

VOLUME #4



98things

Gen-Z & Beauty

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, whatever that means. To Gen-Z, beauty is in the eye of a lot of things like TikTok, TikTok, and did we mention TikTok? With huge spending power, Gen Z consumers have been named the biggest cohort of beauty spenders with female Gen-Zs now spending \$368 annually on beauty, up 18% year on year according to a recent report by WGSN.





1. Sustainability

Gen-Z cares a shit ton - that's no secret. When it comes to where they spend their money, they care less about the products and services that a brand offers and more about what the brand truly stands for. The beauty industry is no exception: according to Nielsen's global survey from 2018, 80% of Gen-Z feel strongly that companies should help the environment - this means cruelty-free, sustainable, not tested on animals, sulfate free, paraben free, and all natural. Even when beating their faces, Gen-Z cares about things like Climate Change... and that's pretty damn cool.



2. Skintellectuals

Skin is in! Following the trend of all-natural beauty, Gen-Zs gravitate towards a minimalist, stripped down look. As cosmetic sales slow and skincare sales blossom, Skintellectuals are the latest Gen-Z market. Gen-Z is the most empowered generation to date due to their ability to self-educate; they are just a few clicks away from tutorials, information, and evidence at their fingertips 24/7. It's no surprise that Gen-Zs use this access to knowledge and apply it to their own self-care routines, bringing forth new consumer niches like Skintellectuals: consumers that are both interested and educated in the ingredients and science behind their skincare products. Gen-Z doesn't just dab a random cream under their eyes - they want to know everything about the cream, what it's made of, and how it works.

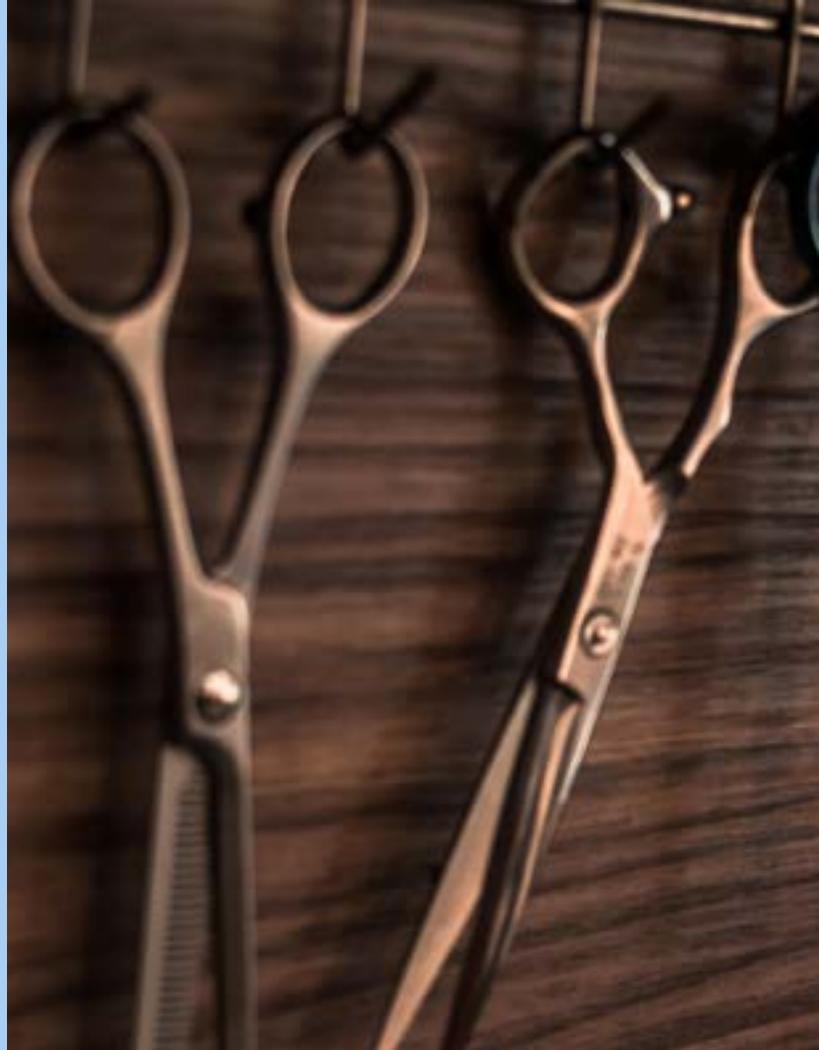


4. DIY Haircuts

Another TikTok trend sweeping the beauty industry is something that culture used to equate to a full-on mental breakdown - cutting our own hair. Yes, you heard that right. People are snipping their ponytails in half to create shaggy layers right in their own homes and posting their results on TikTok. Perhaps the lack of access to hair salons during COVID-19 has inspired the DIY enthusiast Gen-Zs, who decided to take matters into their own hands - scissors - to give themselves a new look.

3. GUA SHA

Not surprisingly, a lot of trends that grow in the beauty industry come from Gen-Z's Holy Grail, TikTok. TikTok drives a lot of beauty trends as people show off new products, tutorials, and information about caring for yourself - and Gen-Z listens! One of these trends that has been booming recently is Gua Sha. Gua Sha tools can include flat rose quartz, jade stone, spoons, and coins that are to pull along skin and release tension, boost circulation, and encourage lymphatic drainage. While Gua Sha is new to some Gen-Zs, it's actually been around for ages, as a time-tested treatment in traditional Chinese medicine. Unsurprisingly, many beauty companies are hopping on this trend and using it poorly, pawning the product off as their own. We're already predicting it: these brands will soon be "canceled" by Gen-Z for being culturally insensitive.





5. The Middle Part

Side part or middle part, which do you prefer? If you chose a side part, we're sorry to say that Gen-Z does not claim you. Gen-Zs are always looking for ways to let their elders know that their millennial is showing (OK, Boomer), and apparently the way we part our hair is no exception. So maybe next time you're doing your hair, think to yourself - do I want to give off outdated Millennial or trendy Gen-Z?

6. Self Confidence?

As the generation with the most access to information and education, they must be confident about themselves and their abilities, right? Wrong. A survey in 2017 by Universum showed that 33% of Gen-Z said they lacked the confidence to lead. This isn't too surprising considering a lot of the news we have access to is filled with negative stories about the state of the world, leading to an overwhelming sense of hopelessness and pessimism. This, coupled with a plethora of airbrushed, Facetuned accounts, causes us to feel pretty self-conscious and low. Hopefully, with new social media features like Instagram removing likes, this confidence deficit will dissolve.



7. Diversity & Inclusivity

When it comes to beauty, Gen-Z holds beauty brands to the same standards of diversity and inclusivity as they would for any other brand. They want brands to be for the people, not for the people's wallets. Diversity has become increasingly important, as those who are marginalized or not represented in society want to see more brands including individuals who look like them. For example, more and more makeup brands have become cognizant of skin tones and some hair products are expanding to more textures and pigmentations. For those who are different, the future is bright as brands begin to include more inclusive and diverse products and campaigns.

8. TikTok = ToxicTok

While TikTok has been bringing in many helpful and interesting new beauty trends, along with these cool trends comes problematic and shameful trends: "Thirst Traps," emphasizing side profiles, bags under eyes, silhouettes, straight teeth, and even how the stomach and hips look while walking. By focusing on features that many people differ on and can't control, these trends create new standards for many different features that create new insecurities for viewers.



9. Celeb Beauty Brands

Move over, Kylie lip kits, there are new celebrity makeup brands in town. These brands have become increasingly popular in the beauty landscape for Gen-Z consumers, and many different celebrities - from singers to TikTokers want a slice of the cake. Some of these include Addison Rae's ITEM Beauty makeup brand, Millie Bobby Brown's florence by mills, Rihanna's Fenty Beauty, Halsey's about-face, and Hayley Williams's Gooddyeyoung hair dye.



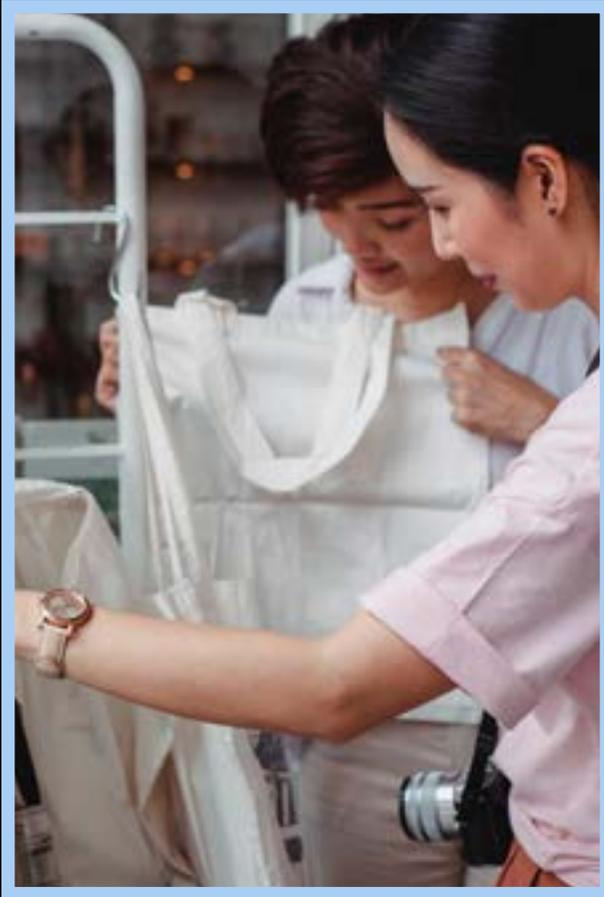
10. Men's Beauty

Don't think we'd forget about the dudes! The lines between masculinity and femininity are blurring, and Gen-Z males are happy to participate in new trends in this industry. One of these trends is the normalization of "manscaping" aka men shaving their bodies more - according to a survey of 500 men by First and First, men aged 18-24 have been reportedly manscaping a lot more! Additionally, ARod's new beauty line, including a blur stick concealer, has led to a rise of male makeup products.

Future of Fashion

Fashion, in its never ending turbulence, has entered a new era beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. With trends and cycles turning over quicker than ever before, new mediums to engage consumers, and questions that young people are asking about their clothes, the future of fashion will look drastically different from the fashion industry of yesterday.





11. Sustainability

Young people face an existential crisis that older generations have not had to face directly: Global warming and the ever increasing impact of human activity on our planet. So, the choices that Gen-Z and young people make are ever-influenced by their consideration of these circumstances.

