Muse. Pioneer. Icon. That’s Barbie® doll, a fashion model whose stride down an endless runway inspired an entire line of quality collectibles for an astounding 60 years! An elevation of design and fashion, Barbie doll appeals to anyone interested in contemporary fashion trends. With her online presence, Barbie also serves as a major influencer. Barbie always encapsulates that intangible quality known as “style.” Under Mattel owner Ruth Handler’s influence and designer Charlotte Johnson’s tutelage, the world was first taken by surprise when Barbie was introduced at the New York Toy Fair on March 9th, 1959, along with her pink fashion booklet.

Sales took off after Barbie appeared in a commercial aired during The Mickey Mouse Club™. All it took was one look and everyone wanted a Barbie doll!
From the beginning, astute collectors recognized the ingenuity and detail that had gone into the doll and her wardrobe, which began to grow along with Barbie doll's popularity. Today, those early tailored fashions are a veritable freeze frame of the era, reminiscent of Balenciaga, Schiaparelli, Givenchy and Dior.

Many clever girls handled their precious Barbie dolls with care, and that eventually marked the beginning of the very first Barbie™ Fan Club in 1961, which set the stage for more clubs where Barbie™ fans could gather and make new friends.

There was so much to collect! Nothing stopped Barbie from constantly evolving with
hairstyles like Ponytails, Bubble Cuts, Mod hairstyles and an eclectic wardrobe that showcased the latest looks from smart suits, career outfits and go-go boots!

Mattel advertisement from 1967 introducing Mod Twist 'N Turn Barbie®.
The Barbie world grew at a rapid pace, and so did the ranks of her devoted fans. Designers at Mattel acknowledged their die-hard Barbie enthusiasts and started to create special dolls for collectors. A major shift occurred in the marketing and design of the popular *Malibu Barbie Doll* from 1971. She and all her friends and family sported tans and seaside accessories—everything related to the Malibu beach theme.

*Malibu Barbie Doll* ushered in the 1970s with hip fashions that reflected the new era.

The Malibu line was a bestseller that remained on the line until 1977’s all-new highly collectible *Superstar Barbie Doll* debuted close to the onset of the fabulous 1980s!
Dolls of the World Series Parisian Barbie Doll

Among the longest-lasting Barbie collectibles from 1980 has to be the *Dolls of the World* series. This popular collection beguiles us with Barbie doll dressed in festive native fashions from different countries, starting with the hard-to-find original *Parisian Barbie Doll*.

Golden Dream Barbie

By 1980, *Golden Dream Barbie* was one of the number one collector dolls on the market. Barbie-mania grew so fast that most new dolls sold out, demanding more supply from toy stores. That same year, 1980, collectors held the very first Barbie
convention in New York City. It was the first time an entire doll show was devoted to one
doll: Barbie!

_Dream Date Barbie_ was another collectors' dream doll in 1982. Seeing the positive
results of the first convention and the need for more dolls, the Barbie design team
began conceiving a Barbie line with the adult collector in mind. This initiated Barbie
doll's rich legacy of working with popular fashion designers beginning with Oscar de la
Renta® in 1984.

_Oscar de La Renta Barbie Doll_

Oscar de La Renta's evening gowns for Barbie would serve as a major win for Barbie
doll's burgeoning atelier. The advantage of showcasing his evening wear separately so
all collectors could display them on their favorite dolls meant gaining name recognition
with a fresh, young audience. This successful collaboration captured the imagination of
the fashion world and two *Oscar de La Renta Barbie Dolls* were released, dressed
exclusively by the designer.

Aside from Oscar de La Renta’s Barbie fashions, the other leading doll of 1984 was
*Peaches ‘N Cream*, who appealed sweetly to a wide range of collectors.

The following year, 1985, Mattel started to market Barbie dolls for a variety of collectors,
beginning with designer BillyBoy for the *Le Nouveau Theatre de la Mode Barbie Doll*.
With a stake in the youth market, the fashion gurus had found their muse. Barbie doll’s
clout with the younger generation spelled longevity for any designer. Barbie also
received her very own fashion show, *The New Theater of Fashion, 1986 Barbie
Retrospective in NYC* which showcased Barbie in couture creations designed by
Hermes, Christian La Croix, Thierry Mugler, and Jean Paul Gautier. This grand fusion of
famous names would have a very positive influence on the future of Barbie designer
dolls.

Business as usual for *Day- to-Night™ Barbie.*
The coolest collectible from 1985 was Day-to-Night™ Barbie, a career girl by day but with a flip of her business suit, she was off to the disco at night! Among the leading Barbie dolls created for all collectors in 1986 was the stunning Magic Moves Barbie Doll. Also, in 1986, Mattel developed a separate line of collectible dolls aimed at the advanced collector, titled Timeless Creations.

In 1988, Happy Holidays™ Barbie became the most coveted doll during the holiday season, starting her own line of annual collectibles under The Holiday Series. The next year, 1989, Barbie doll’s 30th Anniversary was met with unprecedented surprises. New
York City named Fifth Avenue “Barbie Boulevard.” Barbie doll’s amazing 30 years were also commemorated by Tiffany & Co. with a special custom-made sterling silver Barbie doll.

