

THE DEFINITIVE  
**YOUTH**  
MAGAZINE

# SHOUT

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# ALL THE RAGE.



## THE FASHION ISSUE

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

# EDITORIAL

How does one define, and consequently limit, fashion? From the highlighted tips of one's hair to the pointy tips of one's shoes and beyond, the fashion and style of the youth is an ever-changing, ever-evolving phenomenon. You can't stop fashion.

Fashion also seeps beyond boundaries and into cultures. Remember the hoodie panjabis a few years ago? I was not entertained but there was surely a market for it. Similarly, fashion is a statement; an opinion. It's part of who you are and what you want to be. My nephew loves his Spiderman T-shirt because, well, he's three years old and wants to be a superhero. Who am I to stand in his way?

It is all the rage, all the time. And when we find the topic of fashion pop up in conversations on the environment, gender roles, self-expression, lifestyle, education and more, we realise how universal it truly is.

This week, on print and on the website, we're talking everything fashion. Get ready.

– Kazi Akib Bin Asad, Editor In-charge, SHOUT



## PLAYWATCH

### YOUTUBE CHANNEL REVIEW



# FASHION SHOWS, BUT NOT REALLY...

#### ALIZA RAHMAN

##### MICARAH TEWERS

Micarah Tewers is a YouTuber known for creating her own dresses. From recreating iconic celebrity-worn dresses on a budget to dressing like characters played by certain actresses for a week, Micarah tries it all. She covers historical fashion, practical videos you could benefit from (or at least want to try) and bizarre ones like "TURNING A COUCH INTO FASHION!"

She will run you through the process of creating a dress while chipping in with corny jokes (she once joked about playing Rocky backwards while unboxing) and clips of various animals. Her videos usually have a pace that makes you feel like you've set the playback speed at 1.25. She'll also speak in three different tones within ten seconds with abrupt changes in camera angles and a whole host of other sounds that seem to have been edited in to match the sheer randomness.

##### KAROLINA ZEBROWSKA

If historical inaccuracies make you gnash your teeth, Karolina Zebrowska's channel is the one for you. She came on my radar after she recreated one of those many videos showing decades of women's fashion but she didn't just show the glamorous side as most videos did.

Despite thinking that the range of her channel would be narrow, I soon found an assortment of different types of videos such as a clothing haul where she acts like it's 1608 and she's a servant, and also one where she pretends to be a beauty guru in 1588. Her shorter videos (around 2 to 5 minutes) are simultaneously historical and modern, making you smile as you wonder how

someone came up with such ideas in the first place. Examples include Karen as a 1920s flapper, a lady in the 18th century behaving in an unladylike manner, and "send this to an unwanted suitor without context".

Her longer videos (around 10 to 15 minutes) are more educational so you end up learning why we stopped wearing hats and how being concerned with being fashionable is a relatively new concept.

##### MODERNGURLZ

When you usually think of YouTube videos critiquing costumes in movies, you think the subject of these videos will involve period dramas, and the aforementioned channels certainly do this. However, ModernGurlz is a channel that discusses contemporary costuming with a seriousness you might not have thought it deserved. Analysing clothes opens up an entirely new avenue for interpreting characters, and this becomes clear when you see the videos by ModernGurlz on "Legally Blonde", "The Devil Wears Prada", and of course, "Mean Girls".

The videos are engaging because of the mention of the minute details, the description of the changes in attire that arise as characters evolve and go through different situations in their lives, bits of fashion history, the fashion trends at a particular time and of a certain age group among many others.

This is also the channel where you will find several videos on Disney princesses, and they can range from simply mentioning what's wrong with a movie, the multiple different versions of Cinderella's ball gowns or even something as minute as the colour of Sleeping Beauty's eyes.





ILLUSTRATION: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

## Cringe Culture and the Case of Fashion Elitism

SYEDA TASNIM ISLAM

If you've been a person on the internet in the last couple of years, chances are you have come across the word "cringe". Cringe: the monosyllabic word that determines what's socially acceptable and what's not; it acts as the metaphorical bouncer ready to chuck you out of the cool kids' club if you don't meet the requirements. So, how does this relate to fashion?

Cringing at others' fashion choices has been a thing for as long as we can remember. From internationally televised shows and YouTube commentary to your Instagram explore page and even that one auntie gasping at your ripped jeans – people have a lot of opinions and they do not hold back. At first glance, this does not seem like much of an issue, because so much of this has been normalised to the extent of us not realising how it is a major hindrance to a person exploring their own style.

By continuing to participate and even being complicit in cringe culture, we are unknowingly doing more harm than good. Shame is a powerful tool that keeps everyone in check. The notion of standing out and it potentially backfiring is a nightmare to most – but should it really be like this? It is a natural human response to want to fit in with the community, but personal fashion choices is an aspect that should be free of such negativity.