So, what does this mean for the future of fashion and the consumer habits of young people? Young people are much more likely to be influenced by the factor of sustainability when making fashion purchases. When asked whether or not sustainability influenced their fashion purchases, an overwhelming 79% of Gen-Zers in our Koi Pond responded “yes”. Among the reasons given were: the feeling that a purchase was made ethically, better quality products, and the higher levels of accountability for both the consumer and the manufacturer associated with sustainable fashion.



12. Activism x Fashion

Gen-Z is a highly active, engaged, and socially conscious generation who uses fashion as a medium to express themselves and opinions about social movements. According to McKinsey Consulting, 9 out of 10 Gen-Zers think that companies have an obligation to address social issues. With this obligation placed on them by young people, companies have responded by showing support (genuine or not) of popular social movements such as the BLM and MeToo movements. With this growing responsibility to address social movements, the future of fashion is looking increasingly social movement oriented. However, not all companies have handled this change gracefully. For example, Old Navy faced criticism back in June 2021 for how it handled a Juneteenth influencer campaign. Whatever the case, the future of fashion is clearly headed in the direction of companies taking on more responsibility for social movements and activism.



14. Patagonia

Changing Brand Values

Patagonia recently revised their mission statement to “We’re in business to save our home planet.” A change in mission statement leads to a change in company actions. One recent change that the company recently announced, is they will no longer be partnering with financial firms to create the iconic co-branded vests and fleece jackets. This news comes as a disappointment to many of the “finance bros”. For many years the Patagonia vest has served as a staple in the “finance bro” outfit of khakis, button downs, and, of course - the branded Patagonia vest. It seems the bankers of New York and San Francisco will need to find a new uniform.

13. Nike

Changing Brand Values

As the fashion industry grows, there is a greater calling for companies to put action behind their words and stand for the values that they claim to have. A company that exemplifies this truth is Nike. Not only does Nike dedicate its effort and money towards advocating for player equality, especially in Black communities and grassroots organizations, it also focuses on ensuring equal pay for all genders in their internal corporate structure. In addition, Nike is committed to improving work environments abroad, as well as creating more sustainable clothing. As the most powerful consumer base, Gen-Zs continue to hold brands to high standards, thus pushing corporate powerhouses like Nike to put effort into the values they preach. Beyond these monetary efforts, Nike excels on all social platforms. The company was extremely involved during the recent Black Lives Matter movement and continues to highlight a variety of individuals on their platforms - not just the classic “athletes.” As time goes on, we will continue to see a greater need for brands to hold themselves accountable, take social justice action, and take strides towards sustainability.





15. Drop Shipping

Fast Fashion

Apps like Depop, Poshmark, and many others are intended to be a space for users to sell used clothing or original creations but lately, these apps have been filled with users trying to profit through dropshipping. Dropshipping is when an individual finds trendy items for cheap and resells the items for a much higher price. Many purchasers are unaware of the quality, as the sellers tend to hide where they source the products from.

The dropshipping industry is typically fueled by high profits, thus items are generally sourced from cheap, fast fashion websites. This includes sites such as, DHGate, Aliexpress, and many more, which are extremely harmful to the environment and workforce. Fast fashion is responsible for 8% of all carbon emissions and 20% of water waste. Although Depop has made some efforts to try and prevent dropshipping, this practice continues to prevail on the app.

16. Fast-Paced Trends

Fast Fashion

Whether we like it or not, the fast fashion industry is stronger than ever and is here to stay. As much as young people tout their love for sustainable fashion, the truth of the matter is that Gen-Z doesn't know a world without fast fashion.

The rise in fast fashion enables the increased turnover of trends in American fashion, and young people are gobbling it up. From 2000-2014, the cost of clothes actually dropped in spite of inflation and economic growth. These cheap prices, not to mention cheap quality, mean that trends are more accessible than ever, which ultimately makes that trend less trendy. A vicious cycle of fast fashion and quickly changing trends will prove to be the future of fashion.



17. Supply & Resources

The global pandemic has affected every industry you can think of - including fashion. The lack of supply and resources has left companies struggling to make ends meet. Supply chains from country to country have been disrupted as companies are no longer able to pay for orders placed pre-pandemic, or the order is too big that factories are unable to fulfill these orders.

In the fashion realm, many companies placed orders and are now refusing to pay their suppliers after factories have already fulfilled their upfront costs for materials and labor. Because of this, workers in factories abroad are being laid off with little to no compensation and all the clothes produced are being discarded. These large clothing companies are taking zero responsibility for their actions resulting in hardship for many workers abroad. The lack of empathy for human beings and disregard for the environment is creating a demand for the fashion companies to be held accountable for their actions and for the industry to take action towards sustainability and fair worker treatment.

18. International Influence

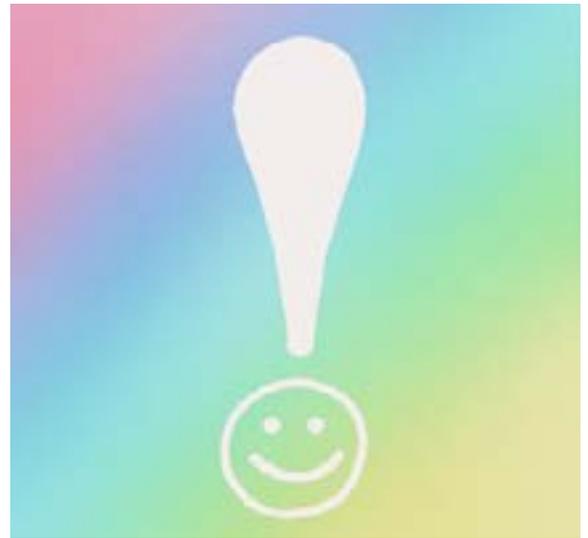


Gen-Z is the most global generation yet, as technology allows us to meet and communicate with people and trends from all over the world. As such, Gen-Z's fashion in America has been heavily influenced by fashion trends from all over the world. Most notably and recently, East Asian fashion, and more specifically East Asian streetwear, has come to stay in American Gen-Z fashion trends. Brands such as Uniqlo, Muji, and Forever21 have established themselves as major players in the American market. Collaborations with Asian artists such as Takashi Murakami have been Gen-Z hits, as Asian fashion trends continue to dominate American fashion.

So what does this mean for the future of fashion? Look out for new trends and ideas coming from all around the world. Maybe the next big wave in American fashion will come from Europe, Africa, or Latin America. We might not know where fashion is headed, but we do know that the future of fashion is a global affair as Gen-Zers continue to draw inspiration from around the world.

Gen-Z Fashion

19. thisis yoursign.org



Thisisyoursign.org is a successful clothing company with eye-catching hoodie designs seen all over Pinterest, TikTok, and Instagram. Rya Partible impulsively started her business over quarantine, and now boasts over 17.1k followers on Instagram and 10.8k on TikTok. We conducted an interview with founder Rya Partible:

What are your brand values that you want to show your consumer?
“My brand values are mental health and suicide prevention. While I also value positivity, I think sometimes surrounding a brand around positivity can promote toxicity - I think of the phrase “Just smile”, which is so often told to people dealing with issues that cannot be erased by putting on a mask of happiness. I believe in feeling your feelings and then being able to work through them internally/in therapy/with close friends and family, especially when you’re struggling.”

Not only does Thisisyoursign.org value mental health and suicide prevention, but the company also takes action to address this issue. The business’ Instagram page is filled with graphics addressing mental health through motivational quotes, encouraging forgiveness, and emphasizing love. The company ensures that 15% of all profit goes towards the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Business Highlight

20. Philly Gurl Thrift



Philly Gurl Thrift is the online shop owned by a fellow Gen-Z, Mary Kate Durnan, a 22 year old recent college graduate based in Philly, Pennsylvania. Mary Kate thrifts and refurbishes vintage/used clothing and accessories to offer on her website and Depop shop, which has over 12,000 followers!

What is a Gen-Z run business all about? What values do you want to tell/show to your consumers?

Born from many years of experience hunting down the perfect vintage pieces for my Halloween costumes, PHLGurl is for those who feel that every ootd is a chance to give something old a new life. Shop our store for authentic vintage, handmade accessories and more, all while limiting your carbon footprint. Now what's better than that?

Our promise: transparency and ethical business practices. Always.

Gen-Z & Rest

■ I sleep, real shit?





21. Watching in Bed

About half of Gen-Z watches TV, movies, or videos before bed, but not as much as Boomers or Gen-X. Almost 2/3s of Boomers and Gen-X respondents reported watching TV or videos right before bed.



22. One More Round

Gaming is another popular activity for nighttime entertainment. According to YPulse, tabletop board games rank highly as a fun activity that Gen-Zs like to do on a typical night.



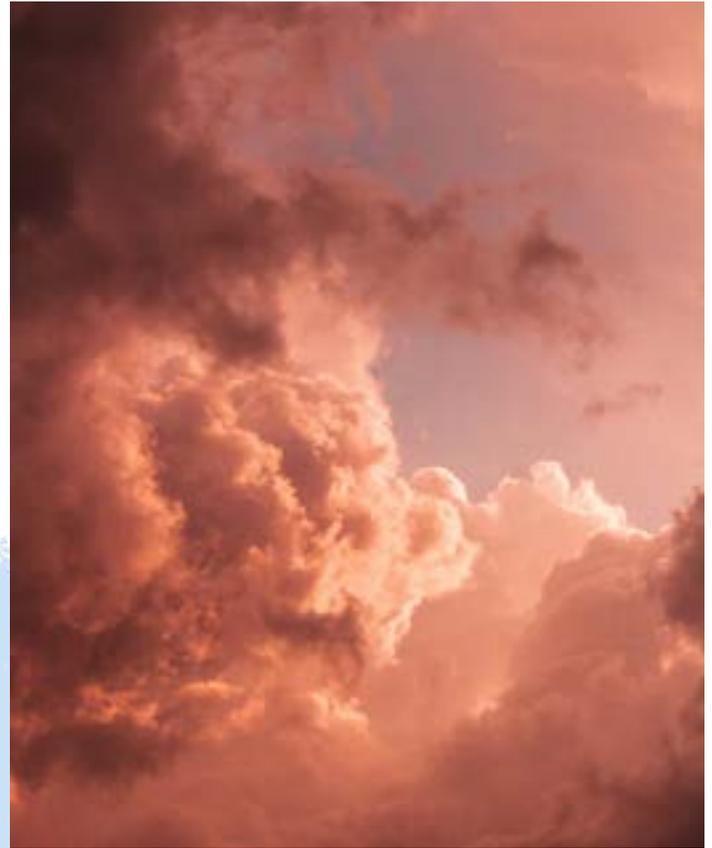
24. Up Later

Postpandemic, Gen-Z's sleep schedules are only getting worse. 64% of Gen-Z reports that they are sleeping later than before the pandemic. Simultaneously, 82% of Gen-Z reports that they had a less stable sleep schedule throughout the pandemic compared to before. Expect to see a more stressed, sleepier generation as things eventually return to normal.

