

ІНШЕ

Hutsaliuk Nadiia

Nail Technician

Warsaw, Poland

Akhtyrska Sarah

Nail Technician

New York, USA

Vilacheva Anastasiia

Nail Technician

Chicago, USA

HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF MANICURE AND PEDICURE: CULTURAL TRADITIONS AND MODERN TRENDS

Summary. *This article explores the historical development of nail care practices as a cultural and social phenomenon. It analyzes the transformation of manicure and pedicure traditions from ancient civilizations to the digital age, focusing on the relationship between technological innovation and changing aesthetic ideals. Particular attention is paid to contemporary trends, including eco-friendly materials, personalized care, and digital technologies in the nail industry. The study draws on archaeological data, historical sources, and current market research, offering a comprehensive view of the evolution of nail care.*

Key words: *manicure, pedicure, evolution.*

Introduction. Manicure and pedicure as cultural practices have a rich history of more than five millennia. These procedures have evolved from ritual ceremonies

to a sophisticated beauty industry with a global turnover. Today, nail care is a complex system that combines aesthetics, technology and even elements of medicine, reflecting profound changes in ideas about corporality and hygiene.

The relevance of the study is due to the need for a systematic understanding of manicure and pedicure as an important part of material culture. Unlike narrowly specialized approaches, this work offers an interdisciplinary perspective, considering the historical, technological and socio-cultural aspects of the evolution of nail care.

The methodological base includes comparative historical analysis, the study of archaeological artifacts and expert assessments of modern technologists in the cosmetic industry. The timeline spans from the earliest evidence of nail care (c. 3000 BC) to innovations in 2024, with an emphasis on key technological turning points. The study aims to trace a single line of development of manicure and pedicure practices, identifying stable cultural patterns and mechanisms for borrowing innovations between different civilizations and eras.

Sacred Origins: Manicure and Pedicure in the Ancient World

Ancient Egyptian frescoes and artifacts demonstrate a developed culture of care for both fingernails and toenails. Interestingly, pedicures in hot climates had not only aesthetic but also hygienic significance. Archaeological finds include special scrapers for foot care made of obsidian and bronze, as well as vessels with aromatic oils to soften the skin.

In ancient India, pedicure was an important part of Ayurvedic practices. The treatises of Sushruta (6th century BC) describe complex foot care procedures, including massage with healing oils and removal of rough skin. Particular attention was paid to the interdigital spaces - areas of potential development of fungal infections in tropical climates. The Chinese aristocracy of the Zhou Dynasty (1046-256 BC) practiced meticulous toenail care, using gold instruments and shellac-based

varnishes. Long toenails, protected by special covers, were considered a sign of high status, as they indicated the impossibility of wearing the tight shoes of a commoner. The ancient Greeks and Romans turned pedicures into an important element of hygiene. Roman baths necessarily included a podologicum - a room for foot care, where pumice stones, metal scrapers and aromatic baths were used. Greek doctors developed the first classifications of toenail diseases, linking their condition with the general health of the body.

Middle Ages and Renaissance: Between Hygiene and Aesthetics

In the European Middle Ages, pedicures acquired special significance due to the spread of skin diseases. Guild barbers offered foot care services using primitive metal instruments. It is noteworthy that in many cities there were special regulations obliging bathhouse attendants to disinfect pedicure instruments after each client.

The Ottoman Empire developed the tradition of the hammam, where pedicure was a mandatory final procedure. Turkish masters improved the technique of foot treatment, using special curved scissors and natural scrubs based on olive pits. This tradition has survived to this day as part of the classic Turkish spa treatment.

The Renaissance brought back interest in aesthetic pedicures. Italian aristocrats used lemon juice to lighten their toenails, as well as aromatic oils to soften the skin. Venetian craftsmen created exquisite instruments from silver and ivory, some of which have been preserved in museums. Traditional techniques continued to develop in the Far East. Japanese geishas paid special attention to foot care, using pumice from volcanic tuff and rice flour for gentle exfoliation. In Korea, during the Joseon era (1392-1897), the first prototypes of pedicure baths with herbal infusions appeared, intended for noble women.