This also brings us to the peculiar notion of "trends". And more importantly, *who* creates them and consequently, benefits from them. More often than not, trends are set by people who are in a position of both power and privilege – able-bodied, slim, white, famous, and wealthy. The most mainstream example of this is the popularisation of "streetwear", baggy clothes, sneakers, and flashy accessories, all of which had previously been frowned upon because this style was mainly the look in low-income communities in America. However, now it is a multi-billion-dollar industry with huge brands like Supreme and Nike that capitalise on these looks by creating the illusion of exclusivity.

A more local example of this is the classic looks of *gram-bangla* (*gamcha* prints, simple cotton saree) which would undoubtedly be considered couture if it were made by a fashion designer, gone through fancy marketing, and carried a hefty price tag, rather than it just being made by the local craftspeople in a rural area.

We cannot deny that wealth and privilege gives people the power to gatekeep fashion. Sometimes, the difference between "cringeworthy" and "cool" can be a thin line we call "privilege". And it's so important to remember that because it helps put things in perspective -- we cannot let elitism and cringe culture dictate how we choose something as personal as fashion.

They say beauty is in the eye of the beholder and it especially applies in this case. Granted, trends are helpful and even beautiful sometimes, but our lives are far too rich, too complex, and too short to be abiding by these superficial rubrics. Personal fashion can be such a beautiful, fun, and empowering thing. It is the way you decide to pick out the most vibrant yellow jacket, or that hot pink shirt that you know is obnoxiously loud – and yet you love it. It is liberating to let yourself choose these seemingly simple things, and that is a luxury we all deserve.

Tasnim is trying to make "fetch" happen. Tell her if it's going to happen at [tasnim.upoma96@gmail.com](mailto:tasnim.upoma96@gmail.com)

# IT'S OKAY FOR MEN TO ENJOY FASHION

FAISAL BIN IQBAL

*"Why is it taking you so long to get dressed? Are you a girl?"*

*"Wow, you sure didn't hesitate to match the colour on your belt with that of your shoes. You should've carried a purse of the same colour as well, given how fashion concerned you are."*

Men are more or less familiar with these lines. They're used to mock the idea that men can be concerned about their appearance, and casually enjoy fashion. If you're someone who's been told something of a similar manner, stop listening. Men, too, are allowed to enjoy fashion, and there's no hard and fast rule that says otherwise. And if you're someone who supports such tasteless opinions, you're part of the problem.

While fashion varies from person to person, and generation to generation, every individual has the right to enjoy what they deem as fashion irrespective of their gender. The thought that it's something that only the female half of the population is entitled to, is utterly misleading. We need to understand that men can explore various styles, experiment with different wardrobes, and take their time while getting ready for a day out with friends or family.

There's nothing unusual about men trying to enjoy fashion, or being well-dressed.

The typical T-shirt or polo shirt paired with a pair of jeans is often considered satisfactory men's fashion by many. After all, it's a pairing that doesn't require much thought, and is easily accessible. Whether you're attending a university lecture, or hanging out with your friends or relatives, dressing simple for the occasion will never grab anyone's attention, nor

will it bring in any ridicule. But do something a bit extra, and you're suddenly overdressed.

Besides, there are times where you need to dress to impress, be it at a job interview, or an office meeting. Our appearance at certain places matters a lot, and we have to make ourselves as presentable as possible. Irrespective of who we are, when the time calls, or the mind feels like it, we have the right to explore different styles or fashion.

But I can't help but wonder as to whether this notion that men don't need to be fashion concerned is meant as a joke, or an attack on the female half. After all, most stigmas are born because we set roles, features, and responsibilities based on a person's gender, and this idea we're discussing is no different.

Statements, like the ones mentioned at the beginning of this article, are used to mock the idea that men too can be well dressed, and take their time getting ready for an occasion. And as you can see, such statements are often paired with subtle references to women, and how *they're* the ones more suited for such concerns surrounding fashion and appearance.

Men's fashion has evolved over the years. And it was allowed to evolve because we accepted those changes as they came. The plain tees and jeans we love to wear today may not be there in the future, and we need to accept this fact. While we wait to see what the coming days have in store for men's fashion, or fashion in general, for the time being, we really need to stop calling out men for trying to be fashionable. And we most certainly need to stop comparing well-dressed or fashion conscious men to women, because fashion is NOT something that caters to a specific gender.



ILLUSTRATION: RIDWAN NOOR NAFIS

# All You Need to Know About Sustainable Fashion

HIYA ISLAM

There is a lot to talk about the fashion industry – unethical practices, unsustainable supply chains, spiralling consumerism and the like. Before you start thinking that turning your wardrobe green suggests ugly and weird, well, it's not and neither is it for minimalists.

What is sustainable fashion? From design to manufacture, from distribution to use, and from use to disposal, sustainable fashion makes sure every step of the way is environmentally friendly. You wouldn't want to wear a shirt that you know came from destructive harvesting or a jacket that'd go on to leach chemicals in the landfill. And much less something that never rots, I hope. Most of us struggle to understand the underlying problems created by fast fashion. When trends shift and evolve every hour, the struggle to keep up overrides any other priority. While it's important for you to be fashionably appropriate, you can still dress the same with a little more effort that would go on to have a huge impact on the welfare of the planet. Here's how.