23. Sleep- less

Let's face it, Gen-Zs are sleep deprived. Societal pressures such as school, bullying, and phone use have all contributed to the generation's sleep debt. This has led to a rise in mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression, as well as a rise in substance abuse. The long term effects of sleep deprivation can also lead to severe physical health problems, like heart disease and diabetes.





25. ASMR & Sleep Media

ASMR has become a staple for Gen-Zs as a sleep aid and a way to relax. The pleasant yet unobtrusive sounds create a white-noise environment that relieves anxiety and soothes listeners. Across YouTube, Gen-Zs have been curating playlists filled with ASMR videos, or even creating their own content, like soap cutting, chewing gum, and other activities to induce that relaxed feeling.

26. Shifting

Ever dreamed of visiting your favorite fantasy world? Gen-Zs on TikTok have been doing just that. Shifting is like lucid dreaming, sharing much of the same techniques, like breathing and visualization. However, it also includes activities like writing out scripts in preparation for the shift. While there is a bit of a debate regarding whether shifting is lucid dreaming, self-hypnosis, or something entirely different, the motivations for Gen-Z exploring and practicing shifting remain the same. Escapism is cited as the number one reason for shifting, allowing Gen-Zs to live in a world free from the bleakness of reality.



27. Napping

As Gen-Z enters the workforce, a new workplace benefit may emerge: nap times. Allowing employees time and space to nap is shown to increase productivity and happiness. For a generation already disrupting “normal” schedules, napping may become a part of our daily lives. Plus, we could always use the extra rest.



28. Always On

As the digitally-native generation, Gen-Z has learned the hard way what it means to be perpetually online, motivating the generation to be more prepared to deal with tech fatigue compared to their Millennial counterparts. As a result, Gen-Zs are less likely than their older generation to be reachable at all times, and are more in line with, ironically, the baby boomers.



29. Disconnecting

In order to foster a healthier relationship with technology, Gen-Zs are making the effort to shut off their screens and step away from the devices that are sapping their attention. Instead, they are doing other activities; drawing, reading books, hiking, shopping; basically anything that avoids being online or staring at a screen. 58% of Gen-Z reports that they visit stores to disconnect themselves from being online constantly. Could brick-and-mortar stores make a comeback?



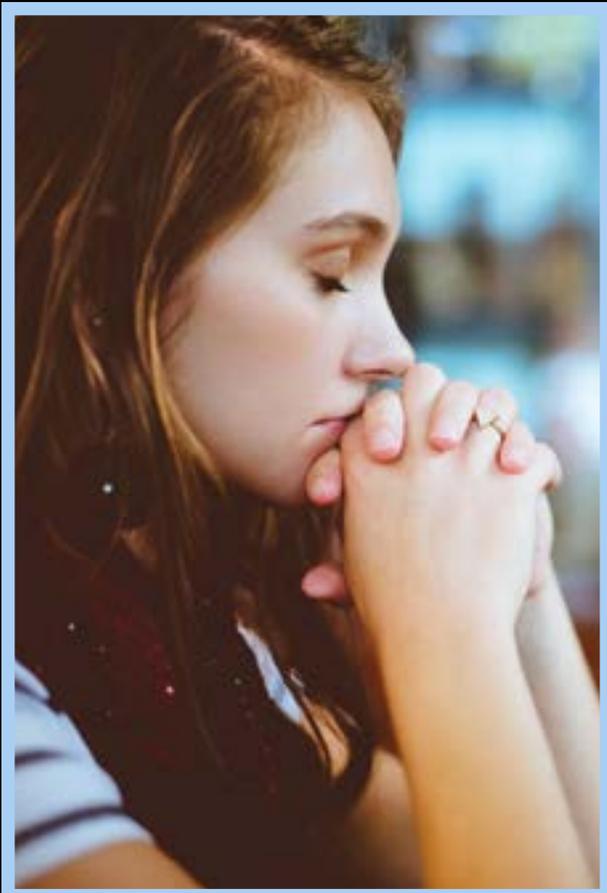
30. Sleeping Beauty

As a result of the increased importance of self-care, Gen-Zs have a greater interest in taking care of their skin. Out of all generations, Gen-Z spends the most on skincare products, and it shows online. Skincare routines and product recommendations are common, especially among celebrities and influencers. These routines are often split between day and nighttime, with the most hardcore skincare fans having overnight routines.

Spirituality

When you think of spirituality and religion, what tends to come to mind? Traditional religion, practices, ceremonies, churches, and more...but for Gen-Z, spirituality has taken on a new meaning. No longer is there one solid path that many are following; they have begun to shape their religious experiences to fit their own beliefs and needs. Don't believe us? Gen-Z is an adaptable generation, and their flexibility and open mindedness is reflected even in their spiritual beliefs... #OnGod





31. Gen-Zs are getting spiritual – but not in the way you think.

The Pew Research Center reports that those under 30 are the least likely to attend virtual worship. According to Pew, 43% of parents said religion is “very important” in their lives, whereas only 24% of teenagers said so. When they were asked about daily prayer, 27% of teenagers reported doing so in comparison to 48% of parents. But are we asking the correct questions to Gen-Zs? Our generation is eager for spiritual engagement, but the form that this spirituality takes is challenging conventional norms.



32. Spirituality + Social Justice

8 out of 10 teenagers report that they believe “in God or a universal spirit” and 77% say that they feel a “strong sense of gratitude” more than once a month. When we discuss spirituality, we need to remove the former constraints of churches, rosaries, and prayer -- and instead look for other ways that Gen-Zs are quenching their moral and spiritual thirst. One of the ways Gen-Zs do this is by mobilizing behind causes they believe in, such as Black Lives Matter, environmentalism, and more. Participating in these social movements is similar to a spiritual experience, in that Gen-Zs are collaborating within a community larger than themselves and standing up for what they believe in.



34. Is Spirituality Lacking Empathy?

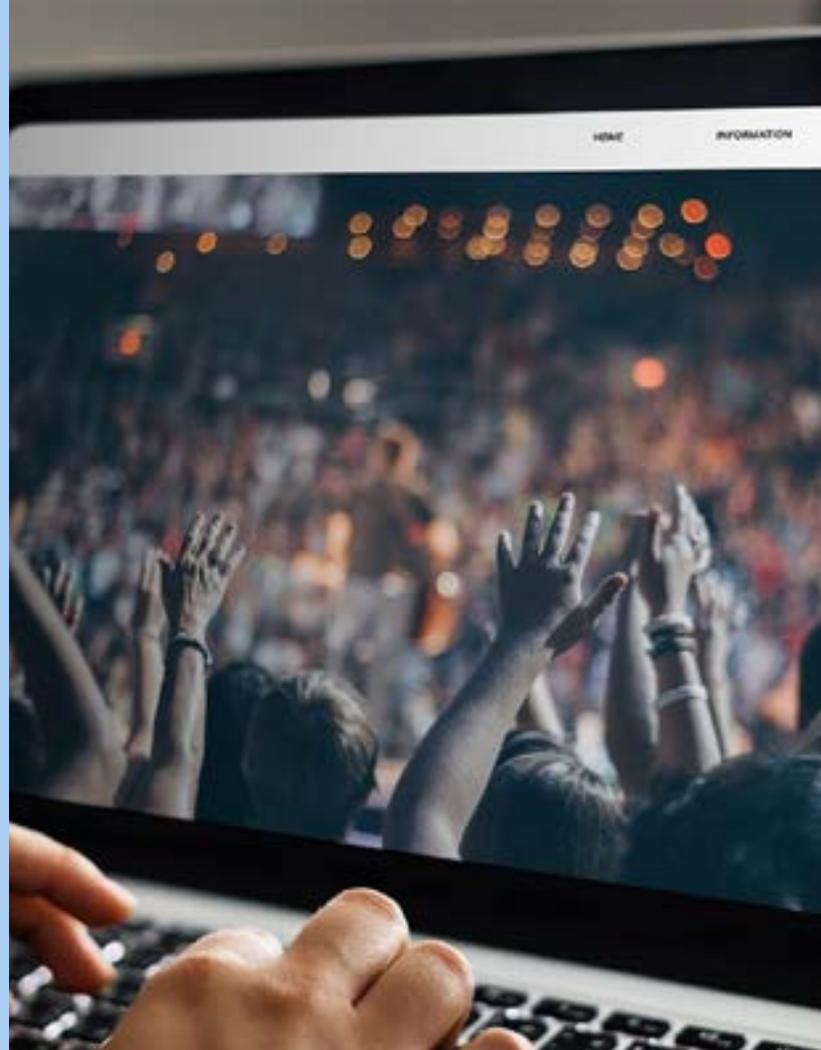
The Springtime Research Institute shares that while 44% of Gen-Zs tuned into virtual religious or spiritual services in the past year, only a small minority found hope or joy in them. Moreover, only 10% of Gen-Zs have had a spiritual leader of some sort reach out to them during the pandemic. This is highly alarming for leaders of institutions - but our advice is to harp on the Gen-Z hyperindividualism when trying to target our generation. In contrast to older generations, who relied on an institution or authority figure to understand the world, Gen-Z spirituality focuses more on interpersonal connections. We want to be preached to as individuals, not a generational slice.

33. Digitally Spiritual

How does Sol attract Gen-Z consumers? Why is a non-dogmatic approach important for younger consumers?

“Religion looks very different in 2021 than it did 100 years ago, because the Gen-Z experience has significantly shifted with the introduction of technology. Where organized religion fails to keep up with our digitally-connected world, Sol welcomes curious brains to build a safe community for personal growth. As a spiritual video content platform, Sol reaches audiences where they are, effectively and effortlessly. This modern twist on spirituality attracts more Gen-Zs to the brand because they feel understood, rather than talked down to or having to conform to rules and standards. By making spirituality a truly accessible experience for every member of the audience, Sol welcomes everyone.”

-- Mona Bijoor (Founder of Sol)





35. #witchtok, tarot, crystals, and more

The rise of TikTok spirituality has boomed over the COVID-19 pandemic, with #witchtok and #tarot as constant trending topics on the site. This is probably the clearest sign that Gen-Zs are straying away from organized religion, and instead seeking individual experiences and growth. With this trend in witchcraft, we're alarmed to see the amount of brands turning it into a fast-fashion; that is, making these products unethically and at lower prices than genuine, sustainable, and ethically-made items. For example, white sage, a plant burnt to spiritually cleanse oneself or one's room, is now endangered due to overfarming and unethical practices. Many established native practices rely on these natural elements in order to conduct spells and rituals - so it's time we stopped treating spirituality as a trend and started treating it as an intentional practice at all levels.



