

MEN'S
HEALTH

Q&A

MATT CONABLE

FOUNDER AND DESIGNER OF WILLIAM HENRY, POCKETKNIFE AFICIONADO, AND ADMIRER OF QUALITY ACCESSORIES

Meet Matt Conable



Matt Conable isn't your average CEO. Matt became an apprentice for knifemaker, David Boye, at 19 years old where he learned the fundamentals of his soon-to-be claim to fame. "I've always had an interest in knives," says Matt. "But I gradually started to see my work as an accessory." This newfound view inspired the self-proclaimed "jeans and leather jacket guy" to create pens, money clips, and cufflinks. "In the end, I appreciate things that are well-built, and timeless in their function and style," he says. "These accessories are practical now, would have been practical 100 years ago, and will be practical in 100 years," he says. We have a feeling you'll agree. Keep clicking to see some of his work, and then tell us what you think at [@MensHealthStyle](#).



What's the appeal of a one-of-a-kind accessory?

It takes confidence to own and wear a one-of-a-kind piece. The big brands out there spend a lot of money to create desire and legitimacy for 'iconic' pieces that are actually only exclusive because of the price. When we make a knife, pen, cufflink, money clip, or golf tool, we define luxury and exclusivity by uniqueness. Our customers appreciate the distinctive character and have the confidence to evaluate the quality and legacy of what we do, make it part of their own person, and proudly walk the road less travelled.



What are the most common mistakes men make when wearing jewelry?

Too flashy. Too big. Too much reflected light. Understated and elegant is always in fashion, and while we use some very exotic and storied materials at WH, the end product is one that draws you in with nuance, not something that pushes you back with glamour. Don't dress like you have something to prove.

Click [here](#) for more must-follow style rules that'll keep you looking your best.

Photo: William Henry fountain pens (\$950, [williamhenrystudio.com](#))



What's the most unusual material you've worked with and how did you discover it?

Mammoth tooth. It is actually the fossilized tooth from a Woolly Mammoth, found on the seabed near Alaska and in the North Sea by scuba divers. After 10,000 years under water, it's hard to work with. How I found it? Trade secret.

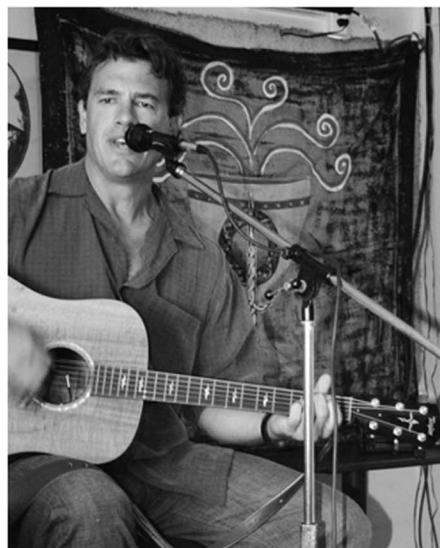
Photo: Mammoth tooth money clip (\$450, [williamhenrystudio.com](#))



Name a stylish man who inspires you.

Indiana Jones, Josh Brolin, Brad Pitt, and Zac Brown. Guys that have confidence in any environment; guys that seem like you one minute, and like they're from another planet the next.

Photo: Josh Brolin (via Getty)



What's something you'd like to buy this summer?

A new amp for my guitars. I play a lot of music both solo and in a band, and as our music evolves and our bookings improve, I find the equipment needs to keep pace with the music. So, I need to find an amp that goes to 11'.

Photo: Matt performing at "Poet and Patriot," an Irish pub in Santa Cruz



How can guys incorporate more personality into their wardrobes?

Carry something that has intrinsic value rather than the right logo on the same predictable 'luxury' accessories that everyone else has. You can choose to wear a special watch. Or, of course, one of our pens or pocketknives. The rare and exotic materials will make your choice—and your style—truly unique.

Photo: Ernst Benz watch (\$4,850, ernstbenz.com)



Which clothing designer do you gravitate to, and why?

I like John Varvatos. Nice cross between dress fashion, rock and roll, and a camping trip through Arizona. Maybe that sounds crazy, but you asked.

Photo: John Varvatos jacket (\$1,250, johnvarvatos.com)



Which William Henry piece are you most proud of and why?

The first WH knife design, which is now our model B10 Lancer. The original drawing was one of the first doodles I did on scratch paper over 15 years ago, and to this day it's still our signature piece—a classic gentleman's pocketknife for the modern world.

For wearable trends and style tips from the *MH* Style Team delivered to your inbox each week, sign up for the free [Style Siren newsletter](#).

Photo: William Henry knife (\$750, williamhenrystudio.com)



What's the best career advice you've received?

"Believe in the work you do, make no apologies, and don't cast pearls before swine." —John Hardy, who discovered my work and continues to be a friend to this day.

Photo: Jewelry designer John Hardy at his home in Bali (via Corbis)