

# Cost sheet basic

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**18th Century Swimwear** During the 18th century, spas where men and women engaged in public bathing began appearing in France and England. Men and women still bathed infrequently for recreation and it was considered as therapy. Modesty was of prime importance with style not much of a consideration in those days. The first suits were far from practical or comfortable; ladies went as far as to sewing lead weights into the hem of the bathing gown to prevent the dress from floating up and exposing their legs.

With the introduction of railroads, ocean-side beaches became popular for sunny recreations and a need to wear bathing suits was felt to protect the skin from the harsh sun and being modest and strongly against any skin show. This 1797 Gallery of Fashion print shows two ladies protected by face-shading bonnets, shawls and gloves as they 1858 Bathing Suit typically worn by the French and English. Early 19th Century Swimwear Even though the 19th century Swimwear was not very high fashion and stylish for the masses a strong need was felt for a fashionable outfit for swimming or Sea Bathing.

This is because Sea Bathing was considered as a recreational activity which was only taken up by the wealthy. The Activity itself was considered fashionable. Along with this new outdoor pastime came the need for a stylish garment for the privileged lady of fashion. Here we will follow the path of the fashionable bathing suit, which began long before the modern day bikini.

**Bathing Machines** In The Early 19th Century Bathing machines were roofed and walled wooden carts rolled into the sea Some had solid wooden walls others had canvas walls over a wooden frame.

The Bathing Machine was a popular etiquette followed by women of the 19th century. The use of bathing machines indicated swimming still being an activity where a lot of attention was paid to modesty and revealing one's body in public was considered to be inappropriate. As it was an activity taken up only by the wealthy, that class was very particular about keeping up appearances and not being inappropriate in public.

**Mid 19th Century Swimwear** In the mid nineteenth century bathing dresses continued to cover most of the female figure. However, the era of bathing suits was over, and then came the heavy flannel "Turkish" pants and "Paletot" dresses. The main reason behind the use of flannel fabric was its quality of high opacity as compared to other fabrics even when it was wet. This is another indicator that skin show was still looked down upon. **Late 19th Century Swimwear** The swimsuits consisted of bloomers and black stockings.

By 1855, drawers were added to prevent the problem of exposure. Women still refrained from swimming too much; the prevailing attitude of the day was that it was mainly a male prerogative. The "Princess" cut was introduced, consisting of a blouse and trousers in one piece. The skirts were replaced with cotton-like trousers. There was also a separate skirt that fell below the knee and buttoned at the waist to conceal the figure. A ruffled cap or a straw hat completed the ensemble.