36. Fandom as Religion

For the faithless, being a part of a fandom can replace some of the aspects of being part of a religious community. Take the BTS ARMY for example. Millions of people follow everything that this group of seven men from Korea say and do. This unprecedented fame, and the insane amount of access to your favorite celebrities via social media, has changed the way people interact with celebrities. These communities of fans have their own ethos, codes of behavior, peer networking, and more. Professor Henry Jenkins, a Communications professor at USC, argues that these fandoms are sometimes the closest thing people get to a spiritual community. With social media building bridges between like-minded individuals, fandoms aren't just online subcultures; they're "participatory cultures." If we're looking at patterns of human behavior, so are religions.



37. Consumption of Spiritual Content

For past generations, these spirituality outcomes derived from religions. Gen Z's increasingly do not follow this trend. With only 47% of Gen Z's claiming to be religious, where are Gen Z's consuming spiritual content? One area is music. In a recent survey 40% of Gen Z's said listening to music gives them a purpose in life and 51% said it provides them with a sense of community and social connection. Another medium for spirituality is provided by brands themselves. Gen Z's care about brands that create values using storytelling opposed to just products e.g. a sustainable clothing brand made of recycled plastics in order to help marine life.

38. Gen-Z Has Questions

Despite our lack of centralized religion, Gen-Zs are still just as human as our older parents and grandparents; that is, we still seek out questions about the human experience and the universe at large. According to Catechist Magazine, a Catholic publication, these questions are still valid - although they might challenge traditional norms. Catechist recommends spiritual leaders and faith-based practices to truly align themselves with Gen-Zs in order to spark interest, specifically by relationally, intellectually, and aesthetically attaching their message to Gen-Zs. It's not about making your religion more palatable to Gen-Z - it's about identifying the unique need that your religion and spirituality serve, and how that may be different across various generations and experiences.



39. Spirituality & Loneliness

According to more research from the Springtime Research Institute, just 8% would turn to one [religious leader], while 74% would turn to a parent or guardian instead. This is slightly alarming for older and religious leaders; however, it's important to understand how and why Gen-Zs feel lonely. Religion and spirituality in our digital world don't address the same needs as they did for our parents and grandparents, so why are we acting like they still do? The impact of traditional faith is dwindling upon Gen-Zs' new hyperindividualism and skepticism of institutional power. That's not necessarily a bad thing; rather, it should be seen as a sign of the times: The world is changing. So is spirituality. And maybe we shouldn't be too worried about it.



40. Gen-Z Spiritual Wellness Practices

Gen-Zs are trading in their parents' bibles, crucifixes, and holy water for meditation, journaling, and therapy. Overall, Gen-Z takes a holistic view of health, perceiving mental health as important as physical health. Spiritual wellness practices, such as those borrowed from other cultures or religions, like Tarot cards, Reiki healing, yoga, and mindfulness meditation, have become increasingly popular spirituality techniques among Gen-Zs. Especially in stress-inducing times, Gen-Z's are turning toward apps like Calm and Headspace to help curb their feelings of anxiety and uncertainty, rather than turning towards a Bible or traditional religious methods.

Gen-Z Experience

Here at NinetyEight, we're all about Gen-Z... obviously. We highlight trends, culture, news, preferences, events, creators, and more. But no matter how much we blab about Gen-Z, it's hard to know what it's been like to grow up as a Gen-Z unless you are one (#IYKYK). But don't fret, we've compiled a list of what we believe consist of the "Gen-Z Experience" aka what has shaped our generation into the badassess we are today, so you can live vicariously through our evolution... you're welcome.





41. Generation COVID-19

Say it with us: “unprecedented times”... smh! The COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone, but has especially left Gen-Z behind. Before the pandemic, Gen Z was expected to enter the workforce during a time of economic prosperity – unlike millennials, who largely graduated college during the Recession. Clearly, this is no longer the case. Recent graduates have been forced to navigate canceled job offers, internships turned remote, along with a change to virtual learning. In the wake of the pandemic, Gen-Z’s cynicism and distrust of corporations is only going to grow.



42. Climate Warriors

We’re nervous about the future, hbu? A 2021 Pew Research report found that Gen-Z is overwhelmingly worried about climate change: 76% of them say that it’s one of their biggest societal concerns, while 37% make it their number one concern. Survey after survey shows young people are not just incorporating new climate-conscious behaviors into their day-to-day lives – they’re in it for the long haul. More Gen-Zs are pursuing environmental-related degrees and careers that were once considered irresponsible, romantic flights of fancy compared to more “stable” paths like business, medicine, or law. Because if current brands and legislations won’t do much to curb climate change, Gen-Z will be sure to take it into their own hands.



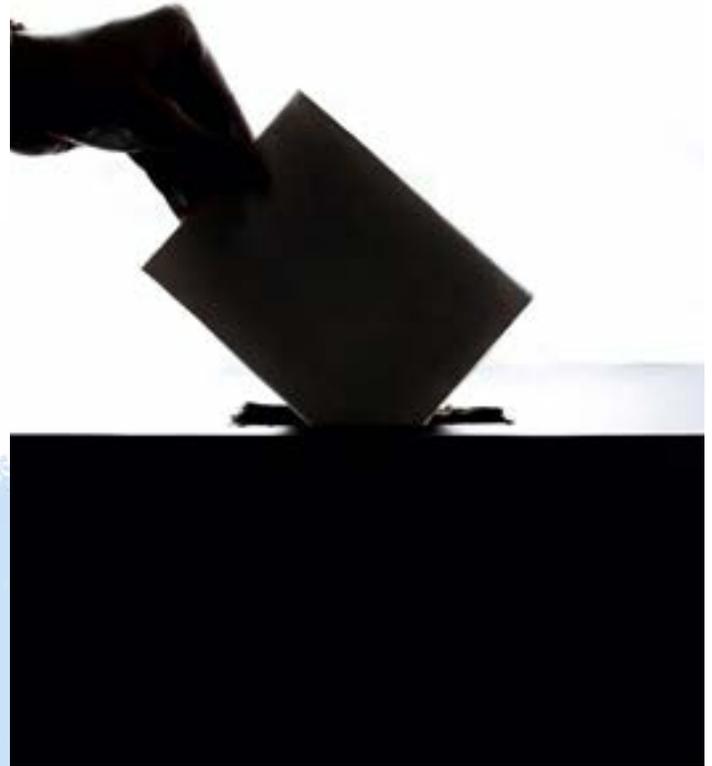
44. The Age of Social Media

Unlike any other generations before them, Gen-Zs grew up in the age of social media - even the oldest Gen-Zs barely remember a time before Facebook existed, Twitter emerged when most of them were at least four years old, with Instagram taking off by age 8 and snapchat by age 11. Social media has been completely ingrained into Gen-Z's childhood and beyond. Due to this, Gen-Z has been able to grow up with access to information at their fingertips and have been able to utilize social media to their advantage to educate themselves, and even make careers based on social media platforms (sounds familiar...)

43. The Demise Of Our Attention Span

Blink and you might miss it... no, literally. Gen-Zs typically have an attention span of only 8 seconds - a whopping 4 seconds shorter than the millennial's approximately 12 seconds. Growing up in the digital age where instant gratification is the new norm, it's no surprise that attention spans (and patience) are getting shorter and shorter. Because of this, we've seen a rise in the success of short-form video content such as the rise of apps like Vine and TikTok. When you enter an app like TikTok, you are hit with an avalanche of new trends, which emerge and evolve on a daily basis.





45. From The 2008 Recession to The Great Resignation

We all know about The Great Recession that significantly impacted Millennials, but what about The Great Resignation? A recent Adobe survey of 5,500 workers found that 56% of those ages 18-24 say they are planning to switch jobs in the next year. Why? Well the great resignation is really the great discontent. Gen-Z's lived through the first Black president, the legalization of same sex marriage, and the first and second iteration of Black Lives Matter. With their lived experiences and societal expectations, Gen-Z workers expect both meaning and purpose at work — and leaders and corporations must figure out how to give it to them.

46. Fluid Politics

TikTok isn't the only "Tic" Gen-Zs are interested in...and yes, we're talking poliTICs. Gen-Z accounts for 1 in 10 of the country's eligible voters, and they're taking that influence seriously. When it comes to voting, Gen-Z has opinions that may differ from other, older voters, and they prioritize policies surrounding things like the COVID-19 outbreak, healthcare, and racial inequality over federal budget deficit, foreign policy, and Supreme Court appointments. Additionally, while a large chunk of Gen-Z exercise their right to vote, stay informed, and have opinions about which policies to prioritize, one thing they stray away from is committing to specific party labels. For example, while 55% of Gen Z respondents said that they plan on voting for Joe Biden, only 39% identify with the Democratic party.



47. Gen-Z Feminism

Feminism today is about celebration and representation, and about sharing the warts-and-all reality of the female experience. It's about equal representation in society, with regard to industry, politics and policy making (apparently there are more CEO's named John than there are women CEO's altogether), and equal representation in culture. Inspired by older feminist icons and more contemporary activists, Gen-Zs are talking more openly about vaginas, periods, miscarriages, body hair, the lot. You'll definitely be seeing more Gen-Z women finding creative ways to openly express themselves.



48. Loneliest Generation

...And despite all this new technology and the rise of social media, Gen-Z is lonely AF - in fact, they are the "loneliest generation." And this is because they don't want FOMO, no mo. A 2017 study from Washington State University suggested that teens with strong FOMO were more likely to display anxiety and depressive symptoms. And this common form of stress is spurred on by the prevalence of social media's highlight reel-esque quality, where posts only highlight the best, most photogenic moments in our lives. According to the Center for Generational Kinetics, 42% of Gen-Z — more than any other generation — said social media affects how other people see you. The same percentage of Gen-Z also said that social media has a direct impact on how they feel about themselves.



49. Creator Economy

Being an “influencer” or what we now call a “creator” is harder than it looks. While older generations criticize Gen-Z for taking too many selfies and playing video games, Gen-Z has put their nose to the grindstone to use technology to channel their creativity and technical skills to create bona fide businesses. An Edelman Intelligence study found that 46% of Gen-Z had freelanced in the last year, with 73% of them having started freelancing by choice rather than necessity. These skills and creativity offer Gen-Zs freedom that previous generations didn't have — to work wherever, whenever, with whoever. All you need is a laptop and a strong Wi-Fi connection (and coffee, lots and lots of coffee). You'll much more likely find Gen-Z at a co-working space in Tulum over a stuffy office filled with Boomers.



