







**Brisé Fan** – Fans were popular fashion accessories for ladies and gentlemen. The brisé style fan is wooden sticks held together with ribbon or string. Sandalwood was a popular source and an ingredient in many perfumes. The fan was often used to hide bad teeth or smallpox marks on the face. Such scars were often also covered by small leather patches, often in “fashionable” designs such as stars and half moons, which, of course, portrait artists did not include in portraits. A book describing fan “language” was published in 1797 suggesting the silent means of using a fan to flirt with the opposite sex.

**Pockets** – Women’s skirts or petticoats did not have pockets in them but they had slits to allow reaching inside the skirt. Under the skirt, a woman would wear pockets on a belt made of similar material and tied around the waist. The pockets would hold common household items used throughout the day.

## **Toys & Games**

**Cup & Ball** – This simple pastime required one to use dexterity and hand-eye coordination to toss the ball at the end of a string to land in the cup. Usually carved simply in wood, wealthy homes might have jewel encrusted varieties.

**Nine Pins** – Bowling games have been popular since 5,000 B.C. This small version was used to play on the floor or on a table top. Larger versions were often played in taverns on a long narrow table. In 1841, Connecticut outlawed the game because of the heavy gambling that became associated with it. To avoid such laws, a tenth pin was added and called Ten Pins. Ten Pin bowling evolved into today’s modern bowling. The head pin or “king” pin that we refer to today came about when colonials painted the front pin red to depict King George in a red jacket, enabling them to take out their frustrations by knocking down the king pin.

**Clothespin Doll (\*)** – An inexpensive small doll could be made with a clothespin and small pieces of cloth. Dolls were also sometimes used to display examples of clothing that could be ordered from Europe rather than using printed catalogs.

**Toy Soldiers** – Toy soldiers were made individually for hundreds of years, but not until the mid-1700s were small tin soldiers made in large numbers and sold to the general public. This example is made from lead-free pewter.

**Slate Boards (\*)** – Slate boards were generally used in classrooms rather than expensive paper.

**Jacob’s Ladder** – A colonial version of today’s “Slinky”!

## **Fire Making Material**

**Tinder Box Candle Holder (\*)** – This type of candle holder held both a candle and the means to start a fire. Inside the base of the holder would be tinder (dried plant material that caught fire easily), a piece of flint, and a steel striker to create a spark. Both soldiers and civilians used tinder boxes.

**Candle Mold (\*)** – Candles were made from tallow (rendered animal fat), beeswax, bayberry (wax from bayberry bushes found along the New England coast), or spermaceti (from the heads of sperm whales). Candle molds were a more efficient way of creating candles than dipping wicks. Molds typically formed more than one at a time and varied in height. A typical beeswax candle is included in the basic trunk.

**Lantern (\*)** – Lanterns come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and materials. Lanterns were particularly useful outdoors to protect a burning candle from rain and wind. Glass sides were probably expensive. Metal sides with numerous small holes punched in them were often more popular when glass was not available.

**Fire Making Kit (\*)** – The booklet *Making Fire with Flint and Steel* by James Townsend and Joe Lee provides details on starting a fire from scratch. The four elements essential to a kit are flints, a striker, char cloth, and tinder (all included in the kit). Char cloth is used to catch and hold sparks made by striking a steel striker against the edge of a piece of flint stone. The sparks are used to catch fire to tinder such as cedar bark, straw, old rope, or dry plant material which has been placed in a circle around the char cloth. The small fire is then used to start a bigger fire or to light a candle or pipe. Such a kit would be carried in one’s haversack. A striker and flint and a few strands of jute are included in the basic trunk. The sparks created by the flint and striker are popular with the kids.

## **Kitchen Items**

**Tin Plate** – Tin was a common material for tableware especially in less affluent homes. China dinnerware might crack, chip, or break. Tin was more durable.

**Horn Spoon** – Knives, forks, and spoons might be made from metal or wood. If made from metal, spoon handles might be made from wood, antlers, or bones. An entire spoon could also be made of horn.

**Soldier’s Fork** – A soldier’s fork could be created by twisting a long piece of metal wire into shape and sharpening the ends.

**Sugar Cone** – Sugar came in solid cones. It might come wrapped in paper with a wax seal on it proving that the proper tax had been paid. Sugar was so valuable during colonial times that it might be kept under lock and key.

**Brick of Tea** – Unlike today, tea often came in solid bricks. This made it easier to transport on ships and generated a greater profit. A company logo could be impressed on the exterior. Tease the audience first by suggesting that it might be a bar of chocolate, then ask them what was thrown in the bay at Boston.

**Tea Infuser** – Once flakes of tea were shaved from a brick of tea, they were used to make tea. They might be put in a tea infuser to hold the flakes like we use a tea bag today. In colonial times, a tea infuser might be made of bamboo in the shape of a small basket or of metal.

**Cast Iron Utensils (\*)** – Large spoons and forks used for cooking were often made of cast iron just like the pots and pans that were in use. These held up well in hot cooking fires.

