

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR TODAY?



Explore

European Paintings

with Fashions from
The Costume Institute

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART





SHOW YOUR STYLE!

Explore costume and fashion in the European Paintings and 19th- and Early 20th-Century galleries. Choose your own fashion looks as you imagine wearing the fantastic outfits the artists painted OR the amazing actual clothes pictured in this guide. Discover what the clothes tell us about the people who wore them and the fashions of their times.

NOW, GO GET DRESSED!

European Paintings • 2nd FLOOR



19th- and Early 20th-Century European Paintings and Sculptures • 2nd FLOOR

CENTRAL PARK

FIFTH AVENUE



KEEP
IN
MIND

Sometimes we have to move works of art or even close galleries to prepare for exhibitions. When in doubt, ask a guard for help!



DID YOU KNOW? The clothing in this guide is in the Museum's Costume Institute collection, which has more than 35,000 costumes and accessories! These costumes are not on view in the galleries. Over time, light and air change the color and weaken the threads of the fabric. To protect the clothing, we can only show them in special displays for a short time.



EDUCATION

www.metmuseum.org

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OLE!

GALLERY
NUMBER
810

WHAT IF?

You are the toreador, the bullfighter in a world-famous bullfight in Spain. Thousands of people are expecting an exciting show. A raging bull is about to charge into the ring towards you. For this thrilling event you wear:

This OR *THAT*



Édouard Manet (French, 1832–1883), *Mademoiselle V... in the Costume of an Espada*, 1862; oil on canvas; H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (29.100.53)

Toreador suit, fourth quarter 19th century; Mexican (probably); silk, metal, glass; Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of the Brooklyn Museum, 2009; Gift of Adele Simpson, 1945 (2009.300.115a–c)



GALLERY
NUMBER
826

IN A BUSTLE

GUESS WHAT?

A bullfighter actually wore this “suit of lights” in a real bullfight! Gold thread and rhinestones sewn onto the silk suit would have made it sparkle in the light. The simpler suit in the painting was a costume worn by the artist’s female friend as she posed for the picture. Notice how she looks straight at you and invites you into the scene with her gesture.

YOUR TURN!

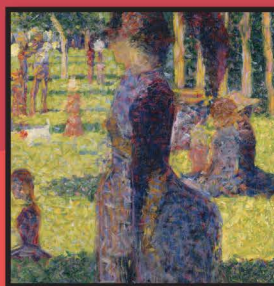
“Met-libs” Fill in the blanks:

Dressed as the toreador, I feel _____ (adjective). In this suit I look like a _____ (noun). As the bull runs towards me I _____ (verb) and then yell out “_____” (exclamation)!

WHAT IF?

It’s Sunday afternoon and you visit a trendy island outside Paris, the most elegant city in the world. You enjoy hours of fun along the river. For this outing your fashionable companion chooses to wear:

This OR *THAT*



GUESS WHAT?

Both outfits include a bustle, a high-tech gadget worn underneath the fabric that gives the dress that bump at the back. At one time, bustles were very much in style. Some bustles could collapse when you wanted to sit down. How many skirts with a bustle can you count in the painting? What other paintings show bustles?



TUTU PRETTY

GALLERY
NUMBER
815

WHAT IF?

You are a finalist in an all-girl dance-a-thon. The hottest band is about to play your favorite tune. To twirl through the evening you choose to wear:

This OR *THAT*



Edgar Degas (French, 1834–1917), *The Dance Class*, 1874; oil on canvas; Bequest of Mrs. Harry Payne Bingham, 1986 (1987.47.1)

Evening dress, about 1955; Norman Norell (American, 1900–1972); silk; Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of the Brooklyn Museum, 2009; Gift of Frances Carpenter, 1965 (2009.300.380)



GUESS WHAT?

