PERSONAL ACCESSORIES

The right accessories are vital when dressing to impress. Some of these items are worn or carried; others are used to straighten up before stepping out. All are marks of the neat, the stylish, and the well-heeled, and are likely to take advantage of Styling (p. 10).

Belt (TL5). A belt can be incredibly useful. It can retain holsters and sheaths (pp. 153-154, 198), conceal money or a survival kit (pp. 58-59) in its lining (+4 to Holdout), or act as an improvised climbing harness (p. 55). The buckle can hide a dagger, a push knife (p. 197), or a small gun. $10-$50, neg. LC4.

Cane (TL5). A walking stick – possibly with ornate carvings, exotic woods, a sculpted or silver handle, etc., all of which would count as styling. It’s useful for pointing, poking, and, if necessary, fighting (for rifle canes, see p. 98; for sword canes, see p. 197). $5, 2.5 lbs. LC4.

Cigar or Cigarette Case (TL5). Holds half a dozen cigars or 20 cigarettes, a box of matches, a cigar cutter, etc. Ulysses S. Grant was known to smoke 20 or more cigars a day. $30, 0.1 lbs. LC4.

Collapsible Cup (TL5). Usually pewter or steel. $3, neg. LC4.

Grooming Kit (TL5). A leather Gladstone, vanity, or toilet bag holding comb, hairbrush, razor, toothbrush, soap, aftershave, shoe-polish kit, etc. $25, 0.5 lb. LC4.

Handbag or Waist Pack (TL5). A woman’s purse, a doctor’s medical bag, or a day-hiker’s fanny pack. Holds up to 10 lbs. $10, 1 lb. LC4.


Mirror (TL5). Handy when applying makeup – and for peering around corners and signaling. At TL5-6, it will break if dropped! At TL7-8, it’s made of nearly indestructible plastic. $5, neg. LC4.

Pocket Watch (TL5). The pocket watch is a TL4 invention, but it isn’t until TL5 that it’s accurate to within a minute a day. The second hand becomes common at TL6, by which time watches sometimes include other features, such as calendars and moon-phase indicators. Other innovations at TL6 are the so-called “perpetual,” which is self-winding, and the ultra-reliable “railroad” watch, which is certified as being accurate enough for train engineers. A good-quality pocket watch is $100, neg. LC4.

Pocketknife (TL5). A small knife with one or more short, folding blades. The largest pocketknife blade might count as a small knife (p. B272) at -1 to damage; the shortest aren’t useful weapons. See Multi-Function Knife (p. 26) for a more utilitarian alternative. $5, neg. LC4.

Religious Symbol (TL5). A small crucifix, rosary, ankh, etc. $1, neg. LC4.

Sewing Kit (TL5). Travelers and soldiers have long carried a “housewife” to mend torn fabric. This includes a needle, several colors of thread, a thimble, etc. It counts as basic equipment for sewing. $1, neg. LC4.

Tobacco Box (TL5). Holds 1-2 oz. of tobacco. The removable lid on 18th-century Hudson’s Bay Company models has a built-in burning glass for lighting a smoke in sunny weather! $20, neg. LC4.

Umbrella (TL5). A folding umbrella keeps the rain off and is useful for prodding suspicious items. $5, 1 lb. LC4.

Attaché Case (TL6). A briefcase with a simple lock. $20, 2 lbs. LC4.

Wristwatch (TL6). Initially, the “wristlet” – a small watch worn at the wrist – is a lady’s accessory. At mid-TL6, though, soldiers fit pocket watches to leather wrist straps in order to keep their hands free in combat. These “trench watches” feature leather or pierced-metal “shrapnel guards” to protect the crystal face under harsh conditions. A TL6 wristwatch might be self-winding or waterproof, have luminous hands or a date function, or show the time in several time zones, but a given watch seldom has multiple features – pick two, if it matters. The best mechanical watches lose 10 seconds a day through TL6; “synchronizing the watches” is an important part of military operations.

At TL7, battery-powered quartz watches appear; digital displays follow. This is the first time a watch can be said to be accurate to within a second, day after day. A good basic watch is $25; a luxury watch, such as a Rolex, can go as high as $40,000! Weight is negligible. LC4.

Propane (TL6)

Propane gas cylinders commonly fuel barbecue grills (p. 32) and camp stoves (p. 57). They’re also potent field-expedient explosives. To set one off, it’s necessary to rupture the cylinder near a flare (like the ever-popular hand flare, p. 58). If any non-crushing damage penetrates the cylinder’s DR 6, the cylinder will rupture and ignite into a huge fireball. The explosion does burning damage, calculated according to Demolition (p. B415) using the cylinder’s full weight and assuming a REF of 0.5. Fragmentation from the cylinder alone is 1d cutting.

Small Cylinder (TL6). A disposable tank for camp stoves, lanterns, etc. (4dx2 burn ex). $5, 1 lb. LC4.

Large Cylinder (TL6). A bulk tank, often found under a barbecue grill or on the exterior of a camper trailer (6dx5 burn ex). Swapping an empty tank for a full one at a retailer costs about $8; a brand new tank is $45, 14 lbs. LC4.