Later in 1989, another special event was hosted at Lincoln Center to celebrate Barbie's 30th Anniversary. As a gift, a limited edition of 1200 Barbie Pink Jubilee dolls was given to lucky collectors. The 30th Anniversary was also greeted with fanfare at FAO Schwartz with the special release of the exclusive Golden Greetings Barbie, the first of many successful partnerships between Mattel and FAO Schwartz.

Another partnership aimed at adult collectors started in 1990 with The Bob Mackie Designer Barbie Dolls. The dolls, covered in Swarovski crystals and expensive fabrics, were bestsellers and included the coveted Gold Barbie Doll (1990), Platinum Barbie Doll (1991), and Neptune Fantasy Barbie doll (1992).
The Classique Collection’s Benefit Ball Barbie

The Classique Collection’s Benefit Ball Barbie (1992), designed by Carol Spencer, became an all-time fave and the beginning of a new collection! Collectors absolutely loved the Barbie collaborations with popular designers including Barbie doll’s own talented artists, and Mattel made sure to satisfy their devoted clients with more extravagant dolls.

Totally Hair Barbie

As far as collectibles go, it’s worth noting that Totally Hair Barbie, one of the all-time best-selling dolls in Barbie history. Designed by Carol Spencer, Barbie was covered from head to toe in blonde or brunette hair and wore a Pucci-inspired miniskirt. She paved the way for big hair, a winsome smile and brilliant fashion!
The diverse collections in the works at Mattel led up to the much anticipated 35th Anniversary in 1994 with special reproductions of the 1959 original Barbie Doll in a few of her most popular couture fashions under *The Nostalgic Series*.

*Nostalgic series reproduction Solo in the Spotlight*

Also, as part of the 35th Anniversary, Mattel released *Gold Jubilee Barbie* in a limited edition of 5,000. Soon, Barbie would strike gold again with another hit, *The Hollywood Legends Series* with Barbie as Scarlett O’Hara and Ken as Rhett Butler!

Barbie Signature was one of the first toy manufacturers to make true-to-life miniatures of iconic action heroines, heroes, and celebrity dolls. The screen-oriented dolls still endure with many avid fans who celebrate their favorite personalities from film and television. There’s been quite a number of Barbie dolls fashioned after movie and TV stars, including several *Wizard of Oz* collections as well as tributes to *Marilyn Monroe, Farrah Fawcett, Star Trek, I Dream of Jeannie, Bewitched, The Addams Family, King Kong Barbie, Catwoman, The Twilight Saga* and recently, the *Mary Poppins* series of dolls.
Whether it’s Alfred Hitchcock’s *The Birds* Barbie doll from 2008, tailored to perfection and accompanied by pesky crows, or more current series like *The Hunger Games Collection* (2012) and the *Wonder Woman Doll Series* (2017), film franchises welcomed the opportunity to work with Barbie doll.

Currently, there’s *The X-Files™ Barbie Giftset*, featuring Scully and Mulder, and a variety of collectible dolls still available at the Barbie Signature [online shop](http://www.barbiesignature.com).
As sales have shown, designer Barbie dolls are still among the most coveted among collectors, especially when supplies are limited. Memorable among these are the *Nicole Miller City Shopper™ Barbie® Dolls* from 1996 that flew off store shelves! After the success of these designer collectibles, Mattel partnered with the most influential designers in the world. As the 1990s progressed, along came Barbie dolls by Christian Dior, Erte, Escada, Bill Blass, Ralph Lauren, Bloomingdale’s Donna Karan, and Calvin Klein.

Due to Barbie doll’s exquisite fashion sense, another major exhibit was mounted so fans could view Barbie in a new light. The exemplary showcase was set in Los Angeles and called *Barbie on Rodeo* with twenty dolls and accessories modeling creations by designers like Versace and Escada for a charity auction in 1996. “Why not?” asked Ron Michaels, president of the Rodeo Drive Committee, which sponsored the event, along with Mattel. “Barbie is the most fashionable girl in the world!”

![Barbie and Ken as Romeo & Juliet](image1)

![Barbie and Ken as King Arthur & Guinevere](image2)

All this publicity led to more exclusive collectibles like *The Together Forever Series* with *Ken and Barbie as Romeo & Juliet* (1998) and *Ken and Barbie as King Arthur & Guinevere* (1999). These were sold as giftsets, and as limited editions they are highly valued on the secondary market.
Other cutting edge Barbie dolls that struck a chord among fans included the Harley Davidson Barbie, who was so popular she started an entire line of Harley Davidson Barbie and Ken fashion dolls. Also hard to find is the magnificent Ferrari Barbie from 2001, who ignited a number of Barbie doll collaborations with the high end car designer. It seemed like every prestige brand gained clout by partnering with Barbie! Collectible Barbie dolls were a specialty for the discriminating collector and Mattel went to great lengths to deliver some of the most breathtaking collector dolls ever produced. Among them was the fabulous Hollywood Movie Star Collection, including Barbie dolls in