50. No More Teen Awkward Phase

We've all been there: the cringe-worthy moments where you bring back old middle school yearbooks or scroll through Facebook photos, and you see yourself back in your awkward stage: whether it was crazy hair, terrible eyebrows, braces, you name it... However, Gen-Zs can't always relate. For younger Gen-Zs, there is a lack of all these awkward phases we went through as a rite of passage as teens. A quick scroll through Instagram or TikTok reveals preteens with perfect glossy hair and flawless makeup - it's almost not even fair! This might be due to the pervasive nature of beauty standards today and the ease of accessibility to beauty products, tutorials, tips, and tricks.

The Rise of Analog

The past is refreshing to Generation Z. As the saying goes: “The more things change, the more they stay the same.” Ultimately, the past will never go out of style and will always find its way back!





51. Y2K Fashion

Trends in fashion are just the old made new, and Gen-Z has brought Y2K back: butterfly clips, velour sweatsuits, bedazzling, the like. Nostalgic fashion is not by any means a new phenomenon, and Gen-Z's fascination with the early 2000s is one of many forms of escapism. With the cliché of 2020 as "chaos" -- the U.S. election, the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate change crisis... it's unsurprising Gen-Z is wishing for the not-too-distant days when adolescence was just about going to the mall.



52. The New Finsta

Pics or it didn't happen... or did it? The social media world has made sharing every part of your day as easy as a click of a button. Now "finsta" doesn't only mean "Fake Instagram" but also "Film Instagram." With the saturation of media, Gen-Z has turned to film photography as an attempt to stay present and bring back some much-needed authenticity. With film, every photo counts, and we're seeing a rise in Instagram accounts solely dedicated to pictures captured on film: @gisposable, @dianasfilmidiary, @tanatookthese.



54. The Middle Part

If you wear your hair on a side part, we're sorry to tell you that your Millennial is showing. It all started when TikToker @Lady-Gleep said, "Prove me wrong, but I don't think there is a single person who looks better with a side part than they do a middle part." Since then, Gen-Zs and Millennials have been taking over social media with the middle-part/side-part debate. So what's with the middle part obsession? Gen-Z is a generation that champions embracing flaws: like highlighting your eyebags or posting crying pictures. It's no surprise they prefer the "exposed" look of a middle part. It is also thought to highlight symmetry and equality -- making vintage hairstyles like pigtails, space buns, and the middle part "in." Either way, Gen-Z opinion is not the be all and end all... so wear your hair however you want!

53. Thrifting

"Omg, where'd you get that top?" "It's thrifted" -- an answer you'd probably get from a Gen-Z. Gen-Z is known for valuing sustainability and social change, but for those without massive budgets, the need to consume both ethically and quickly has turned thrifting into a viable, \$28B industry that is expected to eclipse fast fashion by 2029. In an age where everything is accessible to everyone, the allure of thrifting a unique piece and making it your own is the cherry on top for Gen-Z. With the unpredictability of thrifting, the conversation has definitely shifted about who sets trends and what qualifies as "fashionable."





55. Crocs are Back

... yes, you read that right. The 2006 fad deemed one of Time's "50 Worst Inventions" is now not only socially acceptable, but actually cool. How? Crocs made the impossible possible through collabs/partnerships and TikTok. With the likes of Justin Bieber, Post Malone, and Bad Bunny dropping exclusive lines, Crocs has rebranded into becoming a streetwear symbol. Instead of trying to be fashionable/trendy, they've become a statement of being unapologetically themselves regardless of the rules of fashion -- a sentiment many Gen-Zs rally behind.



56. Vinyl Renaissance

Nothing screams nostalgia more than a vinyl collection. MRC Data from 2020 found that Gen-Zs buy more vinyls than Millennials, making vinyls outsell CDs for the first time since the 1980s. In fact, 2020 was the biggest year for vinyl in three decades! As music remains to be the top choice for Gen-Z's media consumption, it's no surprise Gen-Z is turning to record players and vinyls to turn music into an experience. Some top albums Gen-Z is listening to are: Rumours by Fleetwood Mac, Back To Black by Amy Winehouse, and Fine Line by Harry Styles.



57. 90s Sitcoms

Could Friends BE a bigger hit? Apparently so. Friends, a show made by Baby Boomers about Generation Xers that was obsessed over by Millennials, has unexpectedly found its way to Gen-Z. While Friends exists as the almost perfect epitome of its era -- albeit void of politics, gender identity, and non-white people -- it's an era removed from much of Gen-Z's coming of age: untouched by likes and retweets, by Tinder and TikTok. But what attracts Gen-Z most is how relatable it is, as Rachel, Ross, Joey, Phoebe, Monica, and Chandler fill archetypes that are timeless in many ways. It's also just straight up funny... and funny never gets old!



58. Gen-Z Green

Sorry, Pantone, but the color of the year according to Gen-Z is green! Not the green of Hulu or Excel, but the green of nature. It's eucalyptus but fernier, Granny Smith but younger. In a saturated world, Gen-Z is attracted to things that are stripped down and natural. Your average green-loving person has probably been called a "do-gooder." You're caring, loyal, and are super sensitive about doing the right thing and embracing a cause you feel is right. Green is secure. Green is good. Green means go — and good luck. No wonder it's the color of Gen-Z!



59. Synthwave

“We discover something our parents were into and it seems like you’re discovering hidden treasure.” The 80s has always been a significant music period, but the decade’s influence has really stuck this time round: with artists like Dua Lipa and The Weeknd using Synthwave, a style of electronic music that defined the sound of 1980s film and game soundtracks. Technology has taken over to such a degree that people are rediscovering there’s something very tactile and tangible about the 80s and 90s. Now we hear Debbie Harry (from Blondie) in Dua Lipa’s vocals on Physical and see Michael Jackson influences in The Weeknd.



60. The Rise of Rollerblades

Goodbye heelys, hello roller skates! With little ability to venture far from home each day, roller skating offers Gen-Z a familiar taste of pre-pandemic freedom. The 1970s skate culture has made a comeback particularly on TikTok, where #rollerskating has amassed over 2.5B views. Is it a fad? The roller skating sport, though made mainstream by the pandemic, has been steadily growing throughout the years. Now, social media helps democratize the craft by allowing influencers to share their skills. Roller skating also plays part in social justice movements today, with #skateforjustice gaining traction on TikTok.

Travel

Near, far, wherever you are... will travel go on? The pandemic has fully disrupted the travel scene, and what was meant to be a "temporary" setback doesn't seem to have a foreseeable end. As the world begins to reopen, many Gen-Zs are itching to travel to popular destinations. But are Gen-Zs actually ready to experience the more mundane realities of travel, like the dreaded office commute? Or will hybrid workplaces save us all? From land, to sea to space... this section explores what travel will look like. Bon Voyage!





61. Space Travel

3, 2, 1 ... BLAST OFF!!! The people living in the 2020's may be living in the next space race with billionaires like Jefferey Bezos (Blue Origin), Elon Musk (Space-X), and Richard Branson (Virgin Galactic), competing with one another in the privatized space exploration and tourism industry. In July of 2021, just over a week apart, Bezos and Branson sent themselves up into space demonstrating that space travel is possible for non-astronauts. Do Gen-Zs even care about space travel though? According to a Pew Research study only about 4 in 10 Gen-Z's have an interest in space tourism. We wonder, will the influence of these billionaires increase Gen-Z's interest in space travel?



62. Mr. Worldwide

"Ooo I saw that place on TikTok...let's go there!" It's safe to say Gen-Z's travel habits are very "spur of the moment". They may see an Instagram photo from one of their friends and want to book a trip there immediately, or see a cheap flight price and just say "f*ck it, I'm down." With that being said, marketers must be prepared to match this spontaneity, ready with content-rich, mobile-friendly, and multiplatform approaches. Gen-Z's are heavily influenced by good deals, but focusing on shareable experiences, connectivity, and social awareness can also drive Gen-Zs to book their next travel experience.

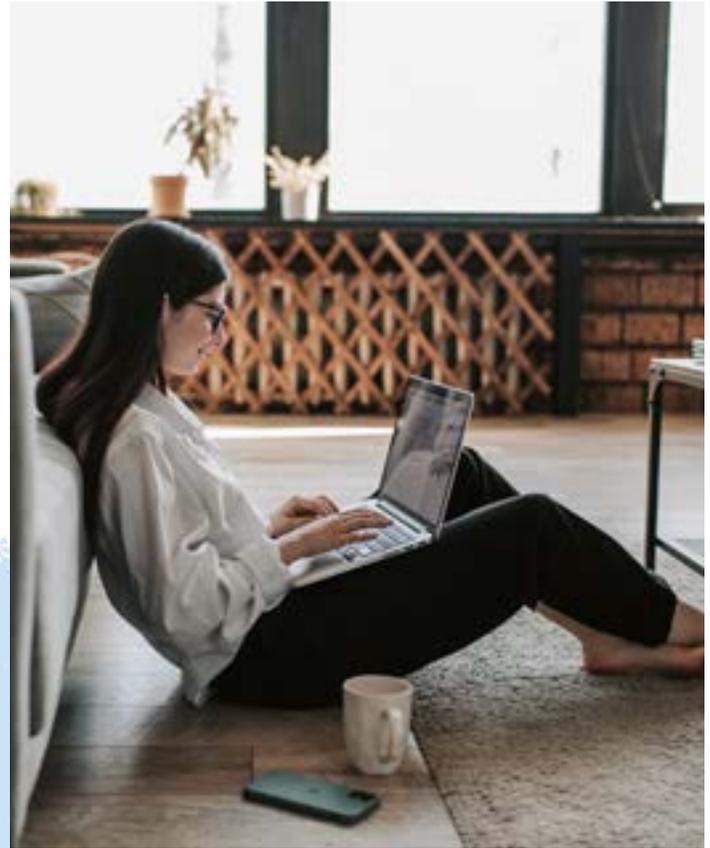
64. Will the Cruise Industry Stay Afloat?

Popular amongst people of all ages, the social cruise industry has been around since the 1950s - after all, cruises are a great way to enjoy a luxurious life at sea. But the pandemic brought the cruise industry to a 15-month standstill with a loss of nearly \$24.5B in revenue. As the cruise industry slowly begins to return, will it stay afloat? Many are eager to hop onboard, but others are hesitant, citing carbon emission, pollution, food waste, and potential “disease hotspot” as the main reasons against cruise ships. Polling our Koi Pond (a Gen-Z Database), 64% of respondents said they would like to go on a cruise, with the poll’s top responses including: 1) it’s a good way to visit different countries, and 2) cruise perks including food, alcohol, performances, and amenities.

