



LEATHER JACKET

Trend Forecast for Fall 2020

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Trend Forecasting



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About the Author



Lisette Melendez is a Creative Trend Forecaster at the Worth Global Style Network (WGSN) and a freelance image consultant. Born and raised in New York, she was always determined to pave her way into the fashion industry. After graduating the New York City College of Technology with a bachelor's degree in Fashion Marketing, she became an assistant for celebrity fashion designer Christian Siriano. After working with Siriano for two years and gaining first-hand experience in trend forecasting, textiles, and product development, she obtained her current

forecasting position at the WGSN office in New York.

She believes that fashion is more than just something you throw on and strives to inspire others to feel confident in their own skin. With extensive knowledge of color, fabrics, prints and her attention to detail, Lisette is able to provide the most accurate forecasting results to help guide her clients to deliver the right products at the right time.



To the Reader

With the pendulum swing in full effect, there is no doubt that fashion is bound to repeat itself. In this forecasting study, we will be focusing on leather jackets and its prospective modifications for the year 2020. The leather jacket has been around since the 1920's but wasn't popularized until celebrities were seen wearing them in films and television (Medine, 2016). With fast fashion



causing the whole production process to speed up, it is important for fashion forecasters to have the ability to accurately identify trends one to two years in advance. In order to determine what the future of the classic leather jacket will be, one must familiarize themselves with previous trends along with where the industry is going by scanning both the market and environment. Will the 90's grunge trend be making a return? Do movies such as *The Matrix* and *Grease* have an effect on what silhouettes are going to be coming out for the next couple of seasons? In this forecast we will be covering everything from general market trends for 2020, the color palette for Fall, fabrics, prints, textiles, and silhouettes.



Consumer Profile



The beauty of the leather jacket comes with the fact that it can be paired with so many different things. However, the ideal consumer for these jackets are both men and women part of the millennials group. With their interest in always being one of the first of their social group to try things out, they are also considered to be innovators. Innovators are always taking in information, willing to experiment, future oriented, skeptical about advertising, have a wide variety of interests, and highly receptive to new ideas and technologies (VALS Types, 2018). These are people who are confident and desire to be comfortable without having to sacrifice their personal style. The ideal consumer lives in a busy city such as New York and is always on the go. They want something they can wear from day to night without having to change. These consumers are well educated, college graduates. They fall into the middle and upper classes and are willing to spend more a bit more money on items that are guaranteed to last them a long time. They're also well informed about sustainability and no longer care for the finest Italian leathers. Instead, they are in the market for quality faux leather alternatives.



History of the Leather Jacket

Believe it or not, the first leather jackets were not worn or made specifically for motorcycles. In fact, the iconic leather bomber jacket was originally worn by pilots during World War I (From Functional to Fashionable, 2016). They weren't worn as a trend, but instead were used to add a protective layer to their uniforms. It wasn't until the military started to use motorcycles as their primary mode of transportation that the leather jacket started to be associated with bikers. In 1918, Harley-Davidson began to rise and provided half of the motorcycles for the U.S. army (From Functional to Fashionable, 2016). These jackets were also used through World War II and managed to remain relevant throughout the decades to come.

Hollywood has also played a huge role in the popularity of the leather jacket. Actor Marlon Brando played a member of a biker gang in the 1953 film *The Wild One*. Following this was the film *Rebel Without a Cause* (Medine, 2016). It was at this moment where leather jackets were starting to be considered a symbol of rebellion. The late 70's film *Grease* is a great example of this. Aside from the protagonist Danny and his crew wearing the classic leather jacket, the leather jacket was also shown in Sandy's iconic post-makeover scene paired with an off-shoulder top and sassy leather pants. This idea was further enforced in the 80's by music icons such as Joan Jett and Madonna (Medine, 2016). MTV also debuted their music channel during the 80's which allowed people at home to see what these celebrities were wearing in real time. Fast forward to the 90's, the grunge era really started taking off. The leather jacket was worn a lot by rock stars and made a huge wave in street style as well. Today, there are so many variations on the leather jacket that it's kind of hard to keep track of them all. From aviator jackets, to lengthy trench jackets, and of course the motorcycle jacket, there is no doubt the leather jacket is here to stay.