Industrial Revolution: Standardization and Mass Production

The 19th century brought dramatic changes to pedicure technology. In 1872, French physician Louis de Bois developed the first classification of foot diseases,

which contributed to a medical approach to pedicure. The advent of industrially produced steel tools made the procedures safer and more accessible to the middle class.

The end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries were marked by the appearance of the first specialized pedicure chairs with an adjustable back and footrest. In 1904, the first "Foot Hygiene Salon" opened in Chicago, offering comprehensive care using a standardized method. These innovations laid the foundations for modern podology.

The 1920s, with their cult of open shoes, made pedicures a must-have procedure for women. The appearance of the first toenail polishes in fashionable shades was a real revolution. Pastel colors for sandals and bright red for closed shoes were especially popular, reflecting changing social norms. The post-war period brought important technological innovations. In the 1950s, the first electric pedicure files were developed, and the 1960s were marked by the appearance of professional ceramic whirlpool baths. These improvements significantly increased the comfort and effectiveness of the procedures, making them widespread.

Modern technologies: from aesthetics to health

The end of the 20th - beginning of the 21st century became a period of rapid development of podology as a science. Hardware pedicure, invented in Germany in the 1980s, made a revolution, replacing traumatic trimming techniques. Modern installations with diamond cutters allow the procedure to be carried out with medical precision, which is especially important for patients with diabetes.

The 2000s brought innovations in toenail coatings. Gel polishes, originally developed for manicure, were adapted for pedicure, providing durability of up to 4-5 weeks. Special formulas with antifungal components appeared, combining aesthetics and therapeutic effect.

Modern trends emphasize the health-first approach. Medical pedicure performed by podiatrists and orthonyxia - correction of ingrown nails with special braces - are gaining popularity. "Smart" coatings are being developed that change color at the first signs of a fungal infection, which allows you to start treatment on time. Eco-friendliness has become a key requirement for modern pedicure products. Leading brands are abandoning toxic components in favor of biodegradable formulas. Particular attention is paid to sterilization of instruments - many salons are switching to disposable sets and autoclave processing systems.

Gender: Evolution of Social Norms

Historically, manicures and pedicures have evolved in close connection with gender roles and social expectations. In ancient civilizations, well-groomed nails were often the preserve of aristocratic men, symbolizing their high status and freedom from physical labor. Egyptian pharaohs, Chinese mandarins, and Roman patricians meticulously cared for their nails, using expensive pigments and metal tools.

The Victorian era changed these ideas dramatically, making manicures an exclusively female practice. Women's magazines of the 19th century promoted pale, neatly trimmed nails as a symbol of modesty and virtue. Interestingly, the first beauty salons in Europe offered "hygienic manicures" as a medical procedure to circumvent social taboos against excessive attention to appearance.

The 20th century brought revolutionary changes to gender norms. The 1920s, with their emancipation, made brightly colored manicures a symbol of the new woman. In the 1970s, male manicures experienced a renaissance among celebrities and musicians, and in the 21st century, gender-neutral nail care has become part of mainstream culture. Modern brands are increasingly releasing products addressed to all genders. Modern research shows an interesting trend: if in the 1990s only 5% of nail salon clients were men, then by 2023 this figure has grown to 25%. Medical

pedicures and cuticle care procedures are especially popular among men, which reflects a shift in the perception of male grooming culture.

Economy of the industry: from craft to global business

The global manicure and pedicure industry demonstrates impressive economic indicators. According to the latest research, the global nail services market is estimated at \$11.6 billion with an annual growth of about 8.5%. The United States and China are the largest consumers, while South Korea sets trends in technology and design.

The structure of the industry has undergone significant changes over the past decades. If in the 1980s 90% of services were provided in specialized salons, today new formats are developing: nail bars in shopping centers, mobile masters, home mini-studios. The premium services segment is growing especially quickly, where the average bill can exceed \$200 for comprehensive care.

