

PAJAMAS

By Lois Przywitowski

“Because they have grace and chic --- because they are equally practical and comfortable -- pajamas are the outstanding and best-beloved of all fashions. The little girl, the dignified hostess and her youthful guests . . . all attire themselves smartly for almost every occasion in these smart new designs.” Pictorial Review, June 1931

Pajamas have a long history in clothing. According to Wikipedia the original pajama was worn by both sexes in South and West Asia. It was known as *pajama*, a “loose, lightweight trouser fitted with drawstring waistband.” The word *pyjama* or pajama derives from the Persian word *payjameh*.

The British adopted the pajama during the period of their expansion, adding a top and jacket. By the Model A era, the pajama was worn for beach wear, sporting activities, entertaining at home, and dancing, as well as sleeping and lounging.

The following images show the many styles and uses of the pajama.



These smart two-piece pajamas could be purchased with or without the Coolie Coat. Both the pajamas and the coat were made from knitted Rayon Jersey, hand-painted and guaranteed washable.

The pajama top is a contrasting color slipover with matching trouser trim at the neckline, arm holes and lower edge.

The trouser legs have contrasting trim to match the top.

The Coolie Coat features contrasting color trim around the sleeves and the entire coat.

As a set, it makes a lovely negligee or lounging ensemble.

National Bellas Hess, F/W 1928-29

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The pajama on the left is for girls, aged 6 to 14 years. These two-piece pajamas are made from knitted Rayon, in a solid and printed design. The trousers have an elastic waistband and matching trim. The slip-on top is trimmed with matching trouser material.

The striped pajama on the right is made of Windsor Fancy Cotton Flannel, perfect for cold winter nights. The trousers are full-cut, with a drawstring at the waist-line. It came in bust sizes 34 to 44.

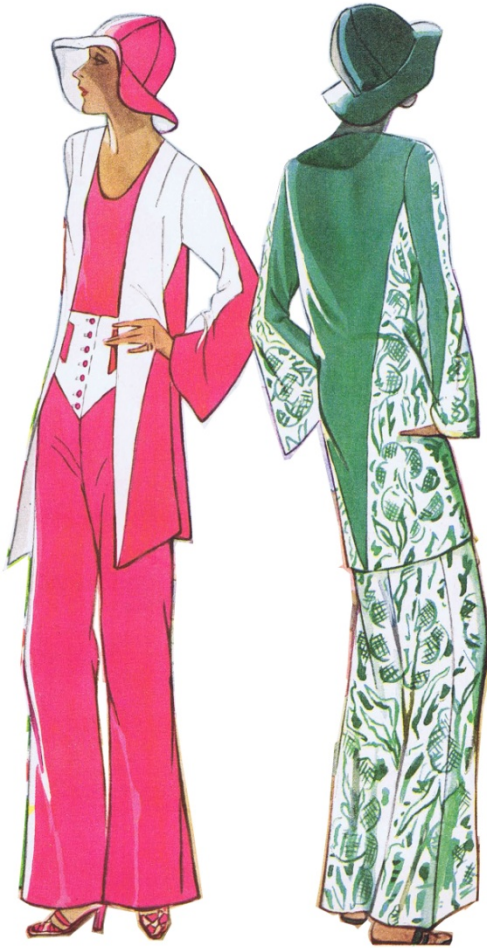
National Bellas Hess, F/W 1928-29

The 1931 Spring and Summer *National Bellas Hess* Catalog includes these fancy print pajamas. According to the catalog, ***“Up-to-date women all over the country have discovered the enormous chic and great convenience of Pajamas like these. They’re swaggerly cut with the new flared trousers and have a cunning blouse to tuck into the yoke top trousers.”*** Harmonizing solid tone fabrics are used to trim both the blouse and the trousers. An all purpose Pajama, meant for lounging, gardening or working about the home. They are made from vat-dyed cotton broadcloth, in Women’s and Misses sizes.

National Bellas Hess, S/S 1931



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This smart Paris ensemble, shown in both a front and back view, features front fitted yoke trousers, beach jacket and hat. The blouse is described as a bathing suit. The front and back views display the use of contrasting materials.

McCall's, May 1930, Pattern Number 6044

This, too, is McCall's Pattern Number 6044, with a much clearer view of the bathing suit top. According to *McCall's*, "**the trousers may be cut very short.**"

McCall's, May 1930



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Contrasting appliqués show off this stylish beach ensemble. It consists of trousers, blouse, jacket and hat. The yardage requirements for each ensemble in a size 36 follow:

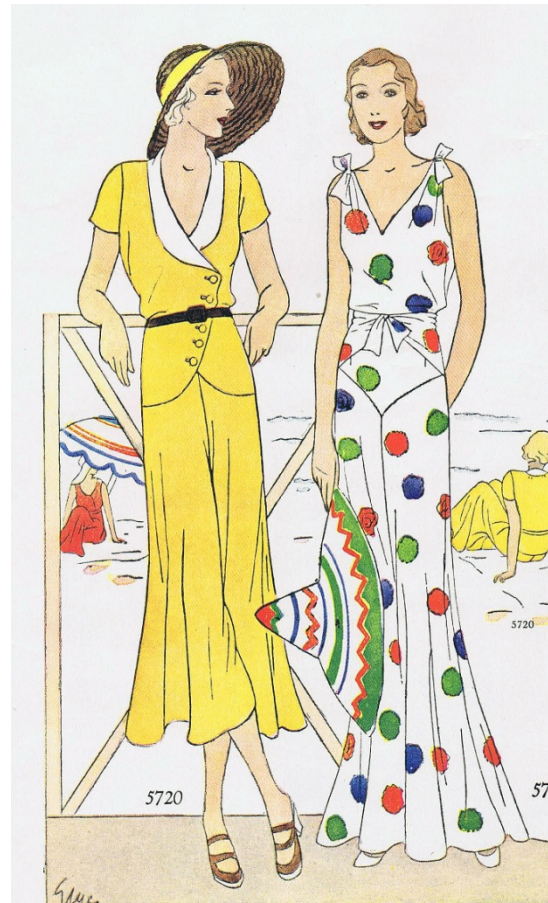
Left – 4 ½ yards dotted fabric; contrasting bands, 5/8 yard; hat, 7/8 yard; all 39-inch wide material.

Right – white, 4 yards; blue 3 ¼ yards, red 1 1/8 yards; all 35-inch wide material.

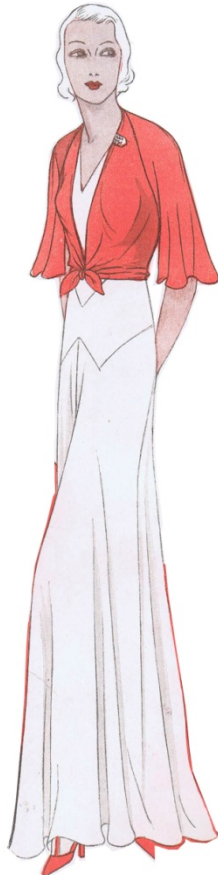
McCall's, May 1930, Pattern Number 6069

“Pajamas, not content with capturing lounging, teeing, and dancing honors, invade the sports world in this swagger, well-tailored model...We adore the short trouser length...The pajama takes on a new role and might easily be confused with a sports frock.” The smartly tailored button top sets off the shorter trousers. It is designed for sizes 14 to 42. *Pictorial Review*, July 1931

“Even if you confine your dress prints to small figures, you will want to find a gorgeously colored and strikingly patterned print for these pajamas with slim smart hips and graceful long lines.” *Pictorial Review*, July 1931, Pattern Number 5725



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Pajama Ensemble
5668

This formal pajama, just right for entertaining, features a contrasting bell-sleeved jacket.

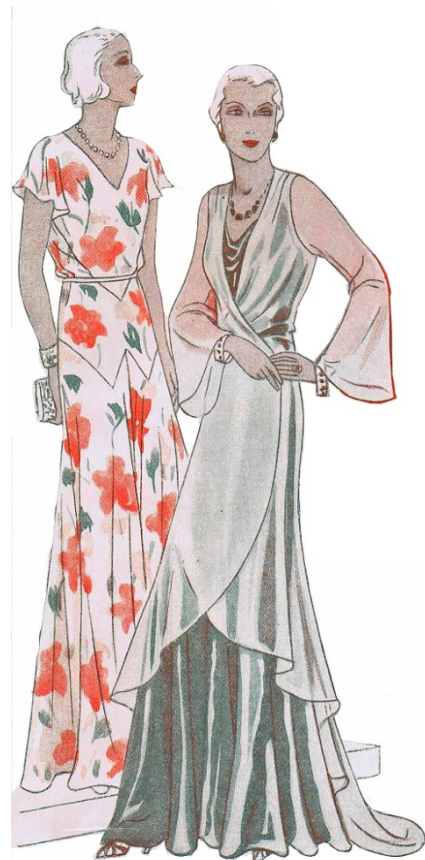
Pictorial Review, June 1931, Pattern Number 5668

Straight from Paris, this graceful, floral, print pajama is perfect for formal evening wear and dancing. Designed for sizes 14 to 42, size 16 requires 5 3/8 yards of 39-inch print.

Pictorial Review, June 1931, Pattern Number 5668

This formal pajama ensemble is just right for entertaining. The pajama is set off by a sheer bell-sleeved wrap. The graceful hemline of the wrap begins above the knee and tapers beyond floor-length. Designed for sizes 14 to 42, size 16 requires 4 7/8 yards of 39-inch material and 5 3/8 yards of sheer fabric for the wrap.

Pictorial Review, June 1931, Pattern Number 5479



5668

5479