

The RISING nerd chic

Being called a 'nerd' usually referred to being very uncool, looking and dressing in a quirky sort of way. In recent years, this very idea of nerds has lessened as people, both nerds and non-nerds, have begun to highlight and get creative with the elements of nerd fashion and aesthetic.

It is no more just about comics and superheroes or being studious and introverted, it is about personality and vibrancy. The stereotypical nerd image is quite outdated for the 21st century and so, this subtle art of expression and fashion has become a part of almost everyone's wardrobe.

Let's take a look from the top. When you think of 'nerd', the image in anyone's mind is black oversized glasses, the nerd trademark. One ought to ask themselves, what is so bad about glasses? A pair of thick framed glasses could always act as an accessory to elevate the rest of the outfit. Moreover, it does not necessarily have to be heavy-framed and oversized, it can be anything from sleek with a transparent frame to round spectacles like Harry Potter.



Moreover, lacking eyesight is not a mandatory requirement to add this appealing yet nerdy aesthetic to one's outfit. Keep in mind, glasses and spectacles are not mandatory if you are not comfortable wearing it.

T-shirts and sweaters are also big fashion statements. Although such attire can seem mundane and boring, the nerd-chic entails that you show off your interests and express yourself. Unfortunately, comicons do not happen every week nor can one dress in a Batsuit for work. To express such interests, be it superheroes, villains, video games, sarcastic quotes or philosophical sayings, t-shirt designs are endless, especially now that various shops offer customisation options. From various quotes to superhero symbols to anything quirky, t-shirts and sweaters are empty canvases for subtle self-expression.

One of the more trendy and chic clothing is comic strip prints. These prints are no longer specific to nerds but have emerged in other fashion fandoms as well. It does not necessarily mean wearing a gruesome panel from *Batman: The Killing Joke* but can be anything from playing around with the typography to pop art to Mickey Mouse comic strips to Calvin and Hobbes from the '80s. Such prints go great on almost anything like t-shirts, sweaters, sweatshirts, shrugs, dresses,

shirts and so on.

Sweaters are not for all seasons. However, when the time is right, a printed hoodie, checkered V-neck sweater or a sweater vest paired with glasses and sneakers not only achieve the nerdy look but also gains everyone's favourite, the Pinterest aesthetic.

Choosing shirts and t-shirts in shades complementing skin tone and body shape, matching and attractive blouses or polo shirts with patterned ties, bow ties or jeans, or pleated skirts and blouses with argyle vests, is a versatile way of always keeping the look fresh. Furthermore, the mismatched look is achieved with a harmonious and unique coherence.

One's entire wardrobe and the look itself should not be too trendy but a blend of both chic and non-chic. Usually, this translates into fitted clothes displaying insider nerd jokes coming from the varied cosmos of cult classic movies, graphic novels, comics, books and/or video games etc.

Just as oversized clothing is a major trait of the fashion fandom, so is the mismatched look. Brightly coloured or muted coloured pants are much more eye-catching than the usual skinny jeans. Decorative leggings, printed cargo pants and almost any other patterned bottom-wear is a nerd-chic culture necessity. Pleated or plaid skirts and khakis are classics of the nerdy

style and more so, adds dimension and movement to the entire outfit. Anything outside of the mainstream black leggings and denim jeans, ought to fit the bill.

Footwear can either make or break any outfit. However, one does not need to break a toe. Wearing practical shoes like sandals, loafers, sneakers and Mary Jane's ballerina flats brings the entire fashionable and nerdy look together. If one must wear heels, kitten heels or platforms are the go-to options.

Accessories are all too welcome among nerds. Not only for the sake of the look but also for comfort, practicality and expression. In recent years, suspenders, beanies, clunky watches or necklaces (or both), messenger bags, colourful bow ties etc. have made a comeback. These unique and eye-catching accessories descend originally from nerd-chic.

Lastly and probably the most important part of nerd-chic to keep in mind, is comfort. It is not about squeezing into your jeans from high school which are now two sizes smaller or wearing stilettos, which give you immense back pain and even break a few toes. Whatever clothing makes you feel comfortable and most like yourself, even if your fashion choices make no sense, is exactly that nerd-chic motto.

Nerds of all ages, genders, and others looking to reflect their stylish nerd selves, should consider blending a professional and classy look with a casual one. The nerd image often portrayed in social media and television are rather extreme and more stereotypical than what the image actually is.

Yes, it is about standing out and catching attention, but not because of a bizarre appearance. Fashion and style are all a part of this fandom and we all probably already have something nerdy in our wardrobes which we wear as a natural part of ourselves.

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