



10 YEARS OF TRENDS

Fashions come and go. But which ones do we want to forget forever?

Last week, just as the tiny and overpriced sunglasses I'd ordered finally turned up with the courier, I discovered they were no longer fashionable. I guess that's the way it's always worked. One minute, an accessory will make you look super cool, and the next minute it'll make you look like a relic from a bygone era. I try to make smart purchases: I do plenty of online research whenever I have money to spend, and I visit lots of shops to get the best price and quality. But fashion moves too quickly! However, the good news is that fashions will often repeat themselves. When my parents were teens, they'd wear dungarees and flowers in their hair. In my grandmother's day, it used to be leopard print that showed you were fashion-forward. And then a few years ago, leopard print, denim dungarees and floral hair pieces all made a comeback. No doubt we'll see those tiny sunglasses I regretted buying back on the catwalk some time soon!

Of course, there are some things that we can only hope are well and truly consigned to the past decade. In my opinion, sandals are ugly enough, but combined with white socks? Once, many people might have thought that if you made a fashion faux pas like this, you would have to ensure that no photographic proof remained! However, while to many the word 'ugly' sounds rude, fashion has recently reclaimed the socks-and-sandals look as a hyper-trend. Cheap and humble sneakers and shoes tell the world that you can be yourself and comfort is more important than looking pretty. 'Ugly' is suddenly chic.

As for personal grooming, the online chatter about hair, beards and moustaches was endless. The grey/silver look for young women came and went, as did shaving one side of the head (think Miley Cyrus, Rihanna and Selena Gomez). It was men's hair though, that was the most polarising. Full beard, stubble, goatee, man bun and beard combo – styles would come and go, and be ridiculed and admired in equal measure. I should know. My fashion-conscious older brother was constantly spending money at the barber and coming back with a new look. I never knew what to expect when he walked through the door.

The last ten years also saw people encouraging each other to do weirder and weirder things. The Ice Bucket Challenge kicked it all off – with friends inviting each other to dump ice over their own heads. While this particular challenge was intended to raise money for charity, its popularity prompted other people to come up with their own challenges, most of which were not exactly designed to put an end to world hunger or inequality.

Another trend was the extreme selfie – people standing on cliff edges, tip-toeing towards large carnivores, dangling off bridges, falling into zoo enclosures – it seems that many amateur photographers will keep putting themselves in physical jeopardy in pursuit of the perfect picture. We've also seen the explosion of beautifying filters on social media recently, offering users an instant makeover. While these hugely popular filters may seem like a fun way to try out a glamorous look, studies show that for many people, using them can end up damaging their self-esteem, as they measure their real face against unrealistic and false beauty standards. I can't help but hope that soon, people will stop putting themselves at risk just for the likes, and move on to something altogether healthier for mind, body and soul.

Talking of moving on, isn't it time to admit that most movie franchises are well past their expiry date? My friends and I often used to go to the cinema together to see the latest action movie on the big screen, but there isn't that same excitement any more. Essentially, we've been revisiting those super spies, dinosaurs, light sabres and killer cyborgs forever! Even the most avid fans are realising they're paying for the same old story with slightly different special effects. And while time seems to have moved slowly in the world of action films, dance-wise, there were some pretty interesting and short-lived moves – *Gangnam Style* for instance – and of course, who could

forget The Floss? After a dancer named The Backpack Kid demonstrated the move in 2017, 'flossing' soon went viral – even ending up as a victory dance on *Fortnite*. All these dancers suddenly found themselves in the spotlight and being sought out for interviews – for a brief time at least.

Meanwhile, on social media, astrologers began gaining hundreds of organising suddenly became cool with influencers like Marie Kondo gaining millions of social media followers by showing how to be organised, and you'd hear people talking about how cool it was to fold their jeans in a special way and criticising others for being disorganised: 'You're always losing your house keys – set a pattern for them.' 'She would have a messy room, wouldn't she? She never tidies up!' Experts have given a variety of reasons to explain this phenomenon, noting that Millennials and Gen Zs seem to have bought into it more than any other age group. The consensus is that they're increasingly turning to structure at a time when the world around them can cause concern and anxiety. Although it's not something I find particularly cool, I can sympathise with people looking for a way to cope. Personally, all I need is a plate of avocado toast, but maybe that's no longer fashionable either!