The first inventor of wearable glasses is unknown. However, the Romans first discovered the ability to use glass to enhance their ability to see small text, creating small magnifying glasses with spheres.

The first wearable glasses known to history appeared in Italy during the 13th century. Primitive glass-blown lenses were set into wooden or leather frames (or occasionally, frames made from animal horn) and then held before the face or perched on the nose. Mostly used by monks, these grew in popularity and the technology improved through the Renaissance.

As these glasses became more popular, the Italian creations spread throughout Europe, mostly available to the wealthy. Because scholarship was a prized attribute during the Renaissance, glasses were status symbols of intelligence and prosperity.

After the “over the ear” innovation, new developments with glasses began to speed up. Benjamin Franklin added to the versatility of glasses by inventing the bifocal lens, which allowed a person who is both near- and far-sighted to use one pair of glasses instead of two. He did this at first by cutting lenses in half and putting them together into one frame.

Another style that was prominent during this time was “scissor spectacles.” These were glasses that could be stored in the pocket and taken out when needed for seeing something important. Some men did not enjoy wearing glasses full time, so these were the answer: pocket glasses that could be folded up on a hinge like a pair of scissors.

As the 19th century dawned, glasses were still handcrafted and not available to everyone. But soon the industrial revolution would make the mass production of both frames and
lenses much simpler so that working men and women could obtain the necessary eye correction.

The 1900s saw a trend toward making glasses fashionable and stylish. Frames with different shapes, materials, and colors became available for those who wanted glasses to match their face shape, eye color, or outfit.

Most notably, styles changed because of the availability and development of strong plastics. No longer did all glasses need to be made with wood, metal, or horn frames. Plastics could be molded into many shapes and sizes.

The 20th century also saw the rise of sunglasses. While sunglasses were first innovated in China during the 12th century, they were not for vision or for protection from the sun. Instead, they were used to obscure the eyes of judges in court so no one could determine their expressions. Other glasses manufacturers experimented with colored lenses, but these again were not for protection.

Finally, the 1980s saw the introduction of plastic lenses. These were less breakable, and they could be made lighter and thinner than their glass predecessors. Modern technology continues to improve glasses with protective coatings that reduce glare and UV light. Your glasses are the result of centuries of innovative technology.

(See Into The Past: The Fascinating History Of Eyeglasses)

もう一度読みます。

＜繰り返し＞

これでリスニングテストを終了します。引き続き解答を続けてください。