

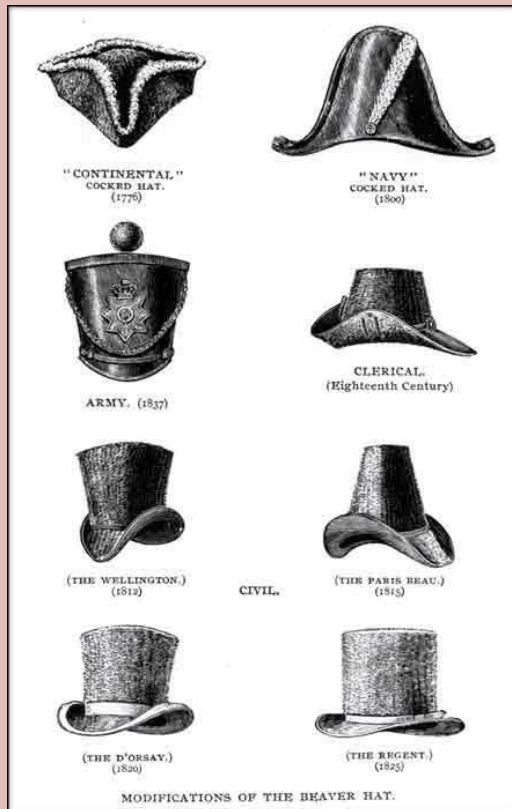
BEAVER PELT FASHION CRAZE

What were beaver pelts used for?

Beaver pelts became popular to wear as clothing in the early 1600s.

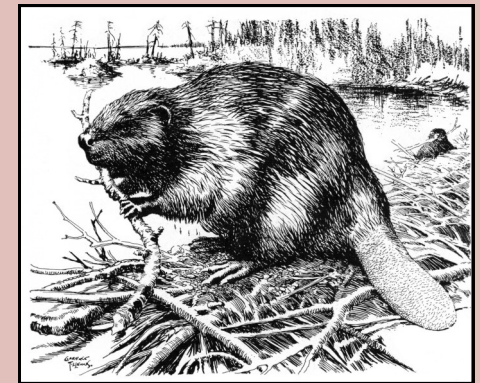
People would often use the beaver pelts with the fur still on them to keep warm. The pelts were used as the lining for capes or coats. Sometimes, people sewed them onto the collars of their clothes to keep their necks and shoulders warm.

The other way to use the pelts was to remove all the fur and use the beaver skin. When the skin was treated it became a form of leather, which is called beaver felt. The most popular use for beaver pelts was in hats. The kind of hats people wore then are not very popular today, but in the 1600s, a person's hat showed their status. A wealthy person wore a fancy and expensive hat.



Who bought beaver pelts?

Beaver pelts were very expensive, and only the richest people in Europe could afford to wear them. A beaver felt hat in 1660 would cost more than \$300 in today's dollars! Not many people in Europe could afford to pay that during this time.



How long were beaver pelts fashionable?

Beaver pelts remained popular in European fashions until the early 20th century. As trappers hunted beavers to extinction in the east, they had to move further and further west, first to the Great Lakes region and then all the way to the coast of the Pacific Ocean. Fur trapping was also popular further north in Canada and Alaska.