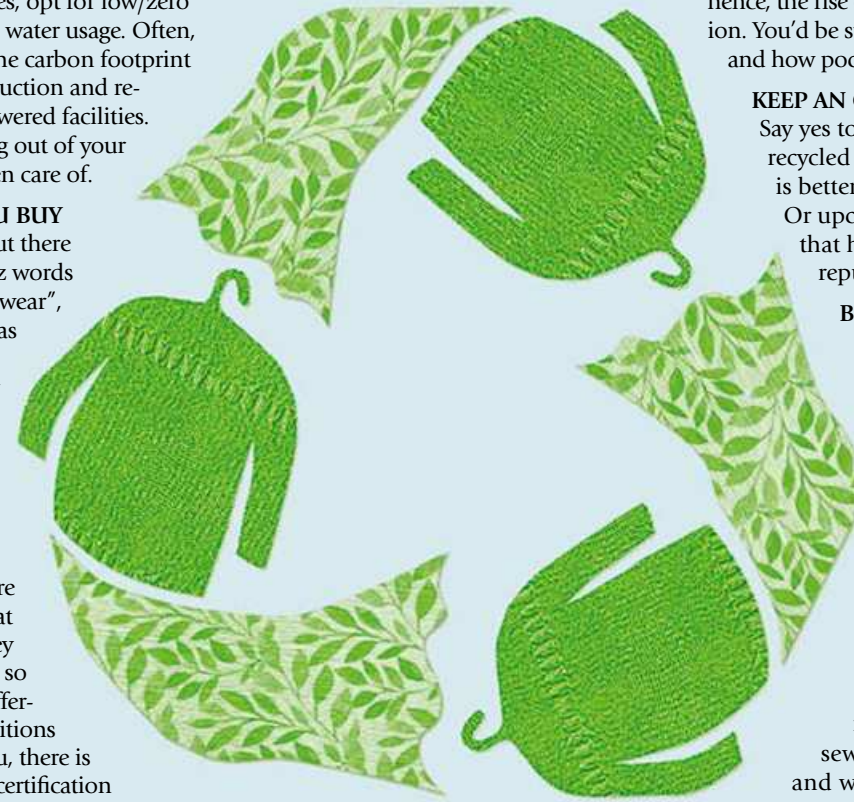
## CHOOSE SUSTAINABLE BRANDS

By buying from these labels, you are way ahead of the game. These brands focus on naturally derived and environmentally conscious fibres like, cotton, linen, wool, silk etc. over petroleum-based polyester, nylon and such. And of course,

use eco-friendly dyes, opt for low/zero waste and minimal water usage. Often, they try to reduce the carbon footprint by using local production and renewable-energy powered facilities. Basically, everything out of your hand has been taken care of.

## KNOW WHAT YOU BUY

Many brands are out there bluffing, using buzz words such as "conscious wear", "sustainable style" as marketing tactics. Keep an eye out for greenwashing strategies and do your homework. Read about the brand. How transparent is their supply chain? How eco-friendly are their practices? What certifications do they own? And there are so many specifying different terms and conditions met. And mind you, there is no one-size-fits-all certification for sustainability. Examples include GOTS, Cradle to Cradle, Bluesign, Standard 100, USDA Organic and so on. To an outsider, it indeed is textile jargon. But the key to finding your answer lies in one question: Is this brand sustainable? And the mystery unravels on its own.



hence, the rise of pre-owned luxury fashion. You'd be surprised at the options and how pocket-friendly they can be.

## KEEP AN OPEN MIND

Say yes to clothing made from recycled fibres. Recycled polyester is better than virgin polyester. Or upcycled fabric – clothes that have been revamped or repurposed.

## BUY LESS, WEAR MORE

Invest in classic pieces and not fads. Pick and choose in a way that allows you to create versatile looks. In 2015, Barnado's, a British charity organisation, found that each piece is worn seven times on average before throwing out. Take care of your clothes to make them last longer; sew to repair, fix a button, and wash inside-out. While you may naturally think it applies only to clothes, but no, sustainability goes for everything we wear.

## EMBRACE THE "PRE-LOVED"

One man's waste is another man's treasure. Instead of splurging on an outfit that you'd only wear once, try a clothing rental service or a thrift store. Even big names in fashion are following suit and

*Hiya loves food that you hate by norm – broccoli, pineapple pizza and Bounty bars. Find her at hiyaislam.11@gmail.com*

# WHAT IS THE BANGLADESHI AESTHETIC?

AAHIR MRITTIKA

It's hard to think about fashion these days without talking about the rise in subcultures and aesthetics. The aesthetics in question include dark academia, goth, and cottagecore, and they're explored and popularised heavily by platforms like Pinterest, Tumblr, and TikTok.

