

STYLE

The latest bags are small enough to wear slung around your hips, says **Bibby Sowray**

We've come a long way since the early-2000s trend for suitcase-size handbags, popularised by WAG-era Victoria Beckham and her vast collection of Hermès Birkins. Perhaps it was the repeated warnings of developing "Arm-Hook Crook" (caused by dangling them from the crook of your elbow). Or perhaps it was a sartorial reaction to austerity – eschewing ostentatiously large bags, heavy with hardware, for something less "showy". Whatever the reason, we progressed to cross-body bags, then mini bags, then micro bags so small you could barely fit your phone in. Now it's all about the bum bag, the ultimate Eighties and Nineties accessory that's become the appendage of choice for tourists in cagoules the world over, though this time around it's operating under the nom de guerre "belt bag".

We can attribute its resurgence to Gucci. Ever since his appointment, Alessandro Michele, the brand's creative director, has single-handedly made the so-bad-it's-good aesthetic cool.

Designers including Stella McCartney had trialled the trend for spring/summer 2017 but it wasn't until Gucci introduced the "Marmont" belt bag as part of its pre-fall 2017 collection that it really received the kiss of life. At the latest series of fashion weeks, the round leather pouch – embellished with the house's logo in gold hardware – was spotted around the waists of the street style set countless times. Also spotted was Prada's popular boxy "Cahier" bag, which now comes with a removable leather belt as well as a chain strap.

In its new grown-up iteration, the bum bag adds an edge to pretty much any outfit. Wear it over a double-breasted blazer to cinch the waist, add a point of definition to a diaphanous floral dress or thread through the belt loops of your jeans and wear with a cropped jumper.

And if you have an old one lurking in your wardrobe, Wheelers Natural Beeswax Leather Balm (£5.95, John Lewis) is a gentle and effective way to spruce it up.

FIVE OF THE BEST...



LEATHER-TRIMMED SUEDE BELT BAG £240, See by Chloé (net-a-porter.com)



LEATHER AND SUEDE STUDDED BUM BAG £89, & Other Stories (stories.com)



LEATHER 3-POUCH BELT BAG £258, Vere Verto (needsupply.com)

WEAR IT WITH...

EMBOSSED FLOWER DRESS £99.99, Mango (mango.com)



MOHAIR-MIX JUMPER £59.99, H&M (hm.com)

JEANS £140, Raey (matchesfashion.com)

IT'S IN THE BAG Marisa Mell models a belt bag by La Bagagerie in 1968

DUST OFF YOUR...

BUM BAG



BELT BAG £19.99, Zara (zara.com)

LEATHER BELT POUCH £150, Longchamp (longchamp.com)

TRACKING THE TREND

FIRST FASHION FORAY

"Bumbag" first appeared in the Oxford English Dictionary in 1951, with the entry referencing an excerpt from a skiing handbook. By the Sixties, it had been adopted by high-fashion – seen here in a 1966 issue of *Vogue*.



NINETIES HEYDAY

The bumbag reached its peak in the Nineties. Goldie Hawn is photographed in New York in 1992 (with daughter Kate Hudson), wearing a black leather version. Karl Lagerfeld also gave it the Chanel stamp of approval for spring/summer 1991, adding the French fashion house's signature quilted leather and iconic leather-woven chain strap.



THE REVIVAL

Gucci's "Marmont" belt bag has reignited the trend, seen all over the streets of the spring/summer 2018 fashion weeks. The fashion editor Thora Valdimars is pictured wearing the bag at Milan Fashion Week in September 2017.



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