Notice the ballerinas' skirts in the painting. Called "tutus," these definitely inspired the designer who created this black evening number. They all feature layers of a netlike fabric called *tulle* [pronounced: tool]. The wide skirts are flouncy and let your legs move. In the painting, how many shades of white and gray can you find on the skirt closest to us?

YOUR TURN!



Strike the pose of one of the dancers in the painting!

YOUR TURN!

From hoodies to Velcro snaps, gadgets are everywhere. Name another fashion gadget we use today and then invent your own right here!



Georges Seurat (French, 1859–1891), *Study for 'A Sunday on La Grande Jatte'*, 1884; oil on canvas; Bequest of Sam A. Lewisohn, 1951 (51.112.6)

Walking dress, about 1885; Charles Frederick Worth (French, 1825–1895); silk, glass; Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of the Brooklyn Museum, 2009; Gift of Mrs. C. M. Andrews, 1951 (2009.300.771a, b)



This is what a bustle looks like underneath a skirt.

WHAT IF?

You're a toddler taking your first steps in a lovely garden with your adoring parents. You're completely happy except for one annoying detail: your protective mother and father insist you wear a hat! You choose:

This OR *THAT*



The famous artist who painted this is Peter Paul Rubens. That's him in the painting with his wife and son.



Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577–1640), *Rubens, His Wife Helena Fourment (1614–1673), and Their Son Frans (1633–1678)*, mid-late 1630s; oil on wood; Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, in honor of Sir John Pope-Hennessy, 1981 (1981.238)

Cap, first quarter 19th century; American; leather, silk, 6 1/2 x 7 in. (16.5 x 17.8 cm); Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of the Brooklyn Museum, 2009; Museum Collection Fund, 1952 (2009.300.1453)

DRESSED UP TO FALL DOWN

GALLERY
NUMBER

628

GUESS WHAT?

Both hats would have protected your head if you fell as you learned to walk. At the time, it was common for young children in wealthy families to wear protective “pudding caps.” Why the funny name? Back then, “pudding” was the word for sausages. The rolls on the caps reminded people of them.

YOUR TURN!

Design your own protective helmet here and give it a funny name.



DRESSED TO IMPRESS

GALLERY
NUMBER
628

WHAT IF?

You are a duke in the court of the most powerful king in Europe. You must appear at the court to show your loyalty to him. To keep your noble position (and your head!) you wear:

This OR *THAT*



Anthony van Dyck (Flemish, 1599–1641), *James Stuart (1612–1655), Duke of Richmond and Lennox*, about 1634–35; oil on canvas; Marquand Collection, Gift of Henry G. Marquand, 1889 (89.15.16)

Court suit, about 1810; French; silk; Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of the Brooklyn Museum, 2009; Designated Purchase Fund, 1983 (2009.300.1001a–c)



GUESS WHAT?

You would be quite acceptable in either of these, all those years ago! Members of the court wore suits made of expensive materials, just for formal appearances. In the painting, see how slivers of white and gray paint make that fancy star shine. Notice the man's footwear. How can you tell these shoes are not made to wear every day?

YOUR TURN!

Sketch a pair of shoes to wear with the purple suit.



FUR REAL

GALLERY
NUMBER
629

WHAT IF?

You are a Hollywood star. As you dash around town followed by photographers and adoring fans, you need to stay warm *and* glamorous. You wear:

GUESS WHAT?

Both costumes use luxurious fur, which feels super soft and keeps you very warm. The fur set is made of ermine. An ermine is like a weasel. It is hard to trap and is only white in the winter. Wearing its fur has long been a status symbol because it is such a rare animal. Look closely at the fur set and find the small ermine faces. The black markings are ermine tails! (Poor little things.)

YOUR TURN!

Find paintings of people wearing clothes that look like they would feel soft to touch.