Aesthetics is defined as a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of beauty, taste, and art. Looking at all of these examples led me to think about the subcultures in our local context. While they do exist here, we also have some of our own:

## THE HIMUCORE

This aesthetic is obviously based on Humayun Ahmed's famous character Himu. It's defined by mustard-yellow *panjabis* and *fatuas*, with a strong disregard for shoes. Accessories could include flowers in your hair and a pair of glasses that you probably don't need. A perpetual Pahela Falgun, reading palms and predicting the future.

## THE CHHAYANAUT

Chhayanaut has been the introduction to music for generations of musicians and singers. They play Tagore alongside Bengali rock bands. Their wardrobe is all the earthy tones. Light green *panjabis*. Cotton sarees with clay earrings on week-ends. Brown silk. Red and white colour schemes. Big bold bindis. A little smudge of kohl on the edge of the eyes. Occasion-



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

al pearl studs from their mothers. Fabric satchels filled with notebooks of *sargam*. Wrists of bangles and rustic bracelets. A guitar next to the harmonica.

## THE CHARUKOLA

This is for the artists and art enthusiasts. Everyone's hair is in a bun, probably held in place with a pencil. Casual outfits with a plethora of accessories. An infinite colour scheme. A brush tucked behind the ear. Paint splattered shabby jeans with faded T-shirts. Scarves around the neck.

Long, jute satchels hanging with every paint brush from New Market. A strong urgency in the air, to create something new.

## CULTURE'S GIRL

The fashion aspect of this aesthetic includes loads of thrifted pieces and hand me downs. Wearing your mother's watch for "sentiment" or your brother's worn in oversized jacket for warmth. Western outfits with eastern elements: throwing a denim jacket over the threaded *kurti* in

winter and wrapping a shawl over T-shirts. Silver jewellery with everything. Bindis with any outfit. Intricate mehendi designs. Roaming around Shilpakala Academy for art exhibitions, and Bangla Academy for the book festivals. Dressing up at home for no reason. Curfew at sunrise.

## BENGALI ACADEMIA

This list is incomplete without including the scholars and students whose most prominent accessories are eyebags from staying up late. Who carry fully annotated books with pages falling off, that they bargained for in the sun at Nilkhet. Who are STEM majors but secretly write novels. Discussing politics over endless cups of tea and sitting on campus yards with roasted peanuts. Coffee and tea stains on their freshly ironed clothes. School uniforms with a blue tint. Pashmina shawls over white *panjabis* and *kurtis*. Messy unkempt hair falling over thick glasses.

The Bangladeshi aesthetic spans over boats and rickshaws, alleys and foot overbridges, street foods and *tong er cha*, *nato*ks and Matir Moina – an article can't possibly encompass it. Fashion has always been an extension of culture. That's why food, film, music, and language inspire us in the ways we express ourselves through style.

*Aahir Mrittika likes to believe she's a Mohammadpur local, but she's actually a nerd. Catch her studying at mrittikaahir@gmail.com*

# Fashion: Self-expression or consumerism?

AANILA KISHWAR TARANNUM

1

As I write this piece sitting on my table with the laptop, I am wearing a black hoodie, dotted with dandruff-like remnants of cream I whipped for a dessert the previous day. I haven't washed this hoodie since the beginning of winter. The foods [and dirt] on it are layered, just like the dessert I mentioned.

It is when I put on this old, dirty hoodie and wear my hair in a tight bun that I feel the least like a person. I feel quite invisible in this outfit, sitting inside my room with nobody but the FBI agent on the other side of the webcam watching me work. Few people have seen me looking like this, because this is not the self I typically want to express to the world (not to be confused with the self I am ashamed or embarrassed to express to the world).

The version of myself that I quite like expressing is when I'm in clothes that excite me. The accessories work right. Colours go together. Eyeliner wings are at that perfect angle. The lipstick works without overwhelming my usually print-heavy, colourful wardrobe.

Fashion and style is a journey, I feel. Quite a few women in my mother's side of the family are gifted designers. They paid attention to every detail, head to toe. They'd grown up making their own clothes and it became an interesting extension of their personality. As I grew older and began creating my own wardrobe, I became more aware of myself.

Most of all, I feel that clothing ends up becoming a vehicle of self-expression because it makes you more aware of yourself. Regardless of your level of investment in your outward appearance and denial of social constructs, fashion can become a vehicle of dissent, it can be symbolic for religions, cultures, regions, movements.

To dismiss fashion as purely utilitarian and label it vain would be denying the many messages, meanings and moments that clothing has delivered throughout history. It is omnipresent, everywhere we go, every era you live in. Che Guevara and Billie Eilish and Mosharraf Karim are all fashion icons – a sentence I never thought I would write, but the point I want to make demands it.

I saw an uncle walking at Shyamoli today. He was wearing a bright orange topcoat and red earmuffs, and he had a huge moustache. At that moment, he too was

making a statement with his clothes.

(The statement is that he is a fashion icon.)

Every person chooses to express their gender with their clothing, even people who claim to put zero effort into dressing themselves. Clothing carries undeniable meaning, and that is why it can become a strong vehicle for self-expression.

2

If a tree falls in a forest, and no one is there to hear it, did it even make a sound? If you wear a fire outfit and don't post about it on Instagram, was your outfit even fire?

Being yourself in real life is rarely enough anymore – there's the added pressure of curating your life for social media. Fashion starts out as a creative medium, but it can be counteractive. The older, fashion-conscious women in my family, fell prey to the abundance of choice in the market. For us, that consumerism is supplemented by the presence of social media.

Under late capitalism, hobbies that involve material things are a slippery slope, be it clothing, makeup, gaming consoles or watches. The internet can meet every specific demand. Spending a few hundred taka impulse buying T-shirts online doesn't even require a second thought.

This is not to say the internet has had an entirely negative effect on fashion as a hobby – like everything else, the internet has provided more opportunities to people for expressing themselves than ever before. People who cannot express their queer identities within their communities have an outlet to do so through social platforms, and they make excellent use of fashion.

My personal gripe is less with the internet, and more with the way it aids rampant consumerism. If your personal style is Pakistani dressy *kameez*, you can keep collecting them endlessly – one for every *dawaat*. If you enjoy logos on clothes, there are enough brands for you to wear new clothes every day.

If you're a leftist, Instagram will advertise you businesses selling leftist merch. (They almost got me.)

The fashion industry hadn't been headed in the right direction even before the internet completely took over our shopping habits, thanks to the pandemic. Marc Jacobs said in a *Vogue* interview in April 2020, "We've done everything to such excess that there is no consumer for all of it."

The pressure to keep up with trends mounts on consumers as they keep buying one article of clothing after another, piling up their closets with clothes that will never be worn to its full capacity.

Having as many clothes in your closet as an



average-sized store is only a matter of time when nearly every store in the world is accessible. Influencers may convince you to tie to your self-worth to social media validation on #OOTD posts, but buying more than one new piece is an unsustainable, wasteful habit.

Meanwhile, the environment gets irreversibly damaged. The fashion industry produces over 92 million tonnes of waste per year and uses 1.5 trillion litres of water, alongside chemical pollution and high levels of carbon dioxide emissions, found a report published in Nature Research Journal.

Hasan Minhaj covered this better than I can, so I'd suggest a rewatch of *The Patriot Act*.

3

But clothes are fun, expressive, and exciting. Style is inseparable from its material manifestation. One cannot simply give up fashion when it carries so much meaning – so how does one strike a balance?

Consumerism, self-expression, and the journey in between – New York City-based Bangladeshi blogger Amiya Dewan has been there and done that. She studied fashion at Parsons School of Design, and the impact of fast fashion and consumerist practices on the environment made her notice the amount of waste we create through our wardrobes.

Last year, she set a rule for herself that she would only buy second-hand clothing, and donate one item of clothing against each purchase. She had been even stricter the previous year, allowing herself to buy only four articles of clothing throughout.

"For the industry to stop harming the environment, the industry will have to slow down its rates of production. On the other hand, the industry is creating so many jobs, evidently here in Bangladesh," Amiya pointed out.

Fast fashion's harm on the environment can only be minimised through a concerted global effort that also accounts for lost jobs in the industry, but our individual consumerist habits are easier to solve. A wardrobe that has too many choices cancels out the purpose of each article of clothing, and prevents full use of your favourite pieces.

Amiya's advice is to ask a simple question, "Does this outfit excite me?" Mortified after carrying five suitcases full of stuff to Bangladesh after her undergraduate studies ended, Amiya figured out strategies for purging her closet to build one where every piece of clothing has a purpose and expresses her personal style.

"The consideration of space should always be on your mind. There are unlimited clothes online but your space isn't unlimited," she said. "The trouble is letting go of things of sentimental value. You'll probably never wear that jewellery your aunt got you years ago but you think it's wrong to not keep it."

"But you can always take a picture, keep the memory. Memories are precious, things are not," Amiya said.

Amiya advises people to reuse their clothes to the fullest, and create wardrobes where the pieces are easy to style together. A few items of clothing can be used to create multiple looks – all it takes is a little creativity.

"Convincing yourself to get one slightly more expensive pair of pants instead of three pairs of cheaper quality ones is often a good way to motivate yourself to get the best use out of your clothes. You get your money's worth the more you wear them," Amiya said.

Brands should grow slowly and thoughtfully, and so should your wardrobe. Instead of relying on over-consumption to find our purpose as humans, let us be more responsible with our purchases, and let our choices express our best selves.

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# Frugal fashion: *Styling on a budget*

**BUSHRA ZAMAN**

Have you ever scrolled through Pinterest outfit inspirations or seen notable street-wear fashion and wondered if you could ever look as classy? Students and others attempting to pay their own bills, I've got your back. Here's how to look stylish with affordable regular wear.

Affordable T-shirts purchased from Facebook pages sometimes cost approximately BDT 250-400. The best time to purchase these are during clearance sales. Best be lightning fast at booking these products because clearance products are usually in limited quantities, which is why sale timings may be posted beforehand. It's a sign – get all duties done and over with because these purchases could involve the survival of the fittest.

Physical stores (which are better options in terms of price) such as the famous location opposite Dhaka College may present T-shirts at prices as low as BDT 150 each. T-shirts may be more affordable options than *fatuas*, hence the focus on them. There are great options in Uttara too such as Nigar Plaza, near Rajlaxmi Complex and vendors in Sector 7 Rabindra Sarani. An open market on vans in front of Rajlaxmi is another great find particularly on Wednesdays when all else is closed in Uttara. Pair your look with a decent pair of pants within approximately BDT 500-700 from



**Two excited customers. Too excited customers. Styling on a budget.**

PHOTO:  
ORCHID CHAKMA

one of the aforementioned locations for T-shirts, shoes within approximately BDT 1000 from Elephant Road or New Market, and boom, you have a basic outfit.

But what exactly should you be looking for? Rather than opting for tasteful and

trendy pieces, look for classic items that never go out of style and are of colours that can be reused with multiple other pieces of clothing in your wardrobe, like black formal pants, flannel shirts, solid-coloured T-shirts or ones with a small logo in the

corner. Details such as collars and a border around the sleeves or neckline may easily make you look well put together.

As for which shades of a particular colour to choose, pick ones that you are comfortable in and that highlight a particular feature of yours to make you look even better, for example, one that enhances your hair colour, eye colour, or skin tone. When purchasing shoes, wear the outfit you have in mind and try the shoes on with them to see how it all looks together. Never opt for pieces that make you uncomfortable since it brings down a key feature that can help you look good: self-confidence.

If you have some extra cash, invest in accessories. I personally like affordable unisex small beaded accessories, but small jewellery pieces may be found online at prices approximately less than BDT 400. A tip to make metallic jewellery be more colour-fast is to coat them with clear nail polish from time to time. It is also important to be well-groomed. Proper nail maintenance, regular haircuts and shaves can absolutely be DIY-ed at home with practice. Altogether, you'd spend roughly under BDT 2000 depending on bargaining skills and the number of items. Happy shopping!

*Bushra Zaman likes books, art, and only being contacted by email. Find her at bushra-zaman31@yahoo.com*

## DO OR DYE

# The "colour your hair" adventure

**NISHAT TASNEEM SHAHARA**

If your screenshot folder consists of strangers with blue, red and pink hair, and your search engine history is just Brad Mondo react videos, this article is the sign you have been waiting for. Here's your beginner's guide to the crazy hair of your dreams.

### THE RESEARCH

This is not applicable for you if you are hoping to get something drastic done, like a platinum white. It would be tough to get and maintain this look for people with naturally dark hair. To understand this, start with some boring research. What is your hair type? Do you need to bleach it to get a neon orange, or would you settle for burgundy highlights? Because unfortunately for most of you reading this, your naturally dark hair will need to be either lifted or stripped of its colour for anything bright to be visible on it.

And here's the catch: bleaching your hair can be scary and damaging. To get the best results (and to avoid frying your hair), book an appointment at a well-reputed hair salon and be prepared to make a dent in your wallet. But hey, if you are reading this article, you must have already ordered that purple hair dye. It's pointless to try to stop you now, so here are some tips instead.

### THE PREPPING

Moisturising your hair is essential before, throughout, and after the process. In fact, avoid shampooing your hair before bleaching it. If you must, use a moisturising conditioner or a hair mask. You need your hair to be in its best condition before attacking it with bleach. Using anything other than a box dye will also immensely improve

the quality of your new hair (Arctic Fox and Manic Panic products are recommended). And if possible, don't do this alone. Call a responsible friend. You will need the help.

### THE PROCESS

Accept that this is going to be a mess. Wear your gloves and slather some Vaseline on your hairline and ears. Read the detailed instructions that come with your products, and strictly follow them. Set timers. Start by separating your hair into as many sections as you think is necessary and apply the bleaching solution from the end sections. Work your way up to your roots, never the other way around. Use warm water to clean the lightening or bleaching products off, and don't overdo the washing. Take a break before applying your hair dye next. Once it is all done, condition your hair and leave it alone for the next couple of days.

### THE AFTERCARE

To get your new hair to last for more than five days, invest in some sulphate free, hair colour friendly shampoos, dry shampoos and colour protecting conditioners. Do not shampoo your hair for at least the next two days of colouring it, and be prepared for some really cold showers from now on. Hot water fades hair colours faster. Minimise the number of times you wash your hair by using dry shampoo.

There you have it. A very basic guide to help you not damage your hair beyond repair. Disappoint your parents and have fun!

*Shahara is the resident blue haired tsundere of her friend group. Write to her at nish.nts@gmail.com*



# TWO COLOURS IN MY HEAD



## ADHORA AHMED

A banyan tree stood in the middle of the field, shielding the grass, earth and a weary soul from the scalding midday sun. Yet, spots of light filtered through the leaves and branches, peppering his sleeping form. As the sun grew hotter and the spots touched his closed eyelids, he slowly fluttered them open.

He would return when the sun took the colour of egg yolk, playing with his friends in the dustier parts where the grass was more stunted.

The sun doesn't shine here anymore. The skies are perpetually in different shades of grey with no blue streaks to be seen. The banyan tree still stands, ruling over grass much taller than he remembers. He wakes up to raindrops dripping from the branches and the blades of grass hovering over him. He lies among the puddles for a little longer, letting the rain soak him to the bone.

He wishes the rain would wash all his thoughts away too, especially the guilt and indecision. There's no use trying to walk all the way back to the city, because there's nothing left. It's not like this place has much to offer on its own, but there's no harm in trying, right?

He musters all his strength and rises to his feet. He must go on.

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He would store the seeds of the fruits and vegetables he ate in a tin can. His little piggy bank. Once he had enough seeds to

grow a garden, he weeded out and raked the patch of land behind the kitchen. He put his seeds to sleep in their new beds beneath the soil, waiting for them to wake up into tiny sprouts.

He watered his soon-to-be garden every day, except when it rained, and looked out for weeds. He didn't trust chemicals, so he made and applied organic fertiliser by himself, despite the stench. He'd listen to the advice his family and neighbours gave attentively. Still, there was no sight of green among the brown of the earth.

A storm raged one night, the first of the season. It was strong enough to topple a few trees in the village. He was dejected as he tried to drain the excess water away, but when the sun came up again and dried the ground, green spots appeared.

That was the happiest day in his life.

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He barely recognises the bamboo fence, the one he remembers his father and uncle building together. Branches of thick ivy curl heavily around the bamboo poles, causing some of them to bend or break. As he steps inside through such a clearing, he tries to identify the huts similarly overtaken by wild nature: the big one with the porch, the kitchen, the latrine, and the sheds.

He wishes he had a knife to cut through the foliage, but all he has is the wet clothes on his back, clinging to his body like a second skin. He knows there must be snakes sleuthing around. If he dies by their venom, so be it. He makes his way to the

gardening shed in the dim hope of finding a tool, any tool.

The wooden shelves are still there, but empty. As the situation worsened, people grabbed anything they saw, no matter if it was theirs or if it would come to use. He recalls the times he had to swallow his guilt as he raided refrigerators in deserted apartments, or make away with a pair of shoes from the outlet of a luxury brand he could never afford to set foot into.

Then, he notices a scythe and a spade tucked deep into the leafy shelf at the bottom, both rusted. Those will have to do.

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He didn't like being an only child. He didn't like the feeling of loneliness that would sometimes grip him unawares. He would have loved a big brother to count on, or a little sister to play with. Luckily, he grew up in a close-knit community who were there to support him.

He had many siblings from other mothers, playing and learning together. He had aunts and uncles at every corner of the road, as well as honorary grandparents, all of whom loved him. Everybody looked out for each other. Everybody belonged to the same team. He believed, mistakenly as he realised later on, that the rest of the world was utopian like this.

His bouts of loneliness were sudden but brief, because he had an entire village of a family by his side.

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He manages to cut and tear through the foliage barring the doorway to his

old room. While doing so, he discovers a branch bearing blackberries. He thinks it might be from the blackberry tree in the kitchen garden, one of the last trees he planted before leaving for the city.

The room bears no resemblance to its old self, as expected. Thick roots of two trees crack the stone floor, whose trunks burst through the thatched roof. His bed, reading desk and wardrobe have long been taken away by someone he'll never know, by someone who probably doesn't even exist anymore.

Nestled between the two trees, he eats the blackberries he's gathered. The rain has slowed down enough to not splash on his head through the openings of the roof. Reclining against one of the trunks, he wonders if there's anyone left in this place. If there's anyone left anywhere.

It's not like he's desperate for company, he's just curious. He's been fending for himself, alone, for so long that loneliness doesn't bother him anymore. The existence of blackberries seems promising, so he decides to stay here for a while. He wants to see how long he can survive in the place he used to call home, now so foreign and empty.

Right then, golden light peeps through the broken roof, shining on the remaining blackberries in his hand. He looks up in disbelief. It's the sun.

*Adhora Ahmed tries to make her two cats befriend each other, but in vain. Tell her to give up at [adhora.ahmed@gmail.com](mailto:adhora.ahmed@gmail.com)*

# A GUIDE TO FASHION SCHOOLS

## NABIHA NUSAIBA

I distinctly remember the day I confidently expressed my dreams of becoming a fashion designer to a relative, who then blessed my aspirations with evil remarks. Looking back, I believe that I gave in to her reaction because I was terrified. Should you choose to exhibit your creations to all of the world's eyes, you will be judged. For the longest time, receiving a chance to work and succeed in the fashion industry had been nothing short of an uphill battle on a very slippery mountain. Now, modern media has changed all of that.