*Hollywood Premiere™ Barbie*

*Between Takes™ Barbie*  

*Day in the Sun™ Barbie*
As the decade continued, a special 40th Anniversary Barbie Doll, wearing a gown reminiscent of Barbie doll’s original black and white striped swimsuit, was gifted to conventioneers at the 1999 40th Anniversary Convention. The convention doll was praised for her ingenuity by transforming the iconic swimsuit into a festive gown, making it an instant collectible.
The year 2000 continued the upward swing of Barbie dolls marketed toward all age groups. New arrivals included the elegant Givenchy Barbie limited edition collector doll, the Magic and Mystery series, including Tales of the Arabian Nights Giftset and Ken and Barbie as Merlin & Morgan Le Fay.
The year was also a chance to oooh and aaah over the new unprecedented *Barbie Fashion Model Collection*. The BFMC® was introduced in 2000 and collectors had never seen any dolls quite so elegant. Created by designer Robert Best, they were called “Silkstones” and were created with a special combination of porcelain and vinyl. The Silkstone™ dolls were an instant sensation with separate fashions specifically designed for their regal haute couture looks!

*The Lingerie Barbie Doll*                          *Lisette™ Barbie Doll*

*Lisette™ Barbie Doll* from 2001 was another hit for the *Barbie Fashion Model Collection*. In 2003, The Barbie Fashion Model Collection teamed up with FAO Schwartz for a dazzling Silkstone Barbie, *FAO Exclusive Joyeux™ Barbie Doll*.  

*FAO Exclusive Joyeux™ Barbie Doll*
Available in 2002 was the highly collectible and hard to find *James Bond 007 Ken™ and Barbie® Giftset* featuring Barbie as the ultimate Bond girl!

![James Bond 007 Ken™ and Barbie® Giftset](image)

Barbie doll’s Bond girl ensemble was created by Linda Hemming, the same costume designer for the 20th Bond film! The successful giftset led to several other Barbie dolls as Bond Girls for the collector line.

Debuting in 2004 were two exceptional dolls from the acclaimed Versace fashion house. The first Barbie doll was called *Versace Barbie Doll*. She was gorgeous, wearing a dramatic strapless taupe gown that billowed around her legs. The second doll, *Versus Barbie™*, sported a casual pantsuit in a royal blue and white asymmetrical design. The limited edition dolls were sold out shortly after their release.

![Versace Barbie® Doll](image)  ![Versus Barbie® Doll](image)
With all the collectible offerings, the 50th Anniversary in 2009 for Barbie doll reached a fever pitch and every collector wanted to attend the convention. Old friends shared their new finds and new friendships began over simple things like memories of finding that special doll. Celebrations were held in Barbie clubs worldwide and Mattel debuted the beautiful 50th Anniversary Barbie doll created especially for collectors.

In recent years, the Barbie Signature team has dreamed up even more extraordinary Barbie dolls. If the dolls of the past few years are any indication, Barbie is going in directions that signal all new adventures in the future. Notable are collector faves designed by Bill Greening, like the Fantasy & Special Occasion Dolls with Goddess of the Galaxy (2011), Empress of the Aliens (2012), and Queen of the Constellations (2013). It’s clear, Barbie rules the universe!
Always catching collectors by surprise, the treasured *Haunted Beauty Collection* deviated from the Barbie aesthetic to give collectors a different series with a fantastical, humorous edge. The dolls sold out within weeks, leaving collectors clamoring for more! They were the perfect treats for the Halloween season!

*Haunted Beauty*  
Ghost™ Barbie Doll (2012)  
Vampire™ Barbie Doll (2013)  
Mistress of the Manor™ Barbie Doll (2014)  
Zombie Bride™ Barbie Doll (2015)
Fantasy has always been a part of Barbie doll's world and one of the coolest series in recent years has got to be *The Faraway Forest™ Collection* (2014-2018) with mythical creatures and a built-in storyline featuring a dark queen, an elf and several other forest dwellers, each laying claim to a part of the enchanted realm. There was even a map of the *Faraway Forest* included with each doll so collectors could learn where each character resided!


*Faraway Forest™ Queen of the Dark Forest™ Barbie Doll (2015)*
It’s never too late to start collecting and with the fabulous retro-reproductions, you can start from the very beginning and work your way up to a collection that best reflects your taste. Remember, there’s a Barbie for everyone—all you need is a great imagination! Here’s a cool video for more inspiration for your special collection: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qpeBEwdTOP0

2019 is already shaping up to be a banner year for the 60th Anniversary of Barbie doll! Collectors can look forward to quite a few jaw-dropping surprises! Here’s to more wonderful additions to your Barbie collection. Check out the 2019 line all available a click away at the Barbie Signature online shop!

Barbie 60th Anniversary Doll

Proudly Pink™ Doll

Barbie® Busy Gal™ Doll