63. Returning to Travel

Gen-Z and Millennials are eager to travel and are willing to take various measures in order to do so. In a study led by Contiki, 100% of respondents indicated that they are dreaming of travel, 71% say they would get the COVID-19 vaccine in order to travel again, and 58% would travel right now even if they had to pay for quarantine upon returning home. Our Gen-Z Koi Ponders affirmed these statistics with all respondents answering “yes” to travelling even if additional fees/rules were involved. One Gen-Z who recently travelled to Mexico said that she felt even better about travelling knowing that there were “many precautions and safety measures from our resort and airlines, along with 90% of others wearing masks at all times”.





65. Travel “Must Haves”

Despite the urge for travel, Gen-Zs are not just looking for a quick cheap getaway -- in fact, many have higher standards than before the pandemic. With the uncertainties of COVID-19 and protocols constantly in flux, Gen-Zs are looking for flexible travel plans including free cancellation (86%) and flexible booking (74%) as the essentials of travel planning. In order to entice Gen-Z travellers, hotels such as Hyatt and Marriott have recognized the need for flexibility in travel plans and have enhanced COVID-19 safety measures and cancellation policies. In addition, our Gen-Z proprietary survey showed that location/access and good reviews were among the top “must haves” when returning to travel. What do you say... ready to book your flight?

66. Hybrid Workplaces

We often think of travelling as a nice little vacation away from work, but what about the travel to work... the dreaded office commute. The pandemic forced most companies to move into a remote work setting - and a year later, most of us are experts at taking calls in our PJ bottoms with a barking dog in the background. Truthfully, most Gen-Zs have never experienced a full-time job in a 100% office environment - but will we ever? While working remotely comes naturally and seamlessly to the generation of digital natives, many Gen-Zs are looking forward to potentially returning to office for more face-to-face interaction with their co-workers. That being said, Gen-Zs are strong advocates for a hybrid model with 2-3 days at home and the rest in office. On top of reduced commute times and increased flexibility in schedule, many find that the hybrid model is optimal for work-life balance, something Gen-Zs want in spades.



67. International Palete

Being the melting pot that America is, food for many is a little reminder of home - a nostalgic touch of familiar culture and tradition. As the most racially and ethnically diverse generation, Gen-Zs are more likely to try unfamiliar foods. Local American supermarkets are now flooded with important snacks from Pocky to Matcha Kit-Kats -- a nod to Gen-Z's adventurous palettes. In 2021, two Singaporean snack brands F.EAST and Fupi decided to launch in the U.S market, hoping to bring a little bit of Singaporean spice and flavour to stateside. When asked, "What inspired you to bring your product to the U.S?", Founder of F.EAST, YJ Lee responded, "America being a cosmopolitan mix of Western and Asian cultures also perfectly mirrors our chips, which combine instantly-recognizable Asian dishes on the Western potato chip base!" Similarly, the Founder of Fupi, Collin She said, "We brought Fupi to America to make them feel a sense of nostalgia and the warm feeling of "home" when they are elsewhere in the world."

p.s. check out @foodiefoodsus on Instagram for mouthwatering pictures... run by yours truly!



68. COVID Stopped Flights but Not Progress

Although most international travelling was cancelled due to COVID-19, great strides in diversity and inclusion in the travel industry were made. In December of 2020 the World Travel & Tourism Council announced new guidelines for diversity and inclusion, which are backed by notable private travel giants such as Airbnb, Trip.com, Hilton, and Marriott. The guidelines fall into four main pillars: developing a supportive system, creating safe spaces, supporting an agile system, and exemplifying inclusion & diversity. The May 2020 BLM movement has also caused some notable changes for good, according to Martinique Lewis, a diversity in travel consultant and president of Black Travel Alliance. Delta Airlines has joined OneTen, a coalition of CEOs and major companies across several industries dedicated to hiring and promoting one million Black Americans within 10 years into family-sustaining jobs with opportunities for advancement. A recent study by MMGY Global in partnership with BTA shows that 54 percent of U.S. Black travelers indicated that they are more likely to visit a destination if they see Black representation in travel advertising.



69. A Destination in Every Scoop

Throwback to April 2020 when the entire world went into lockdown and your dream vacation to Bali was suddenly cancelled. A big part of many Gen-Z's travel agendas is to experience the local cuisine, but with restricted travel, one can only close their eyes and imagine what a Hokkaido Cheesecake tastes like. Thankfully, brands like Wanderlust Creamery captured the essence of international flavours in a single scoop of ice-cream. Founded by Adrienne Borlongan and JP Lopez, Wanderlust is an LA based artisanal ice cream shop with flavours inspired by wanderlust. From their infamous Ube Malted Crunch (Philippines), to White Rabbit (China), to Pasteis de Nata (Portugal), Wanderlust is truly an adventure around the world, just in ice-cream form. (That's a pretty close second to travelling irl imo). Whether you're in LA or not, visit their store, order online and support a local business that can transport you to France in a matter of one bite.

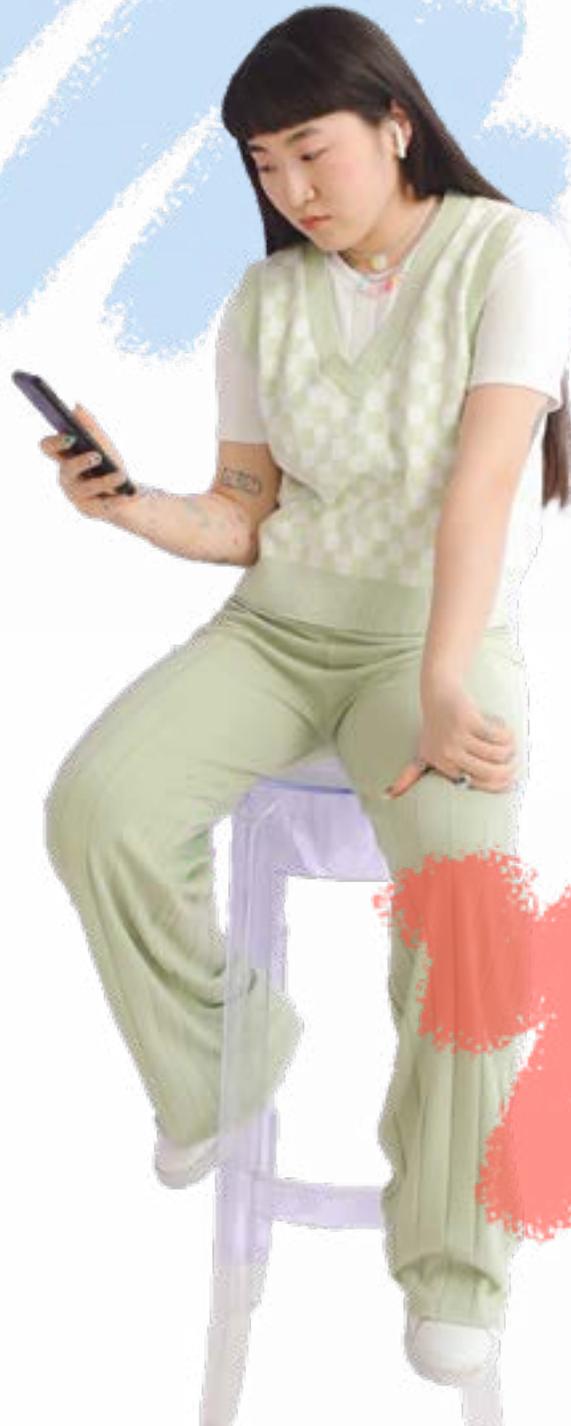


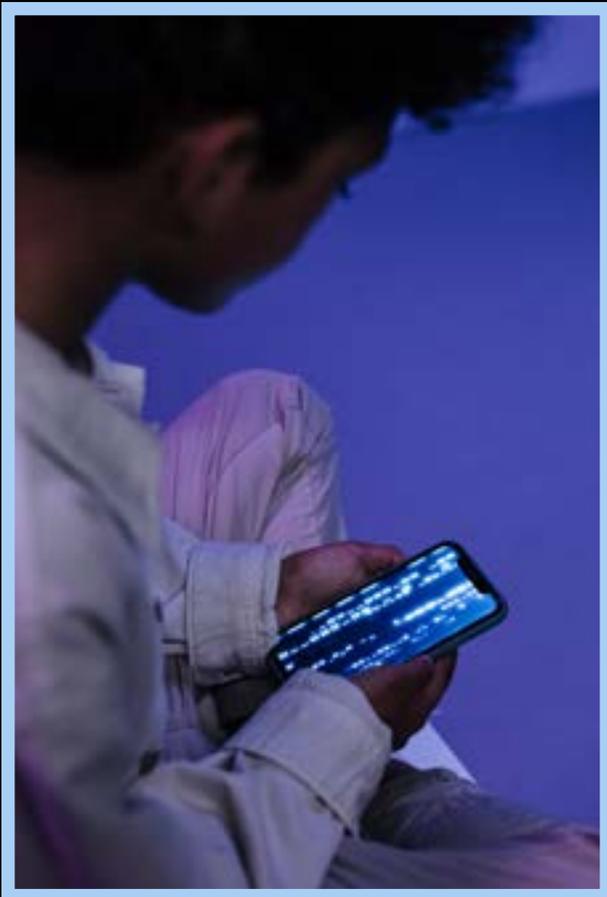
70. Sustainable Travel

Sustainable travel has grown in popularity as people have tried to mitigate the negative effects of tourism, and the pandemic appeared to accelerate this trend. While 59% of Gen-Zs express genuine interest in leading change in sustainable development and tourism, to what lengths would we actually go to to bring sustainable change to the travel industry? A study by The Vacationer showed that 83% said that sustainable travel was important to them, yet nearly half of the respondents said they would opt for such trips only if it did not inconvenience them. Good intentions aside, achieving sustainable tourism will cost a lot and require the combined efforts of businesses, regulators, and travellers.

Myth Busters

When it comes to Gen-Z, there is so much speculation on who we are and what we like, but like... has anyone ever asked us directly? We did. With the help of the members in our Koi Pond, our proprietary research database made up entirely of Gen-Z's, we'll be busting some of the biggest assumptions made about Gen-Z in this section. If you are a Gen-Z and want to share your opinions as well, please join our Koi Pond as well!