**Yellow Root** – The small branches from this plant were cut into about 1-inch pieces and brewed in water to provide a homemade medicine used for a variety of illnesses. It has not been found to be particularly useful under modern research. An example can be used to highlight the impact of Native American culture on European settlers.

## Other Household Items

**Bone Comb** – Bone was a popular item from which to carve a hair comb. No part of an animal left unused!

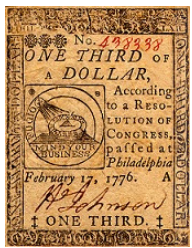
**Toothbrush** – This bone handled brush in the shape of a toothbrush used an interesting source for the brush: boar's bristles. An alternative to using a tooth brush was to use the end of a stick of sassafras to clean one's teeth.

**Playing Cards** – Cards have long been a popular game. The Jack, Queen, and King were relevant to the royalty of Europe. Cards were often annotated or drawn to make fun of royalty. To prevent this, the King of England placed a heavy tax on each deck of cards. A seal was placed on the deck to prove that the tax was paid. Even today many decks of cards have a seal placed on the box to show that the cards have not been opened. Also note that printed numbers were not placed on the cards since most American colonists could not read.

**Pieces of Eight** – A coin called the Spanish Milled Dollar was often used around the world in trade. It was used in the American colonies because of the lack of English coins available. Not having other coins with which to make change, the Spanish Milled Dollar was often cut into eight pieces to make change. Thus it was also called a Piece of Eight. Each 1/8<sup>th</sup>

piece was called a bit. Thus two bits were one-fourth of a dollar or a quarter of a dollar which is why a quarter today is still referred to as 2 bits, as in the phrase, "Two bits, four bits, six bits, a dollar."

**Continental Currency (\*)** – From 1775 to 1779, the continental Congress issued \$241 million worth of Continental currency in twenty-three denominations. Each denomination had its own unique emblem on the front. The back was decorated with nature prints of leaves. Beginning on May 20, 1777, some of the words were changed from "United Colonies" to "United States." Each denomination included a Latin phrase.



**Homemade Soap** – Soap was made in an iron kettle over an open fire by boiling rendered animal or cooking waste fats with wood ash lye from six to eight hours until it formed a thick frothy mass. Colonists rendered fats by cooking them with water in a two-step process to remove any impurities like leftover meat and tissues. Wood ash lye was created by pouring water over wood ashes creating an oozing brownish liquid. This procedure resulted in a soft (liquid) soap typically used by colonists that was stored in a wooden barrel and ladled out with a wooden dipper when needed. "Hard" soap could be created by adding common salt at the end of the boiling and letting it cool into a hard texture, but salt was considered expensive and not to be wasted on this process. Hard soap when created by vendors was formed in large wooden frames and sold in that size or by the pound rather than into bars as we think of soap today. A vendor might add scented oils. The specific recipe was very much trial and error and often involved several attempts to obtain a usable batch of soap.

**Sewing Kit** – In lieu of a full sewing kit that might include scissors; a spool of sinew; a wooden needle case with pins and needles; wooden, bone, horn, and pewter buttons; a wooden thimble; and heavy cotton thread in a roll-up, canvas bag, the basic traveling trunk includes scissors, an example of sinew (the stringy part of an animal's muscle, i.e. the tendon, such as from the front leg of a deer) used as thread or string, and two each of the button types on a display card. The expense of metal buttons can be compared to homemade buttons. Sinew comes in lengths related to the size of the animal and must be spliced together to create longer lengths and artificial sinew comes in long lengths like a ball of string. Sinew was used like string to tie arrowheads onto arrow shafts, for sewing, and similar uses.

**Stoneware Inkwell and Quill** – A quill pen and ink container were used for writing.

**Scales (\*)** – A set can be used to show how gold dust could be weighed or pieces of eight might be weighed to ensure that none of the cut edges had been shaved down by unscrupulous traders.

**Dunlap Broadside (\*)** – The Dunlap Broadside is the first two hundred copies of the Declaration of Independence, printed on the night of July 4, 1776, by John Dunlap of Philadelphia. By 1989, only twenty-four were known to remain in existence. In 1989, a twenty-fifth copy was found behind a painting bought at a flea market for \$4. It was sold for \$8.14 million.

**Redware Grease Lamp** – This type of lamp burns a jute wick using vegetable oil or animal grease such as bacon grease and was an alternative to more costly and harder to make candles.

**Rabbit Fur** – The impact of the fur trade can be highlighted with this sample fur.

**Sassafras** – The sassafras is a medium size tree (up to seventy feet tall). Sassafras leaves are eaten by deer, bear, and other woodland animals. Rabbits love to chew the bark in winter. Colonists would boil the roots and bark to make a tea. They would also use a piece of the root, about the size of the finger and perhaps several inches long, to cleanse their teeth. This was useful to those who could not afford to buy a boar bristle toothbrush. The sassafras oil also left a minty smell in the mouth, thus freshening breath.



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