

ASK A LIBRARIAN FEATURED  
QUESTION OF THE WEEK

September 8, 2020

Question: Where did the term, Penny Loafer, originate?

Response:

The term "penny loafer" is defined as **a loafer with a strap across the upper originally used for holding a penny** (Merriam-Webster). It got that name because the strap was originally intended to hold a penny.

It appears that the cost of making a call on the pay phone in 1930s was 2 cents, and so the shoes could hold a penny each.

Further reading on the history of penny loafers:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slip-on\\_shoe#:~:text=1936-,G.H.,the%20name%20'penny%20loafers'](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slip-on_shoe#:~:text=1936-,G.H.,the%20name%20'penny%20loafers').

<https://magazine.brooksbrothers.com/penny-thoughts/>

