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HISTORY

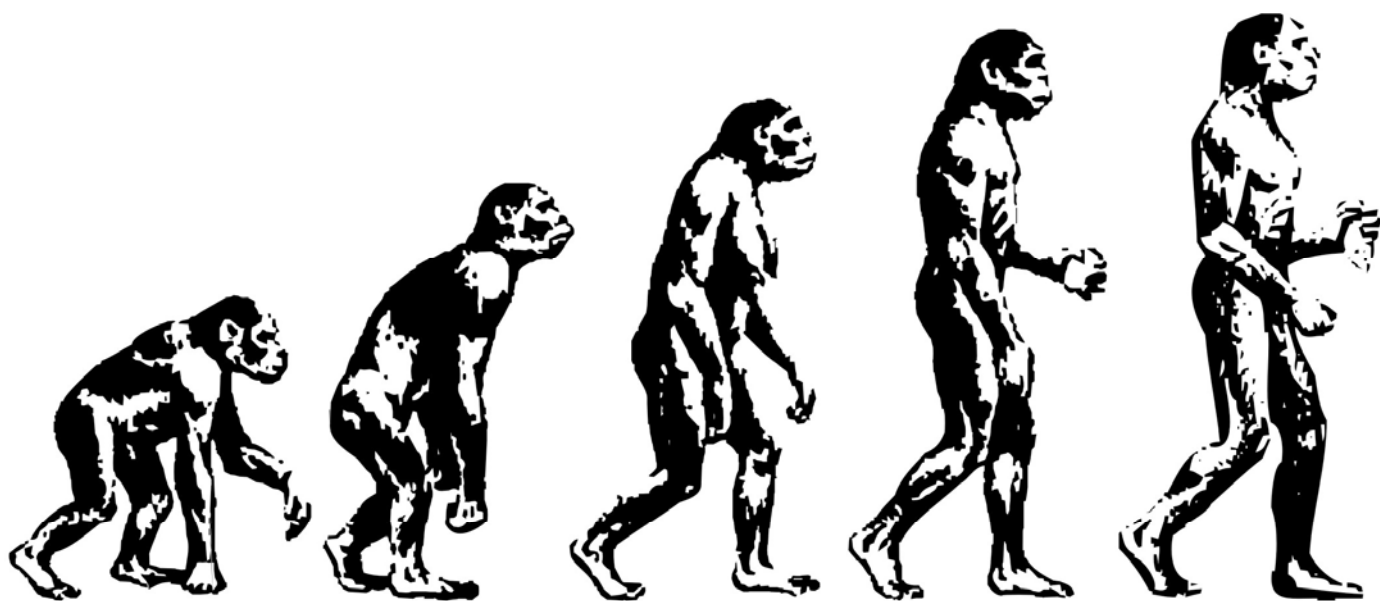
HISTORY OF THE ZIPPERS



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HISTORY

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## Let us tell you, the evolution of zipper is no less dramatic.

The naked ape ventured upon civilization, as we know it, by deciding to get dressed. Not only to preserve his modesty but also to protect himself from the tough weather.

Garments were simply wrapped around the body. Leather straps were used to keep it in place. Not only to keep it in place but to keep it in shape. We wanted to be attractive to each other. We were getting fashionable.

Thus starts the story of zippers...



## 570 BC The Pin



Large, dagger like pins were very popular in Athens, Greece to fasten clothes. But furious Athenian women did more than fastening their clothes with the pins. They killed one Athenian soldier with it.

The poor soldier had brought them the news of their men being killed in the war. The killer pins were banned for general safety. But clothes had to be held together. So the pin got converted into large brooches.



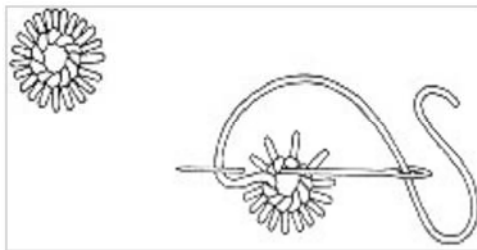
## 13 AD The European Broaches

Europe too were using safety pin like brooches well into the 13th Century. But more like a fashion statement. The artisans created them with elaborate intricate designs.



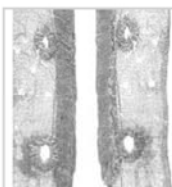
However it turned out to be too elaborative; the metal base, various objects added to the surface for the sake of fashion made them too heavy to be suitable for daily wear. Especially for the working class.

## 17 AD Eyelets



The Commoners of England revolted against the brooches. The cold, inhospitable climate, physically hard work culture demanded heavy, tight fitting clothes and a tough fastener. Brooches were not practical. The rusty metal used for clasps also punctured their bodies.

The English Commoner had enough. Necessities always being the mother of invention, Eyelets were developed. The eyelets were sewed into their pants and shirts. Into these eyelets, they laced string or thin cord, which held the garment tightly together.



