

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

around the world

School uniforms are specific outfits and pieces of clothing required by several schools throughout the world. Students from primary school all the way up to high school (and sometimes college) can be required to wear them when attending schools with an enforced dress code. Some people believe uniforms will help students focus on their studies. They hope that by having a dress code, children won't have to worry about owning the latest designer clothes and looking as cool as their classmates. Other people believe that students should be free to express themselves through dress, and that uniforms can be too expensive to purchase. They say that uniforms will not eliminate bullying; children will simply focus on things other than dress.

Uniforms in England and the United States

School uniforms were first introduced in England in the 16th century. They were originally only used for "charity schools," where children from poor families attended. Over the years, other schools, even prestigious ones, started adopting their own school uniforms. Eventually uniforms became a symbol of status — you could tell where someone attended school simply from looking at what they were wearing.

School uniforms didn't make their way to the United States until around 1970. They are nowhere near as widely implemented as in England. In the U.S., the majority of schools that require uniforms are private schools.

Most uniforms consist of a pair of slacks, a blazer, dress shirt, tie, socks, and sometimes a sweater for boys. Girls' usually include a skirt, socks, dress shirt, jacket, sweater, and sometimes a tie as well. There will usually be a summer and winter version for both boys and girls.

Uniforms in Japan

School uniforms are much more common in Japan than in the United States. Many uniforms are considered fashionable and cool-looking. Sometimes, students will choose their high school simply based on how cool the uniform is!

Japanese school uniforms are called, "seifukus," or "制服."

Uniforms have become more popular thanks to appearing in many well known cartoons or anime series, such as *Sailor Moon*. The sailor-style uniform worn by these characters is based on the British Navy's uniform. This a popular style for Japanese girls' uniforms. Sometimes, prestigious schools will even collaborate with high-end fashion designers to create their uniforms.

Do you think school uniforms are a good idea?
Why or why not?

Compare and contrast the differences between
boys' and girls' uniforms.



Japanese elementary school
girls' uniform