71. Gen-Zs are a “mobile-first generation”

FALSE - While Gen-Zs do utilize our phones more than other generations, we are not yet ready to replace our computers for smartphones. When asked about which device they would prefer to keep, over 75% of surveyed Gen-Zs chose their computers over their phones.



72. Gen-Zs are ditching college

FALSE - Although media outlets have reported that Gen-Z is more open to alternatives, and that a good education does not have to have a college degree, the overwhelming majority of Gen-Z still value a college education. One of the most concerning factors for Gen-Z is the cost of college: 66% do not want to bear the college debt burden. Unfortunately, as the cost of college keeps increasing, it is likely that Gen-Z is being forced to find alternatives for themselves, rather than willingly choosing to skip college.

74. Gen-Zs are going childless

TRUE - While a majority of our surveyed Gen-Zs still wanted to get married, nearly 40% of Gen-Z's did not want kids, with 13% of Gen-Z's not wanting to get married. The reasons are varied as well, but financial security was one major factor.

73. Gen-Zs still utilize Snapchat

TRUE - TikTok may be the new “Gen-Z” app, but Snapchat is still widely used amongst this generation, with over 75% saying they either actively or occasionally use the app. Snapchat has what TikTok lacks—the ability to easily message the mundane to close friends. Even though other platforms have similar functionality (Instagram DMs), Snapchat still reigns supreme for disappearing picture messaging.



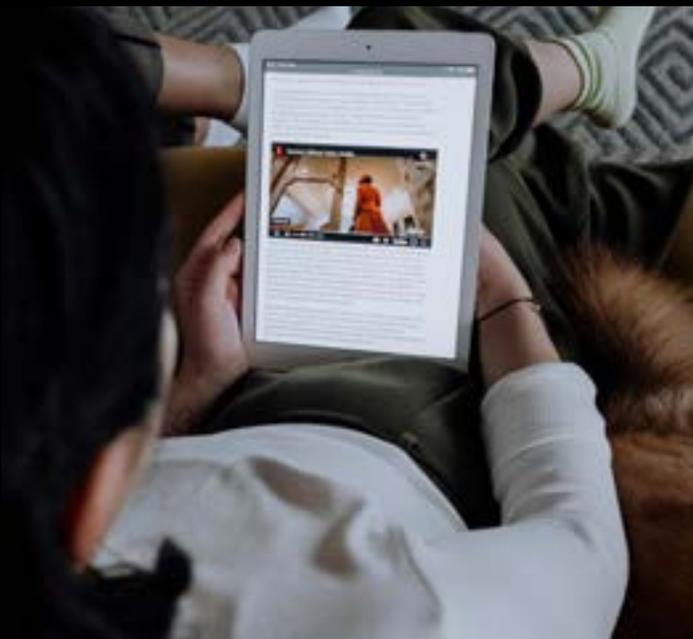


75. Gen-Zs prefer experiences over products

TRUE - When it comes to choosing products or experiences, almost 66% of Gen-Z's cited that they would choose experiences over products. The answer doesn't change much at different price points either: whether it was \$200 or \$2000, Gen-Z's preferred experiences, with more switching from products as the price point increased. Many cited travel or events as the experiences they would spend on. Even amongst the product preference, some Gen-Z's cited that they would only buy a product if it could be used as an investment for the future.

76. Gen-Zs are financially literate

FALSE...to an extent. Our surveyed Gen-Z's state that they have made budgeting moves or started investing on apps like Robinhood. For the generation money has always been a concern, and budgeting was a skill that was taught from an early age. However, when it came to long term investments, the prevailing sentiment was they did not have enough income to effectively start managing their finances. Rather, the money they invest is mostly for entertainment instead of future gain. Given that many Gen-Z's are still in school, taxes may be another front that Gen-Z does not have experience in either.



77. Social Media is Gen-Z's news outlet

TRUE - 44% of Gen-Z's reported that they used social media as a daily news outlet, aligning almost exactly with the statistics provided by Statista. Amongst the social media platforms, Twitter was considered the most popular source to get news from, followed by Instagram. Snapchat was the least popular social media platform for news, having less than 1% of Gen-Z users.

78. Gen-Zs are essentially young Millennials

FALSE - Gen-Z's felt that they were certainly similar to Millennials; however, when it came to the extent of which the generations were related, there was a distinct split. Many Gen-Z's stated that while their generations valued similar ideals, both Millennials and Gen-Z had drastically different ways of going about them, citing as examples such as how easily information was able to flow between Gen-Z's. Others had more nuanced comparisons, such as online behavior or fashion sense.



79. Gen-Z humor is a thing

TRUE - The surveyed Gen-Z's reported an almost unanimous acknowledgement of Gen-Z humor. Some stated that there were certain aspects about Gen-Z humor that other generations either couldn't understand, or did not find funny. Others cited platforms, like TikTok, for the creation of Gen-Z humor. Just like other generations, Gen-Z has grown up with a plethora of shared experiences. However, as the first digitally native generation, Gen-Z was also the first to be able to share those shared experiences with each other, forming the basis of Gen-Z humor.



80. Gen-Z is a "snowflake" generation

FALSE - Although older generations have written Gen-Z off as young and sensitive, the opposite could not be more true. As the generation behind some of the largest movements in recent years, Gen-Z's have proven themselves to be far more than just sensitive. Unlike their predecessors, Gen-Z grew up without the promise of better days, experiencing the harsh realities of 9/11, the 2008 financial crisis, and now the 2020 pandemic and recession. Now Gen-Z has shown they are the first to back up their feelings with real actions; or in other words, the antithesis of a "snowflake" generation.

Gen-Z Creatives

Our generation is worth bragging about. No, seriously. We mean it. Gen-Z knows how to create like no other - from music to dance to art to design and literally every single thing in between, it's safe to say that we have the next Monet or Van Gogh in our midst. Who knows, it might be one of these eight Gen-Z creators! If we were their mothers, we would 10000% hang their creations on our fridge to admire. See for yourself, you'll be impressed too.



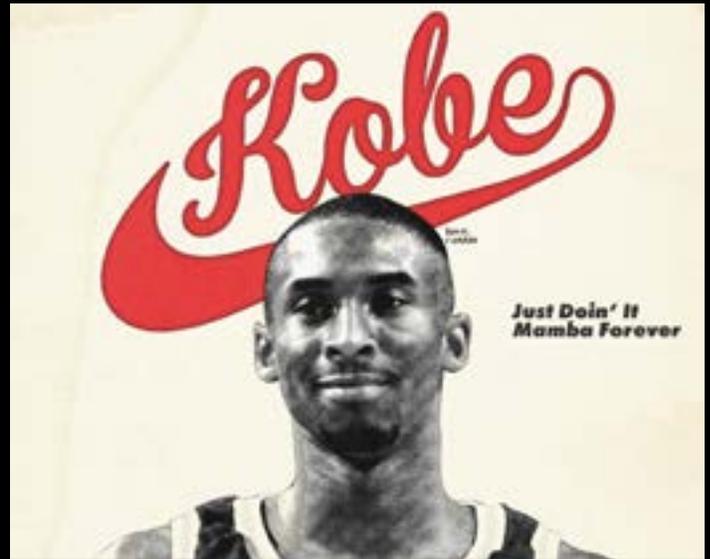


81. Arjun Sachar

Arjun is a musician who dabbles in mixing and mastering music, audio engineering, vocal processing, song writing, rapping and singing. As an important part of his Indian culture, music was ingrained in Arjun's life from a young age. His family would often host Pujas, a casual and fun occasion where he and his family would often sing traditional Hindi songs and chants. As Arjun entered high school, his passion for rap music flourished with the opportunity to record original tracks with his friends. Arjun started feeling more comfortable with his craft during his junior year of college, where he started songwriting, releasing his own music, and performing at local shows. Inspired by The Notorious B.I.G., Andre 3000, Mac Miller, Kanye West, and Chance the Rapper, Arjun is slowly moving

from creating music with his friends to growing as an individual artist by building his own unique skill set. Music has always been a way for Arjun to express and center himself. Music gave Arjun the space to think about the bigger picture: "Who am I? What do I want to be?" As of now, music is a hobby for Arjun, although in the future, Arjun wants to release a full length studio album, tour, and get to a point where making music can be his profession. While making it as an artist is one of the hardest things to do, he encourages everyone and himself to follow their passion, no matter how hard it is.

Find Arjun here - [Instagram](#) | [Spotify](#) | [SoundCloud](#) | [Apple Music](#)



82. Casim

Casim is a graphic designer, who has recently been getting involved in videography. Since middle school, Casim has always had a passion for art, where he and his friends would always doodle in his binder during class. Although he felt like he was never good at drawing, Casim always wanted to create, and graphic design was where he felt most comfortable. He started taking his passion more seriously during the summer before his senior year of high school when his friend asked him to design something. This springboarded him to where he is now. For Casim, graphic design has allowed him to express what he's thinking and how he is feeling, which has helped give him direction in what he wants to do in life. Taking storytelling inspiration from Because the Internet

by Childish Gambino, design inspiration from A\$AP Rocky's Instagram account from 2015, and visual inspiration from Scott Pilgrim vs. the World, Casim has always known that if nothing else pans out, that he will always be a designer. Although being a designer can be exhausting, he encourages artists and creatives to follow and grow with their passion, regardless of personal and social doubts. Even though this can be a hard feat, at the end of the day being a creative is all about what you think and how you feel.

Find Casim here -
[Instagram](#) | [Website](#)



83. Rena McInerney-Olk

Rena is an acrylic painter who has recently been exploring different mediums to move beyond her comfort zone. Art has always been a central part of Rena's life. She grew up in a family of artists, and knew early on that painting was what she wanted to do during her time at Loyola Marymount University's art program. Taking inspiration from CJ Hendry, Matthis, and immersive art experiences, Rena believes that painting provides her a meditative space where she can really zone in. Painting has been a great form of expression for Rena. She loves the challenge of pushing herself beyond self-imposed limits. Currently, Rena is finding her footing in the art world, where she is working as a freelance artist and doing commission art. In the future, Rena wants to continue submitting

her work into gallery shows and exhibitions, and hopes to build a community to meet different artists. Being open to new opportunities has helped guide Rena. You never know what decision will open all the doors to your end goal. As an artist, getting a job is important, and she encourages other artists to do the best in everything you do, push yourself in the things you are interested in, and surround yourself with people that you admire.

