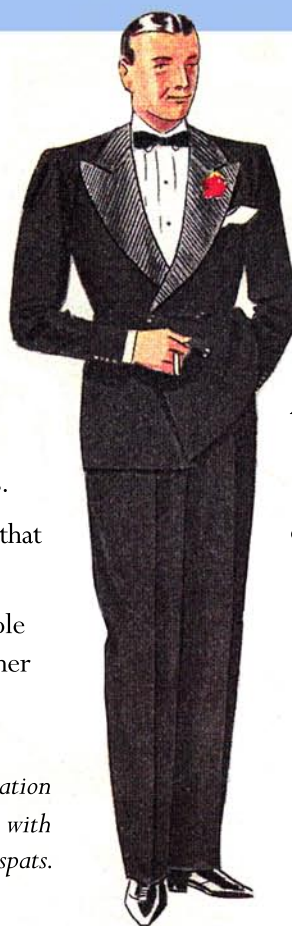
1930s suits featured wide shoulders, wide trousers with cuffs and a front crease.

Pinstripes and double-breasted styles were popular. The lapels were very wide, notched, and crossed relatively high.

Three-piece suits had high-buttoning waistcoats.

Jacket sleeves were short so that shirt cuffs were visible.

A pocket-square, button hole flower and well-shined leather shoes finish the look.



The tuxedo was worn frequently to formal events. It was black, double-breasted with wide notched lapels and a similar wide-shouldered and fitted style to suits of the day. A black bow tie, white pocket-square and buttonhole flower complete the ensemble.



The white dinner jacket with black bow tie and black trousers presented a different option to the more traditional tuxedo. For a more formal look, men could opt for a black tailcoat with a top hat and white bow tie.



Gangster look: black or navy pinstriped suit with a red carnation in the buttonhole, plain dark shirt with a white tie, black hat with a white hatband, two-tone shoes or black shoes with white spats.

The shiny 'wet' look was de rigueur for men's hair styles of the 1930s, and was achieved with much Brylcreem. Hair was parted at the side and slicked from front to back, often with a slight rise in the front.



A man never left the house without wearing a hat. The trilby was the most popular style of the 1930s, worn 'snap brim' style – up at the back and down at the front. The trilby was later eclipsed in popularity by the wider-brimmed fedora of the 1940s.