Technological innovations have become a key driver of growth. The gel polish market has increased by 340% over the past 5 years, and hardware pedicure equipment demonstrates an annual sales growth of 15-20%. Interestingly, the COVID-19 pandemic has given impetus to the development of home nail systems, and this segment continues to grow even after salons have opened.

The labor aspects of the industry remain a complex issue. In the United States, where about 400,000 manicurists work, issues of working conditions and fair pay are being raised. At the same time, schools of mastery are developing in Southeast Asia, training specialists of international level. The future of the industry is associated with the automation of some processes, but experts are confident that the creative component will remain the prerogative of manicurists.

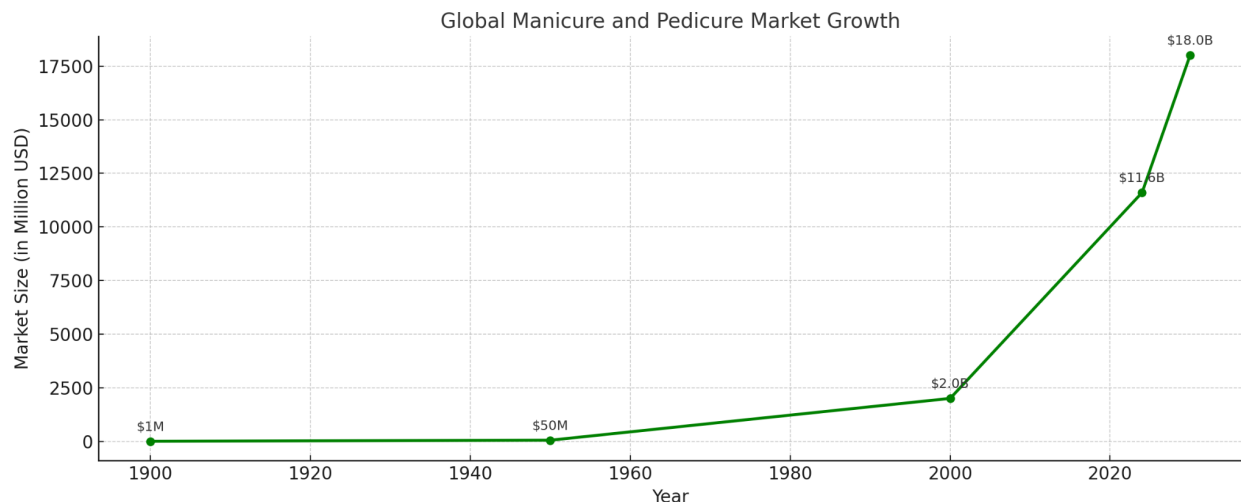


Fig. 1.

Conclusion. The history of manicure and pedicure demonstrates an amazing continuity of traditions with constant technological evolution. From ancient ritual practices to modern high-tech procedures, nail care retains its significance as a marker of culture and social status. It is especially indicative how the medical aspects of pedicure, important in antiquity, have once again come to the fore in the 21st century.

The modern industry is on the threshold of new discoveries. The development of biotechnology promises the emergence of coatings with healing properties and materials that promote the regeneration of the nail plate. Digital technologies are transforming the design process, allowing you to create virtual projects before visiting a specialist. Sustainable development is becoming a mandatory standard, stimulating the creation of environmentally friendly products and closed production cycles.

The cultural significance of manicure and pedicure continues to grow, reflecting changing ideas about beauty, health and self-expression. These practices, having gone through a thousand-year path of development, remain an important part

of human culture, connecting the traditions of the past with the technologies of the future.

References

1. Brown, K. (2021). *The chemistry of nail polish: Formulation, design, and innovation*. Springer Nature.
2. Jones, R. (2020). *Nail art through the ages: A cultural history*. Thames & Hudson.
3. Lee, M., & Park, S. (2022). "Traditional Korean nail care practices in the Joseon Dynasty".
4. Market Research Future. (2023). *Global nail care market report*.
5. Patel, R., & Smith, T. (2023). "Sustainable innovations in nail technology".
6. Schnell, A. (2019). *Body adornment in ancient civilizations*. University of California Press.