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Fashionable Immaturity

by Michael C. Sherrin
EDGE Style Contributor
Monday Feb 28, 2005

Cartoon characters are cool. And showing off your favorite characters should be just as cool. Unfortunately, wearing a Mickey Mouse or Spider-Man shirt can look nerdy or immature. There are solutions. You can wear Bugs and Daffy to the bar at night or to the bookstore on the weekend. There are ways that you can wear your cartoon bearing shirts and still be a fashion hero.

BODY RULES

You do not need huge muscles; the shirt should fit snugly with a nice taper. If the smallest adult size is too large for you, try wearing boy's or young adult size shirts, which also feature more characters. If you have huge pecks, fashion-wise, you can get away with just about anything. Also, if you have huge pecks, my email is MikeCS83@yahoo.com.

DRESSING UP

Sport jackets make the young dignified, the casual mature, and the silly stylish. The sport jacket balances your immature cartoon character with elegance, negating each other. The end result looks cool and smooth.

For matching, work with the color of the shirt instead of the colors in the character. Most shirts work with a black or preferably dark charcoal jacket. With blue shirts, try a gray sport jacket for variation. Black shirts are harder. Gray can work, but the fashion forward might want to try a white jacket, possibly even with some texturing.

ZIP UPS

Also known as "Gay It Up," zip-up hoodies validate your nerdy shirt by transposing it to a gay shirt. Often, one might mistake a nerd for a homosexual, so it is a fine line. Zip-ups allow for more variation and more casualness. Certainly you can wear a sport jacket over your zip-up, but I'll stick with zip-ups alone for now.

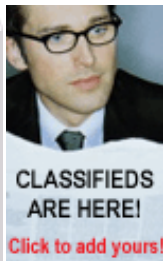
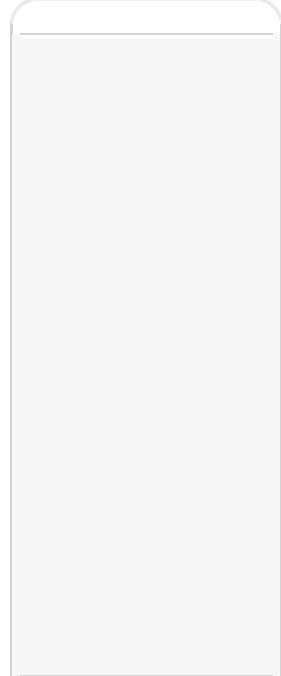
Using the same color contrast as the sport jackets, zip-ups are less expensive and you're more likely to own a white one. Test the height of your zipper for your shirts, depending on the placement of the character. Usually, I will zip to just above my stomach, slightly covering the emblem. I find the affect is lost by keeping the zip-up open.

For a unique example, picture the a Punisher shirt with the white skull emblem on a black shirt. Put on an off-white, light cream zip-up hoddie and zip it just over your stomach. All of sudden, the most macho super-hero is wearing a cardigan. You're fashionable and funny.

EDITING

Funny and dirty shirts work without aids. Cartoon characters do not. So why not make your cartoon characters funny or dirty. Now this is extremely difficult, not for the fashion, but for the writing. With a computer, printer, and iron-on labels, you can edit your cartoon shirts with dialogue and explanations (Note: there are two different kinds of iron-ons - light backgrounds and dark backgrounds. Light background iron-ons are cheaper at around \$10 for 10 sheets). Text is easy by using any word processor. Adding images is difficult if you are not versed in imaging programs.

Good fashion should reflect the individual, but that individual should reflect some good fashion. As fun and original as these outfits can be, they are NOT for any business meeting (unless for you work for a comic book company) or for first dates. Yes you should "be yourself" on a first date, but omitting certain things is just normal. Do not be embarrassed by your nerdiness; just understand the prejudice that exists.



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