Over the past few decades, we've observed changes in every aspect of fashion. From the way companies are run, to the way products are advertised to the clothes itself. This, along with the number of growing companies and the new-found ease of setting up your own stores, attracts more and more prospective fashion students every year.

If you too are looking at your options and considering a life in fashion, let this be your guide on the more conventional route to the world of glitz and glam: fashion schools.

### WHAT DO FASHION SCHOOLS OFFER?

The most common fashion school major is "design". The design track itself is spread out into smaller branches. In fact, did you know that some schools offer fashion design majors for menswear and womenswear differently? Furthermore, there are sectors for accessory design, shoe design, knitwear design, pattern making and print. Each track will ensure that you know all the materials, styles and manufacturing techniques by heart. Schools also have classes and courses to help you realise your own style.

Farah Anjum Bari, Managing Director of Fashion Institute of Designing Ltd (FID), shares her experience entering the world of fashion design, "I had been designing for several national platforms but I completed a diploma in fashion design because I wanted to establish a fashion school in Dhaka, which were very few in our city at the time. I also wanted to learn about the more technical aspects like draping and pattern making."

Granted, fashion schools are largely known for their fashion design programs, but that's just the tip of the iceberg. The fashion industry is ginormous and you do not necessarily have to stay limited to the design or manufacturing of products to be a part of it. With the diverse range of jobs that are available, as long as you have a passion for fashion, you could mix it with your other interests and still end up with a viable career. Prefer pictures to words? Behold, fashion photography. Like the more corporate side of fashion better? There's fashion business management or mar-



PHOTO: STAR

keting. Add to the list sustainability, fashion activism, and many many more.

Raisa Rafique, 17, is pursuing her associate's degree in Fashion Business Management at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) in New York. Raisa says, "I do not only want to become a fashion designer. I also want to turn my brand, *Raiue*, into the first-ever haute fashion house founded by a Bangladeshi. To do that, I need to have business skills, more specifically fashion business management skills."

### SHOULD YOU APPLY?

Are you passionate about artistic expression and creation? Do you find yourself devoting a significant amount of time on your craft? Do you want to expand your horizons and truly learn this trade? If yes, then that is all the reason you need.

For Raisa, the realisation that she wanted to attend fashion school came slowly, "Fabric, colours and creation felt like home to me, FIT put a roof over that home and showered me with the guidance I need. That's when I realised that this was the place I have been looking for all my life."

Farah Anjum Bari comments, "I believe creativity cannot be taught, that comes from within. But enrolling in a program teaches one the technical aspects such as basic elements of design, history of fashion, fashion trends and forecasting, marketing and merchandising, and how to make a portfolio. Programs also offer you hands-on training and internship opportunities."

"Each student is different," she continues. "Some are impatient – they're not as passionate about the field, and think that fashion designing can be an easy or back up option. But it isn't just about glamour, it takes a lot of study, time, and hard work to do well in this field. When you are a designer, you are constantly being

judged by others. You have to create something that is both functional and marketable. From sample development to marketing, financing, branding, a lot of things come into play. But those who are passionate – some who are so young and have such amazing, innovative ideas, surprise us."

### CAREER PROSPECTS

Fashion schools play an invaluable role in connecting students to internships and jobs. Many schools will offer internships at famous companies, for example, at FIT, students get the opportunity to intern at Ralph Lauren, Guess, JCPenney, Saks and the like. These internships not only grant credit and offer necessary job experience but often end in a full-time job.

Raisa states, "In today's day and age, I would say that it's much easier to get jobs as a fashion graduate compared to even a few years ago. Fashion houses are constantly looking for fresh ideas and faces, people are more open to experimentation and less stern about sticking to traditional natures of clothing, fashion, merchandising and marketing. Fashion designers in particular are even luckier when it comes to job opportunities. Without a retirement age, you can keep designing till you are 90."

Job opportunities in Bangladesh look good too, as Farah Anjum Bari informs, "Most graduates of FID have either joined as senior designers at design studios of garment factories, or working with fashion houses like Aarong. Those who focus on fashion merchandising work at buying houses, and others have started their own brands."

### APPLICATION PROCESS

BGMEA University of Fashion & Technology will require you to send in a primary application before taking an admission test. The test is followed by an interview. And Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology requires you to send in your transcripts for a preliminary round.

Most schools abroad will require you to submit a portfolio for consideration and/or your CV for design majors. Some schools also have supplemental questions, essays or challenges. Admissions officers use these materials to evaluate your creative genius and conclude whether you're truly a fit for their school and your intended major. Remember that your portfolio plays a large role in your acceptance, so make sure you use it to express your personality and style candidly.

*The writer just discovered that, when she's asleep, her cat whispers her most embarrassing moments into her ear hoping to elicit nightmares. Shoot her an email at [n.nusaibaah@gmail.com](mailto:n.nusaibaah@gmail.com) to offer moral support in her time of cry-sis.*

