

The rise of the trainer

Presented by Tory Turk

So this is where it all started; in 1916 Keds was launched and they quickly came up with the first all-purpose sports shoe. This is a 1917 Keds Champion, and they were designed for comfort and movement. They refer to it as a 'sneaker' because the soft rubber sole meant you could quietly sneak up on someone without being heard. They were quickly followed up the next year by another American brand: Converse. They were the first sneaker that was designed specifically for a sport – basketball. The amazing thing about these, are the design has hardly changed, in nearly 100 years.

Up until the 1970's trainers weren't really considered anything but a sports shoe. Football played a part in converting sportswear into casual wear. A new style-conscious subculture was forming on the terraces. Fans were getting out of the UK and following their teams across Europe. This German indoor training shoe, the Adidas Gazelle, caught their eye. At the time it was only available on the continent. Trainers were hitting the street. It wasn't until the mid 80's that we saw the meteoric rise of the multi-billion dollar trainer industry.