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Gifts for men

From shirts to jewelry

Every man on your Christmas list can use a new shirt, and one that is enjoying renewed popularity is the button-down, once considered a businessman's classic.

"We're seeing more and more young people buying our traditional button-down models for business and casual wear," says Richard Monds, vice president at Best shirtmakers, makers of quality, traditional shirts.

Other items for the men on your Christmas list include jewelry, ties, pocket handkerchiefs and accessories such as a pocket umbrella.

Some of the newest shirt styles are actually resurrections from decades past. Debonair European stylings of the early 1900s have been repopularized by producers like "Chariots of Fire" and "Bridges of Madison Avenue."

Influences from that sartorial period abound most notably in collar choices. The "spread" collar, with points farther apart than the standard straight collar, is not of the more popular. Another hot feature item is the contrasting collar, which stands out beautifully against solid colors and patterned shirtings.

OTHER "new" dress shirts feature old-fashioned, snap-tab collars and eyeletted collars for insertion of a neck pin. And now that the popularity of dress looks is increasing, the classic tuxedo shirt is a popular gift idea.

"Now that Dad is dressing up more,

Junior is bound to follow suit," says Arlene Morrow, vice president of the Kaynee Co., manufacturers of boys' apparel.

The number of boys wanting wear "just like Dad's clothes" is increasing and Junior is returning to a more elegant way of dressing.

The new dress shirts have shiny, tone-on-tone patterns and Jacquard weaves that are reminiscent of the white-on-white shirts that were so popular during the '50s. And to make a young man feel like a big man, there's even a tuxedo shirt with a pleated front and a winged collar for formal occasions that boys love to wear with jeans!

Whether the man on your gift list is a formal or casual dresser, consider these quality points when shopping for shirts.

Seams: Turn the clothing inside out. All seams should be finished to prevent fraying and unraveling, and allow a smooth fit on the body. In addition, a well-made garment will have extra stitching at stress points, such as shoulder seams.

Collar: The focal point of a man's shirt, make sure it lays flat and doesn't pucker. The mark of a good button-down shirt is to be sure they look as though they're sewn on as well. Make sure they look as though they'll withstand repeated wearings.

In a veritable rainbow of styles and colors, a new shirt may just solve your what-to-give-the-men-on-the-list dilemma.



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