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Controversial "Emo" Fashion

The dark, brooding fashion choices of a grim teen generation

Much like punk music or the Goth subculture which emerged in the early 1980s, the "emo" culture, which some refer to as a cult or a sect, is currently stirring up a heated controversy. The word "emo" - short for "emotional" - encapsulates a trend that's been sweeping over hundreds of thousands of teenagers from around the world. Its distinctive marks are a very specific dress code, listening to a certain type of music and an overall emotional attitude towards life, which some have labeled as "reveling in self-pity". Let's have a closer look at the characteristics of the emo dress code and the details that mark it as particular and distinctive. One essential characteristic of an emo is the jet-black, dramatic hair. In fact, from what has been widely reported in the media and from the information available on the Internet, drama is an inherent part of the emo subculture, as is a sense rebellion and non-conformity. Emo teens straighten their hair and often add a few brightly colored purple highlights for a personal touch. Boys and girls favor the same hairstyle - wearing their black hair in a long fringe, which they then brush to one side of their face. However, the boundaries of drama are pushed further by emos than by most teenage fashion trends. Emo teens favor mainly black clothes - usually their street uniform comprises a pair of black or dark tight jeans, tight T-shirts which often bear the names of rock bands, studded belts, belt buckles, Chuck Taylor All-Stars, skate shoes, or other black shoes (often old and beaten up), as well as thick, black horn-rimmed glasses. Make-up is also important. Emos make liberal use of black eyeliner, irrespective of whether we're talking about boys or girls. Music also plays a major part in defining their collective identity - and they will often accessorize their clothes with a music player that usually blasts tunes from some or all of the emo cult bands - My Chemical Romance, Good Charlotte and Blink 182 to name but a few. It's essential to understand that emos regard themselves as misunderstood, rejected by their peers because of the inability to hide their feelings, and take great pleasure in brooding over their troubles - as a result, emo fashion reflects these attitudes and choices.