



A BRIEF HISTORY OF GUITAR PICKS



Feather quills are believed to be the first standardized pick among Europeans during the middle ages to play the Middle Eastern lute.

It is also known that musicians would manipulate the string of a bow and arrow using an arrowhead to create different tones.

711 a.d. - 1400

The French began handling the Italian mandala using the combination of a finger and feather plume.



1600



It became standard to play the Neapolitan mandolin with a plectrum made from an ostrich feather.

A single ostrich feather could produce 5 plectrums, while an entire bird could create a ten-year supply.

1700-1800

Musicians begin to regard the outer casing of an Atlantic hawks bill sea turtle as the superlative plectrum because of its tone, durability, and flexibility.



Late 1800's

John Wesley Hyatt patents a new type of plastic called celluloid.

1870



John Farris created the 8-string banjo/mandolin combo and regarded a thin tortoise shell wedge as an accessory.

Turtle shells began to become expensive and limited, so other options became available such as leather, ox horn, gutta percha, and hardened tree sap.

1885

Charles F.W. Seidel creates the first patented custom plectrum designed to help musicians maintain a grip while playing the mandolin.

1896



The D'Andrea company creates the first commercialized pick out of celluloid that mimics the flexibility and rigidness of a tortoise shell.

By the late 1930's, they begin to offer various colors and shapes in their famous no. 351 style plectrum.

1920-1940

Companies begin to steer away from celluloid and begin testing out new synthetic plastics. Two of the three largest pick manufacturers move away from celluloid altogether to use composite plastics.



1940-1950



D'Andrea begins making custom picks for companies like Fender using their signature no. 351 style.

1950-1960



Celluloid is still a common plastic used today for guitar picks, but many other materials are also utilized such as nylon, bone, glass, metal, wood, horn and steel.

1960-Present Day

Sources:

Picks! By Will Hoover
Premiereguitar.com
Fender.com
Wikipedia.com



SURE GRIP GUITAR PICKS

www.SureGripGuitarPicks.com