Color Palette for 2020



Over the past couple of years within the fashion industry, it seems as if the gender barrier is slowly starting to fade away. Designers are beginning to cater to both genders by not only offering separate male and female collections, but also unisex collections. With an item as versatile as the classic leather jacket, this is definitely a smart move on the designer's behalf. In order to make a unisex collection work, the color palette has to be chosen wisely. Not everyone is going to want to wear the boldest hues, but it is still necessary to offer a decent range of them. That being said, you can expect a lot of neutrals with subtle pops of color in Fall 2020. Leather jackets are typically dyed black or different shades of brown; however, things are taking a bit of a turn. This season warm ruby reds, midnight blues, and creamy beiges are all expected to make an appearance. With the sun going down earlier during colder weather, these colors allow for the perfect transition between day and night looks.



Prediction for Fall 2020

The preferences and lifestyles of consumers change about twice as fast as the seasons do. Being tech savvy, along with the help of social media, consumers are able to see what styles and trends are happening all around the world. Consumers want their products to be available in a timely manner at an affordable price. While some colors will remain prominent throughout the years, 2020 is the year of experimentation. With an item as popular and timeless as the leather jacket, there is no doubt that it is going to sell to the masses. However, it is important to constantly update the classic leather jacket to have it appear fresh and capture the consumer's eye. After all, most people do not want to wear the same jacket as everyone else – it's all about variation!

For Fall 2020, you can expect to see a variety of lengths from short waist jackets to knee and ankle length options. With the heightened awareness of animal welfare and other ethical practices in the fashion industry, we can say goodbye to the use of real leather in 2020. To cater to all religions and lifestyles, animal hide alternatives such as PU faux leather (also known as pleather) and PVC are going to be taking over. Thanks to technological advancements in the textile industry, these faux leather options reflect the appearance of real leather. Since these options are synthetic, they are easier to cut and dye than real leather, ultimately giving the designer more room to play with colors that will appeal to their consumers (Blesius, 2014). A combination of basic fitted jackets and long trench styled jackets allow for silhouettes that are suitable for both men and women, complementing many different body types.



Leather Jacket Overview

Despite the leather jacket predominately being worn by men, it has become a staple in everyone's wardrobe. Depending on the color, length, and silhouette, a leather jacket has the ability to dress an outfit up or down and can be paired with just about anything. In Fall 2020, the classic waist length leather jacket is definitely going to reappear. Drawing inspiration from *The Matrix*, there are going to be a lot of knee and floor length leather jackets being made as well. These longer jackets not only provide additional warmth for the entire body but are also versatile enough to be worn by men or women. In attempt to break the gender barrier in fashion, clothes are expected to have an oversized, yet structured fit.

The leather jacket's classic aesthetic featuring its thick texture, buttoned lapels, and chunky zippers is not going anywhere. However, as everything else in fashion, we can expect to see some innovative updates to the classic leather jacket silhouette. Since synthetic fabrics are able to handle dye very well, you can expect to see these faux leather jackets in a wide assortment of hues. Pantone predicts that colors such as Potter's Clay, Blue Nights, Crème Brulee, and Black Onyx are going to be the popular color choices among outerwear. Mixing fabrics to create fresh concepts of a traditional clothing item is one of the easiest ways to update any item. Although mixing fabrics has been done for years, you can expect it to be amplified in the years to come. The year 2020 is all about consumers taking risks and embracing their identity. Aside from the use of vegan leather such as PU and PVC, materials such as faux fur, polyester, cotton, mesh, and silk are all going to be heavily used in Fall 2020. That being said, designers are encouraged to use these fabrics in unique ways to create jackets that are trendy and fresh, catering to their general target market consisting of millennials.