17 AD...

## The Button, The Hook and Eye Fastener & The Belt Buckle

The jolly convenient eyelets crossed England shores to every country in Europe. And in no time most of the world was stringed to the eyelets. Till in the 17th Century a German goldsmith and an unknown seaman thought better.

The enterprising German goldsmith filled the eyelet with buttons. But lavishly covered with precious metals and inlaid with expensive gems, only the upper class could afford them. The common man adopted the concept of buttons and made it with fabric, shells, polished rocks and fine grained wood.

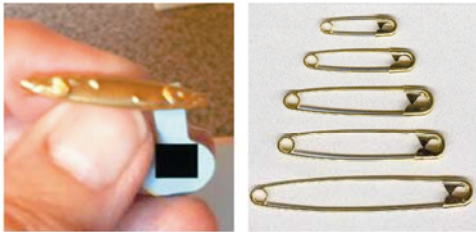
Now about the unknown seaman's struggle. British seamen faced severe handicaps when the violent sea splashed ice cold water on them and they couldn't get rid of the sodden clothes tightly strewn together either by strings or buttons. An unknown seaman took it upon himself to find a solution and he invented the hook and eye fastener; a simple, dependable hook.

The unknown seaman further worked on his invention and produced the world's first belt buckle, which enabled the sailors to fasten and unfasten their garments in any weather.



1849

## The Safety Pin & The Snap Fastener or Snap



When American Walter Hunt invented the safety pin in 1849, it was called the miracle fastener. The snap, also called the miracle fastener, was invented in America the same year. In no time the snap appeared in various avatars...decorated with emblems, coats of arms, precious metal, glass, bone, ceramic, shells etc.

1851

## Elias Howe

Sometimes we fail to realize the true potential of an idea and let it pass by. It happened to Elias Howe, when he invented the sewing machine along with 'an automatic, continuous clothing closure'. The sewing machine turned out to be a resounding success. But he didn't pursue the marketing of the clothing closure, which later turned out to be an opportunity lost.



1893

## Whitcomb L. Judson

The idea of clothing closures or fasteners was pursued passionately by Whitcomb L. Judson and it was patented to him in the United States of America. And he was also rewarded with the title 'Father of the zipper' which was narrowly missed by Elias Howe.

It maybe amusing to know that Judson invented the slide fastener thanks to his friend's stiff back, who couldn't do up his shoes. Judson came up with a slide fastener that could be opened and closed with one hand. Later it proved useful for fastening mail bags, gloves and wherever there was a need to detachably connect a pair of adjacent flexible parts.

Judson along with Harry Early and Lewis Walker in Chicago started the first hook and eye fastener company, M/s Universal Fastener in 1894.



1905

## Peter Aronson & The C-Curity Fastener

Made of thin sheets of steel, the automatic hook and eye fastener allowed free movement as it was clamped together with right spacing. When it was used on ladies' garments it was called **Placket Fastener**.



1913

## Gideon Sundback (1880-1954)

Emigrating from Sweden to Canada, Sundback joined the Universal Fastener Company. There he worked on improving the Judson C-Curity Fastener and designed the modern zipper. Earning him the recognition of having invented the modern zipper. He also introduced innovations like automatic hook, flexible fastener and a new eye, termed Plako, to the Judson design.

Sundback patented his first hook-less separable fastener in the US in 1917, which became the foundation patent for the zipper industry.

Sundback was also the inventor of the Scoop used in garments, bags, trousers and aviation suits. He continued the good work with 'S-L' Zipper machine, models of varying size (#4, #5 and #6 in 1922), giving more flexibility to users.



## 1923 Brand New Name

The B.F. Goodrich company used fasteners on tobacco pouches and boots and they renamed the good old fastener as Zipper.

## The Zipper

The term zippers came to popular usage in America. But exactly why was the fastener called zip? To find out let us closely examine the fastener itself. The fastener consists of two strips of fabric tape, each carrying tens or hundreds of specially shaped metal or plastic teeth. Then there is the slider, operated by the hand, riding up and down the two sets of teeth thanks to a Y shaped channel; fastening and unfastening. Now the friction of slider against the teeth causes a characteristic buzzing noise. Most probably this buzzing noise was the reason why slide fasteners were called zippers!

Over the years zippers have transformed from a useful curiosity to a necessary accessory to clothing and much more. From the ferocious soldier on the war front to the cool dude chasing skirts, from the toughest diving suits to the softest baby apparel, zippers are everywhere. Adding value and evolving with mankind.



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Adam would've loved zipping it!

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**PRECISION METAL PRODUCTS PVT. LTD.**

Synthofine Estate-D, off Aarey Road, Goregaon (East), Mumbai-400063, India.

Phone: +91-22-2875 3442, 2872 8238, Fax: +91-22-2874 3948

Website: [www.3kzippers.com](http://www.3kzippers.com) Email: [info@3kzippers.com](mailto:info@3kzippers.com)