

*Le déjeuner des canotiers*, by Auguste Renoir, 1880

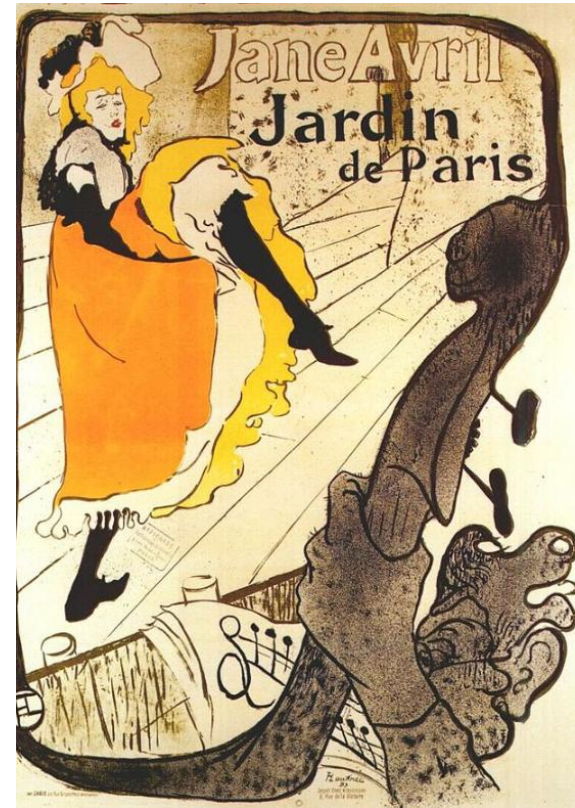
Pink Chanel suit of Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy



Artist Chanel

Year 1961

Type Double-breasted pink wool suit with navy trim



The "French cancan", by Toulouse Lautrec, 1892

## French Haute couture

Haute couture is fashion that is constructed by hand from start to finish, made from high quality, expensive, often unusual fabric and sewn with extreme attention for detail and executed techniques. A haute couture garment is often made for a client, tailored specifically for the wearer's measurement and body stance. Considering the amount of time, money, and skill allotted to each completed piece, haute couture garments are also described as having no price-tag, in other words, budget is not relevant.

There are strict rules to follow if one wants to use the words "haute couture". The criteria for haute couture were established in 1945 and stated that firms should:

- Have a workshop in Paris with 15 employees.
- Present a collection every season with 50 original designs.

Haute couture refers back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the court of Versailles. It was seen as an art and it was imitated across Europe. Fashion was mainly made for the rich customers. Now haute couture aims at creating an amazing garment which might be used as a milestone for the brand. In other words, the haute couture firms such as Chanel and Christian Dior use haute couture to promote their brands and therefore allowing them to sell their "pret-a-porter" or ready to wear.

In a nutshell, France and Paris are famous for the fashion industry, along with the other fashion capitals like London or Milan.

To have information about fashion and creators: <http://www.modeaparis.com/1/les-adherents/>

To have information about traditional clothes in regions of France:

<http://www.linternaute.com/actualite/magazine/dossier/tour-de-france-des-costumes-traditionnels/aquitaine.shtml>

## The French cancan

The cancan first appeared in the working-class ballrooms of Montparnasse in Paris in around 1830. It was initially danced by couples, and was at that time prohibited as it was seen as an erotic dance. The women actually wore costumes with long skirts and petticoats. The way the dancers were dancing and also their outfits were questionable then. Many people actually disapproved this dance.

Quite famous in the middle class, and danced during the carnivals, at the beginning the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the French Cancan as we know it today was created by Charles Morton who made a ballet of it, using music from Offenbach. Today the French cancan is still as famous as it is was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, it is only danced in the cabarets of Paris such as "le Moulin Rouge".

To see a video of a dance in a "cabaret": [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OddjQA4q1\\_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OddjQA4q1_M)

To see videos of traditional dances of French regions: [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x9lqht\\_la-gigue-danse-folklorique\\_lifestyle](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x9lqht_la-gigue-danse-folklorique_lifestyle)