

Manicure Set: Polish Up on Manicure History

excavations of the Pharaoh Nyuserre Ini's tomb... There was indication of the slaves who were literally protecting and mastering the Pharaoh's nails in the list, which means that there were actually the manicure masters who served the Pharaoh".¹ Manicure sets were almost completely reserved for the upper class until the early 19th century when a doctor of King Louis XV removed an inflamed burr from the royal's finger. This gave the doctor the idea to create a manicure set for the common people.² What was a fairly insignificant event marked a momentous change in the history of the manicure set. Clearly, the manicure set had significance before it became widely popular in the 1920s.

suddenly treated to a spectacular sight—Rita Hayworth’s red lips and nails!”¹ The 1920s were about great change reaching down even to the tips of a woman’s fingernails. As the flapper craze began to fade, the importance women placed on their nails remained. New nail polishes, new views and attitudes from the roaring twenties, and celebrities greatly influenced how women groomed their nails. One study shows, “In 1911, less than 25% of the women in the U.S. used any manicure preparations on their nails—in beauty salons or at home. By 1939, 86% were using manicure products, and the manicuring business in salons flourished” (“Nail Polish History Dates Back to 3200 B.C.”). Clearly, the 1920s marked a significant rise in the use of manicure products.

Actresses from the 1920s such as Greta Garbo and Rita Hayworth helped to popularize the moon manicure.

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