**HOW TO READ EAST GERMAN UNIFORM DATE CODES**

Determining when East German tunics, overcoats, hats and other collectibles were manufactured is not difficult if you know what to look for.

Two dating systems were used: Digital and Letter Code. The Digital System was used in the early years of the DDR; the Letter Code System replaced it beginning in 1968.

**Digital System:**   
In the Digital System, the year of manufacture is shown either by its last 2 digits following a slash mark (example: /61= 1961), or by all four digits (example: 1961).

**Letter Code System:**  
Beginning in 1968, letters were used in place of numbers to show the year of manufacture. The chart below shows the year each letter represents. Note that by an oversight the letter "L" was used twice: 1973 and 1987.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **K** | 1968 |
| **Z** | 1969 |
| **M** | 1970 |
| **X** | 1971 |
| **B** | 1972 |
| **L** | 1973 (also 1987) |
| **O** | 1974 |
| **S** | 1975 |
| **R** | 1976 |
| **A** | 1977 |
| **U** | 1978 |
| **F** | 1979 |
| **E** | 1980 |
| **G** | 1981 |
| **I** | 1982 |
| **C** | 1983 |
| **H** | 1984 |
| **T** | 1985 |
| **P** | 1986 |
| **L** | 1987 (also 1973) |
| **Y** | 1988 |
| **N** | 1989 |
| **D** | 1990 |

**Examples:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1966-dated Hat**  1856 = Inventory/Stock # 1966 = Year of Manufacture NVA = Armed Forces  52 = Size | **1972-dated Tunic**  1862 = Inventory/Stock # K52 = Size  IV/B = 4th Quarter, 1972  ("B" = 1972) | **1984-dated Overcoat**  NVA = Armed Forces H/1 = 1st Quarter, 1984  ("H" =1984)  SG52 = Size |