

# Summing up scarves

Ever wondered how you can take your 'turtleneck sweater paired with chinos' look up a notch? Or what is that one thing which is missing in your finely tailored navy-blue suit with a classy, patterned maroon tie? Perhaps it is a scarf that is exactly what you need to oomph it up.

Scarves and mufflers have created a lot of confusion over the years, with people struggling to differentiate between the two. Although the term muffler has become extinct in many parts of world and has been replaced with scarves, it is still very commonly used in Bangladesh. For our ease of understanding, I will be differentiating between the two terms on the basis of the materials they are made of.

The use of scarves dates to the time when the Romans would wear them around their waists, or tie them loosely around their necks to wipe off sweat, or clean their faces. For formal occasions, they would wear scarves around their necks and the fabric used would set apart their social status.

Fast forward to 2016, and scarves are back in fashion with a Bang! Scarves come in various styles, some are heavy and thick, made of wool, cashmere or a combination of both, while others made of silk or satin are meant as accessories for formal occasions.

## MUFFLER

The ones which we wear in winter as a protective layer around our neck can be called a muffler. These are mainly made of wool or other heavy materials to trap heat and block off those nasty surges of cold wind. However, mufflers, a style statement since being around Dev Anand's neck, have been re-discovered by the fashion industry again recently. They come in different pat-



terns such as checks and stripes and in different colours. Wear them such that you create a contrast between what you are wearing on top and the muffler to allow it to stand out. For example, assume a cool look with your burgundy, woollen muffler as you wear it with a simple white T-shirt and your favourite jet black leather jacket.

**Bonus tip:** Keep in mind that your muffler's fabric should be soft because it will be rubbing against your neck continuously and could cause rash on your skin otherwise.



## SCARF

Scarves are usually made from silk, linen, cotton, or polyester. The ones made of cotton or polyester can be worn with casual, semi-formal or formal attires.

For instance, if you are going for a casual look and are wearing a light-blue shirt tucked into black chinos, you can enhance it by simply wearing a black cotton scarf so that it drapes over the back of your neck.

If you are wearing your classic black suit

with a striped greyish-blue tie, add a red scarf in the same manner as you did with your casual look.

When it comes to silk scarves, they are mostly worn with tuxedos or overcoats.

If you are wearing a tuxedo, wear a plain white or black rectangular silk scarf hanging from the back of your neck. Although overcoats are usually not worn in the subcontinent, you can take this tip while travelling.

Scarves are some of the most versatile pieces of clothing, which ensure both style and usefulness. These are not only limited to winter wear but can be worn in different seasons too, making them worth your money. In summer, one can easily wear linen scarves, for example, along with a linen jacket. Make sure that there is a contrast between the scarf and the outfit itself.

Having known everything there is to know about scarves, you must be wondering where you can find them. Although available in almost any store in Bangladesh, I would suggest Astorian or Artisan for good quality and stylish mufflers and scarves. So without further ado, go out there and grab these trending and stylish pieces now!

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**Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed**

**Model: Ali**

**Wardrobe: Ali's Personal Collection**

# Topis - your modern day crown

Wondering how you can glam up your look this season? Simple, top it with a topi! You will be amazed to see how exquisitely it can transform you. The sub-continent has been the hub of cultural development for centuries, of which caps, or topi, as we call them, have been the essential part of one's outfit.

From politicians to activists to actors, all have inspired us to style our appearance with these gorgeous fashion accessories. There are people who wear the typical white, crocheted round topi all-year and those who wear the fur topi with the start of winter or even the ones who wear topis just during the two Eids.

## KARAKUL TOPI

I will start with the most versatile and my personal favourite. Karakul topis are decorated with a fur coating, making this best suited for winter. Wear it with a sherwani or a prince coat and you will not fail to make an impression.

This topi comes in many styles of which the most distinct being the ones made of fur. While people of any age can wear it along with a sherwani, it would better suit middle aged or older people if they wear it with a prince coat or even a sports jacket.

## HIMACHALI TOPI

Designed to tackle the cold weather of the Northern region (example: Himachal Pradesh) of India, this topi is a core of their roots. These come in a range of designs and colours which give you the scope of wearing them with a variety of outfits. For a traditional look, you can wear it with a panjabi and pyjama and to top it off, add a shawl to pull-off an authoritative look. People who are older can wear it with a dress shirt and suit with the addition of a silk ascot to add panache.

## FEZ/TARBOOSH TOPI

Shifting our focus slightly to the west, we are introduced to a cylindrical type of topi. You may recall Aladin running across the bazaar holding on to his dear headpiece with a tassel bouncing all over the top. With its simplistic yet eye-catching velvet surface, this topi never fails to propel your look to the maximum. Wear it with a panjabi or add a Qawwali waist coat to get a unique look.

## SINDHI TOPI

Being regarded as an essential part of the Sindhi culture, this finely embroidered headgear will sharpen your facial features.

Uniquely shaped to expose your forehead, do not be afraid to opt for this slightly gaudy topi with an elaborate art work. For those of you, who want to take a bolder approach, add glass buttons; this will only accentuate your look.

**Bonus Tip:** Wear a Kashmiri embroidered shawl during the cold seasons to complement the topi. It will not only keep you warm this winter but will add grandeur to your look.

## DHAKA TOPI

During the British Raj, a certain fabric which was manufactured from Dhaka and then sent to Nepal was used to weave this topi. Hence, it is called Dhaka topi. This gorgeous work of art has now become a part of Nepali culture, identity, pride and nobleness for which it is given immense importance in their traditions. Being a Bangladeshi, you can always put on this topi with style. If you want to stick to the basics, wear it with a plain white panjabi and a navy blue scarf to create a spark of contrast. For a bolder approach, wear it with a Mujib coat.

## BHASHANI TOPI

How can I talk about topis and not mention the one popularised by the revolutionary

leader, Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani? His classic topi made from cane is popular all over the country. Wear it with a jubbah or a panjabi and pyjama and you have the choice to add a colourful scarf to help you stand out. You can rest assured that you will look stunning in your minimalistic attire.

## ROUND TOPI

The topi which is mostly seen here, in Bangladesh, is the round topi. Covering the length and the breadth of our country, this is mostly donned by the people during religious gatherings and mostly worn with panjabi and pyjamas. This headpiece has proved to be an essential part of our nation's everyday attire, representing style along with culture. Wear it with a keffiyeh for it will not only act as a protective layer, by will look macho and cool on you.

Not only do topis symbolise confidence and style, but these add the cherry on top for the one's going bald. Do not hesitate from wearing one yourself. They enhance your look and your sartorial elegance.

Make them your signature. Do not just follow the trend, be the trend.

**By Ali Sakhi Khan**

**Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed**