

Facts About Blue Jeans (Part 1)

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In the 1850s, people moved west to California and Nevada, dreaming of finding gold and getting rich in the California Gold Rush. Prospecting for gold was a job that required working outside in rain or shine. Prospectors spent long hours panning for gold in streams or hiking on crude trails to look for more spots that might contain gold. They needed strong pants that required no care.

The California Gold Rush prompted Levi Strauss to immigrate from the East Coast to California. He met up with Jacob Davis, a tailor who was making pants in Reno, Nevada. They began selling strong pants that included small metal rivets that supported spots where seams got the most stress, such as the top of the pockets. Strauss and Davis patented this method of using rivets in 1873. Even today, most blue jeans have these metal rivets.

While some prospectors got rich finding gold, Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis profited by selling pants. Blue jeans are today the favorite pants of many people. In the United States, more than 450,000,000 pairs of jeans are sold each year.

Blue jeans are made of a woven cotton fabric called denim. Denim is made with a weave called twill. In denim, like other twill fabrics, the yarns intersect on a diagonal. This weave makes for strong, dense fabric.