This OR *THAT*



Sir Thomas Lawrence (British, 1769–1830), *Elizabeth Farren (born about 1759, died 1829), Later Countess of Derby, 1790*; oil on canvas; Bequest of Edward S. Harkness, 1940 (50.135.5)

Accessory set, 1890s, C. G. Gunther's Sons (American, founded 1820); fur, silk; Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Eleanor F. Peck, 1969 (2009.300.478a, b)



RUFFING IT

GALLERY
NUMBER

637

WHAT IF?

You want to stand out in a crowd.
You choose an outfit with:

This

OR

THAT



Rembrandt (Rembrandt van Rijn) (Dutch, 1606–1669), *Portrait of a Woman, probably a member of the Van Beresteyn Family*, 1632; oil on canvas; H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929 (29.100.4)

Techno Couture, fall/winter 2000–2001; Junya Watanabe (Japanese, born 1961); for Comme des Garçons (Japanese, founded 1969); polyester; Purchase, Richard Martin Bequest, 2001 (2001.742a, b)



GUESS WHAT?

Sure, these oversized frilly collars, called “ruffs,” were designed close to 400 years apart, but they still serve the same purpose: they frame your good-looking face!

YOUR TURN!

As you walk through these paintings galleries notice how other artists have framed faces.



YOUR TURN!

Write a thought bubble for the lady in the painting.

FOR A LAUGH

GALLERY
NUMBER
622

WHAT IF?

You are traveling with the wildest comedians, dancers, jugglers and actors. You are telling an entertaining story about a costumed party. You wear:

This

OR

THAT



Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo (Italian, 1727–1804), *A Dance in the Country*, about 1755; oil on canvas; Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, 1980 (1980.67)

Dress, 1765–70; British; silk, metallic; Purchase, Irene Lewisohn Bequest, 1962 (C.162.29.1a, b)

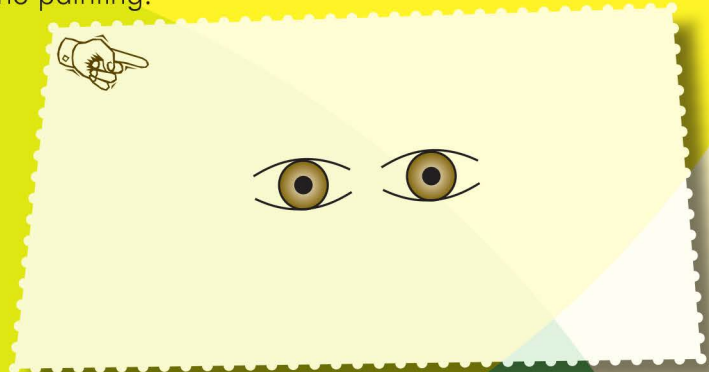


GUESS WHAT?

Any of these dresses would help you steal the show! They have undergarments called panniers (from the French word for basket), or hoops, that extend the width of the skirt but keep the front and back flat. If you were the woman dancing in the middle of this painting your skirt would be several feet wide! How would you make your way through the crowd?

YOUR TURN!

Design a mask to match one of the outfits in the painting.



WHAT IF?

The empress has invited you to a fancy evening party at her palace. You wish to impress and dress in the latest fashions, so you choose to wear:

This

OR

THAT



Baron François Gérard (French, 1770–1837), *Madame Charles Maurice de Talleyrand Périgord (Noël Catherine Veriée, 1761–1835), later Princesse de Bénévent, about 1805*; oil on canvas; Wrightsman Fund, 2002 (2002.31)

Evening dress, 1804–5; French; cotton; Purchase, Gifts in memory of Elizabeth N. Lawrence, 1983 (1983.6.1)



LIVING THE HIGH LIFE

GALLERY
NUMBER
614

GUESS WHAT?

Today these dresses might look like nightgowns, but 200 years ago people would have considered them very chic party wear. Women thought these dresses made them look like Greek and Roman goddesses. Notice the delicate fabric and embroidery on both dresses. In the painting, the fabric drapes softly around the legs and feet. How do you think the artist made it look so see-through?