The top three trends expected to emerge in 2020 include the:

i. Motorcycle Trend

The motorcycle jacket (also known as the “biker” jacket) has been one of the most consistent leather jacket silhouettes throughout the years. Originally being considered a symbol of rebellion, the motorcycle jacket has evolved into a timeless piece. The differences between shopping at a vintage store for a motorcycle jacket and shopping for a brand new one from your favorite retailer or designer are very slim. In a way, it is safe to say that jackets designed decades ago were ahead of their time. Today, people can pull a motorcycle jacket from their parent’s closet and be able to throw it on with anything that is currently trending without aging themselves.

In order to update this motorcycle trend, the devil is in the details. In the first sketch seen on page 12, you have a classic zip-up motorcycle jacket made of PU leather and a poly-cotton lining. The sides of the jacket are where all of the fun is. The jacket has a mesh overlay and two leather straps on each side which adds dimension to the piece. Instead of sewing striped panels onto the jacket, the faux leather and mesh combination gives off the same look with a modern twist. While this update is fairly subtle, the illusion of an



Zayn for Guiseppe Zanotti. Image via InStyle.

extra layer is reminiscent of the 90’s grunge era. Back in the 90’s there was a carefree movement among the youth consisting of layers of mixed prints and fabrics. Even though looks from the



90's can be easily replicated today, this modern update of the motorcycle jacket allows the consumer to purchase a garment that emulates a similar look without the hassle of actually having to wear multiple layers.

ii. Aviator Trend

With the first leather jackets ever made being worn by pilots, it's only right to pay homage to the era that started it all. Back in the 1920's, the aviator jacket was known as a



Marlon Brando. Image via Jet set Sewing.

“flight” jacket. The aviator jacket has had a countless number of updates since then, making it somewhat unrecognizable compared to the ones we see in stores today. This of course leads back to the fact that the original aviator jackets were worn during World War I and World War II as an added layer of protection. Today, most consumers just purchase these aviator jackets strictly because of its appearance rather than its use.

The sketch on page 13 shows a modern PU aviator jacket with faux fur lining along the collar and cuffs. The original aviator went from horsehide leather with silk lining to goatskin leather with cotton lining for more flexibility and enough durability to withstand an open-air cockpit (Muzquiz, 2017). On the shoulders it has a quilted stitch adding just the right amount of pizzazz without the garment becoming too distracting. While this faux fur and faux leather aviator jacket might not be optimized for war, it is bound to keep the consumers feeling both warm and stylish.



iii. Trench Coat Trend

Long leather jackets are on the rise for Fall/Winter 2020. While leather in general can be fairly warm, a typical waist length jacket might prevent consumers from buying them during colder seasons. Keeping in mind that not everyone is a fan of wearing multiple layers under their outerwear, creating a jacket that adds a warm protective layer for the entire body is a must. The length of a trench coat is perfect for this kind of consumer. With an adjustable waist belt and straight silhouette, the double-breasted leather trench shown in sketch three is great for men and women who are looking to keep warm without having to sacrifice comfort or fashion. Lined with a poly-cotton blend, the jacket is both lightweight and breathable (Hassan, 2017). While an authentic leather jacket knee length or longer might cost an arm and a leg, the faux leather alternative allows them to be a lot more affordable, reaching a greater audience.

This trend was recently seen on the runway by designer Marc Jacobs. In his Fall 2018 collection, one of his models wore a full-length black patent leather trench. The piece had a funnel neck-line, exaggerated shoulders and puffer styled sleeves tucked into black leather gloves, adding a very luxurious appearance to it. The fact that the model's face was fully covered further expands on the concept of unisex clothing becoming the new norm. Back in 2017, popstar Ariana Grande wore a very similar patent leather trench during her "Dangerous Woman" tour worn off the shoulder with a full skirt for additional drama (Kirkpatrick, 2017). Although Grande's look was custom made, it is a great example of pop culture having an influence on fashion.



AG Costume Design. Image via People.



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