

## **Tattoos on Women**

Things have certainly changed in women's fashions over the last five decades. For example, women only started to wear pants to work in the 1970's. Before that decade, most companies had strict dress codes requiring women to wear dresses or skirts plus stockings. Before pantyhose or leggings were invented, a well-dressed woman never left the house without squeezing herself into an uncomfortable elastic girdle, if for no other reason than to hold up her stockings. Women also were not allowed to wear sandals or jeans to school or to work. In 1976, I saw a colleague wearing cut-off jeans to work. I was really shocked and couldn't stop staring at her. All over America, young people sometimes go to work now with holes in their jeans, and only their grandmothers get upset about that.

Years ago, ordinary people never got tattoos. It was assumed that a man would exercise better judgment than to pay a stranger to stick ink under his skin with a needle, leaving permanent marks. Male sailors and men in the armed forces used to get tattoos in foreign ports, presumably while too drunk to know what they were doing. A respectable woman never got a tattoo.

Nowadays many average women have tattoos. For example, I once saw thick Amazon bracelets tattooed on the arm of a woman wearing a business suit. Many teenagers have small tattoos, such as a lovely red rose at the nape of the neck. Walking down a busy street in Manhattan, it is not unusual to see women with colorful tattoos on their heel tendons, calves, or thighs. I have admired the artistry of large tattoos covering women's shoulders and backs in the summertime.

Sometimes people contract an infection from the needles used to give tattoos, however. Another hazard is that family members might disapprove of their child's tattoo. I heard of one eleven-year-old boy who had a Christian saint tattooed on his right arm, but when he got home, his family was shocked and horrified to see what he had done. He got into a lot of trouble. The man is now 65 years old, and he still has his tattoo, but it has blurred and turned black over time. All colors in a tattoo will eventually fade to black.

Even society women get their ears pierced these days, but most women will think twice before getting a permanent tattoo. Henna tattoos are a more popular alternative here, and they last only about two weeks.

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Questions:

If you are a woman, what do you think of women getting tattoos?

If you are a man, what do you think of women getting tattoos?

Do you see many women wearing tattoos where you live?

Are you considering getting a tattoo?

Do you have pierced ears?