



Latest underwear marries fit with fashion

Men's underwear is no longer simply a matter of boxers or briefs. According to statistics from the last National Underwear Day, where approximately 20,000 people were questioned about their undergarment preferences, 28% of men said they preferred to wear boxer briefs, a recent style innovation that's been on the market for the past few years.

The latest style of boxer briefs popular with men have been the low-rise boxer briefs, said Michael Kleinmann, ceo of Freshpair.com, one of the leading online e-tailers of men's and women's intimate apparel.

"Low-rise boxer briefs have been popular because they fit in so well with fashion," Kleinmann said. "They're perfect for lower rise jeans."

In the mass channel, Hanes has "Fashion Lo-Rise" briefs in four-packs for approximately \$13. In the department store channel, Jockey offers low-rise boxer briefs and briefs in its men's underwear collections, ranging in price points from \$13.50 to \$21.

Underwear fabrication is another important and changing element when it comes to what lies beneath, according to Lisa Chilsen, director of marketing for Jockey.

"Fabrication combinations such as cotton and spandex and Meryl nylon continue to yield greater growth in the men's underwear category," Chilsen said. "The seamless category has also seen a lot of growth."

Jockey's "Next to Nothing" line, for example, uses a soft, lightweight microfiber fabric. The garment is also seamless and tagless to provide extra comfort, Chilsen said.

"The product also provides the more body-conscious fit men are looking for and gives the added benefit of feeling like a second skin," she said. For spring, Jockey has a line called "3-D Innovations," which incorporates the findings from 11,000 men's body scans. This line should allow for an even better fit, Chilsen said.

Hanes also provides a tagless option in its men's offerings, called "Comfort Cool." Featuring a darted pouch, the underwear is made with 100% cotton that has wicking capabilities to keep the consumer dry and comfortable. The line is available exclusively at Kohl's.



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Higher-end brands, such as Adam + Eve, 2xist and C-IN2, are choosing pima cotton as their fabrication of choice for their latest men's lines, Kleinmann said. The 2xist line sells at Macy's for price points ranging between \$14 and \$22.50 per pair.

"We're seeing a lot more materials creep into the market right now and pima cotton, as well as some mesh varieties, have been the latest hot sellers," he said.

Fun, bright colors and patterns are also creeping off of boxer shorts and appearing on briefs, boxer briefs and bikini briefs for men, Kleinmann added. DT Underwear, for example, sells a Hawaiian print low-rise brief on its Web site for \$28, and Ginch Gonch has briefs with stars and fire trucks available.

"It used to be there weren't a lot of choices for men," Kleinmann said.