Find Rena here -
[Instagram](#) | [Online Shop](#) | [YouTube](#)



84. Lisanne Holterman

Lisanne is a dancer and choreographer who hopes to use movement and language to bring dance across the world. Lisanne has always been passionate about movement. She began as a cheerleader from a young age, later transitioning into gymnastics, and ultimately moving into the dance realm in college. During her time at Loyola Marymount University's dance program, she knew that being a movement artist was her passion. Inspired by the universal understanding of pulse of rhythm and the need to move. Lisanne is passionate about travelling to different countries and bringing dancers and choreographers from different parts of the world to come together and celebrate dance. In the future, Lisanne's goal is to be a professional choreographer and a creative director

for shows, tours, and artists. Lisanne finds that in this day and age, we have so many opportunities, but we must be aware of how we are in the world in relation to others. She encourages Gen-Z and creatives to put effort into yourself and stay true to yourself by continuing to learn with the resources that are available to us.

Find Lisanne here - [Instagram](#)



85. Kiera Breough

Kiera is a dancer, choreographer, and creates intersectional content. She has been involved in the dance industry since she was young, and she recently also started speaking out on issues on Instagram, her podcast, YouTube, and TikTok. Inspired by Ian Eastwood, Emma Portner, and For Harriet, being a dancer and creating content has always been a special way for Kiera to use her voice. For Kiera, dance has formed her life and the people she's met, while content creation has opened her mind and allowed her to connect with a network of critical thinkers. At the moment, Kiera is still

choreographing and is in the process of writing her first book. In the future, she plans to grow her content, podcast and Patreon.

Find Kiera here -

[Instagram](#) | [TikTok](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Podcast](#) | [YouTube](#)



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86. Daoud

Daoud is a visual artist who is involved in various mediums, but has been focusing on design and garment design. What started off as a hobby in the beginning of a pandemic turned into something bigger for him. Daoud was initially passionate about photography and videography, although due to the COVID-19 pandemic, decided to delve deeper into design where he spent a lot of time during lockdown watching old interviews of Massimo Ostin, Samuel Ross, and others. Drawing inspiration from Matthew Williams of Alyx and Givenchy, Samuel Ross of A Cold Wall, and Kanye West's music and his impact on the fashion industry, Daoud has immersed himself in design. For Daoud, design is moving beyond the basic idea of making something that looks aesthetically pleasing. It's about harnessing your own personal experiences and communicating them

in something tangible. Two years ago, Daoud had the opportunity to launch his own creative agency, Lyme Studios, in which he is grateful for the freedom to pursue his passion of design as a career. Currently, Daoud is focusing on designing and bringing to life garments under his own label. Daoud encourages creatives to not worry too much about having everything figured out, especially because social media can give you false expectations on where you 'should' be. Things take time, go at your own pace, and you'll get there eventually

Find Daoud here -
[Instagram](#) | [TikTok](#)



87. Cassius Pettit

Cassius is a photographer, videographer, and editor based in Los Angeles, who is currently working as a freelancer and with various established YouTube creators. Since he was a kid, Cassius was always a camera-oriented person, who created stop-motion videos or comedy sketches with his friends on YouTube. Passionate about the ability to make something from start to finish, Cassius continued to pursue photography and videography when he moved to Los Angeles for film school in 2016, working in freelance straight away. Inspired by people sharing their artistic creation on social media and its collaborative environment, being a photographer and videographer is something that Cassius is extremely grateful for. It helped him get into film school, move to Los Angeles, and pursue his passion as a career. Being able to capture moments that

people would otherwise forget is extremely satisfying to Cassius, especially being able to see people's faces and read positive comments about his work. There are so many creators that Cassius is inspired by, and in the future his goal is to branch out into the music video world, because if he's on his computer and not working, he's most likely watching music videos. Cassius encourages communication if you want to get something done, whether it's a creative endeavor or not. He believes it's much more fun to share successes or learn from failures with others.

Find Cassius here -
[Instagram](#) | [TikTok](#)



88. Tiana Kocher

Tiana is a singer and songwriter, who has been singing her entire life and has taken this creative medium seriously about five years ago. Growing up, Tiana was always surrounded by music and art, where her family was in the opera and musical theater scene in Manila, and her parents always encouraged her to pursue all forms of art, where she was a part of dance classes and musical theater classes. Drawing inspiration from her family and late 90's and early 2000's R&B, music is what Tiana knows and the only thing she could see herself pursuing as a career. Creating original music is where Tiana feels she can express herself, finding music and collaboration very therapeutic. In the future, Tiana hopes to put on a showcase or mini music festival featuring her friends and people

she has previously worked with to raise funds for orphanages back in her home in the Philippines. Additionally, she dreams of performing all across the world's biggest stages, like Wembley, Staples Center, Madison Square Garden, and big music festivals, like Coachella, Governors Ball, Lollapalooza, Outside Lands, and Day N' Vegas. She encourages everyone to embrace their uniqueness and stay true to themselves and what they believe in, because being yourself is more than enough.

Find Tiana here - [Spotify](#) | [Instagram](#) | [TikTok](#)

Gen-Z Hot Takes



Hot Take: Dating in the 21st century as a Gen-Z - what's it really like?

For many Gen-Zs, the term 'dating' is fluid. Gone are the days where a relationship is strictly defined by a romanticized courtship and a picture perfect proposal. Dating today is filled with complicated labels and unpredictable plot twists (both for the good and the bad); we can't help but wonder - is it even fun to date anymore?

We conducted interviews with nine Gen-Zs between 17 and 23 years old. Each interview covered various topics around dating including: first dates, relationship expectations, dating 'slang', love, and of course, the infamous dating apps.

Whether you're a Gen-Z texting your crush for the first time, or a parent with a Gen-Z kid trying to grasp the concept of dating apps, listen up: here's the tea on the Gen-Z dating experience.

All interviewees have given consent for their first name, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation and relationship status to be published.



SO...YOU WANNA GO ON A DATE?

It doesn't take very much to get Gen-Zs to go on a first date. As a generation that craves diversified communities and social circles, going on a first date is often seen as a chance to meet someone new. While the pressure of a first date might be alleviated compared to other generations, Gen-Zs still have a 'checklist' to uphold including: chemistry, safety/familiarity, and attraction. Jared (23) said that in order to go on a first date, the pair must establish "mutual interest and

chemistry, and gauge how well we can be ourselves around each other" while Mary (23) states that to go on a first date, it "requires a bit of familiarity with a person whether that's texting or talking beforehand".

Fast forward to the first date - you're at a little French bistro and your dinner is about to end. Do you expect your date to pay for the meal? The results were mixed.



YES

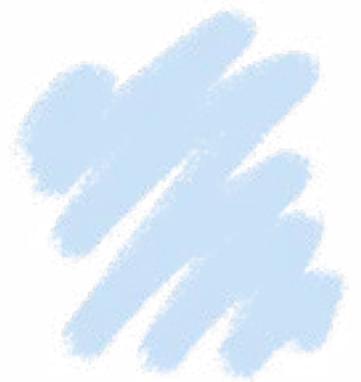
"If a guy is taking you out for food, I expect them to pay for it, BUT I will always offer. [However], 95% of guys will say 'they got it'. On the flip side, if a guy doesn't pay for me on the first date, then I wouldn't consider it a date. I know it sounds traditional, but it's something I stick by." - Olivia (22)

IT DOESN'T QUITE MATTER

"I'm Dutch, I'm fine with splitting stuff - that's totally fine. But, I don't like when one person takes advantage of the other person on a date. Previously I had a guy walk away when the bill came. Let's be accountable for ourselves - if you want to pay for you and your date, that's fair, but if you want to split the bill, I'm very open to it." - Lisanne (22)

NO

"I feel like the [expectation to pay for someone else] is outdated. You shouldn't force a guy to pick you up or pay for your meal. It should totally be one's decision if they want to do that." - Mattie (17)





Parting advice?

Here are top 3 green flags and red flags when it comes to first dates:

Green Flag:

1. Authenticity - If you had fluid conversation and it was easy to be yourself around them
2. Respect - If your date was respectful of your boundaries (both physically and conversationally)
3. Fun & Laughter - If you look back at the date and can confidently say "I had a lot of fun", then you know you had a really good date

Red Flag:

1. Unreliability - If your date never confirmed the time/location or was flakey
2. Self-conceited - If your date only talked about themselves (or their ex!) and never asked about you
3. Disrespectful - If your date was rude to the people around you (i.e. waiter, staff)

BONUS: no politics please.

'BOOO'- HOOO: THE REALITIES OF GHOSTING

Him: hey, that was nice. i had a good time
Me: me too. can we see each other again?
Him:



We've all been down the path where you met someone super cute in class, or danced all night with someone at a bar, or super-liked someone on the apps. Then, you spent all day texting and sending each other cute emojis, and bam, they suddenly stop talking to you. Ghosting - the ubiquitous dating trend we all hate, yet we've all committed the crime as well. Is ghosting someone okay?



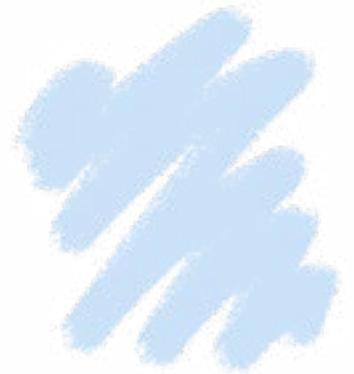
We've all done it

"I'm hypocritical and have ghosted people in the past - but, it's not something I'm proud of. The nice thing to do is give that person your thoughts and closure. Shut the door for them, rather than leave possibility in their minds. Having open communication is the kinder thing to do." - Jared (23)

Stranger's don't owe you anything

"If you've been talking to someone for a while and they ghost you without explanation or a goodbye, then it's rude. However, if you are just exchanging a few texts here and there and there is no emotional connection, it's okay. At the end of the day, strangers don't really owe you anything and you don't owe them anything." - Jonas (23)

No matter how we try to justify it, there isn't a clear cut answer whether it is okay to ghost someone or not. Put yourself in someone else's shoes and use your best judgement - every situation is different!



It's okay to ghost someone if they make you feel uncomfortable

"Honestly, some people deserve to be ghosted. I have ghosted people who were disrespectful and didn't take no for an answer." - Ariana (23)

High School Norms

Current high-school student Mattie says that *“there is pressure to date, especially being in high-school. It seems like everyone is always dating someone and if you’re not dating, then you’re missing out”*. Shannon, now 23 years old describes that she felt pressure from family and peers to go out with guys in high-school. Having her first kiss as a late teen, she *“freaked out because she felt like she was falling behind from others.”*



Under Pressure

Bet. There is always one aunt or grandparent at every family event who is constantly asking, “sweetie, do you have a girlfriend yet?” This led us to wonder, do Gen-Zs feel pressured to date?



Social Media FOMO

For the most part, single Gen-Zs feel neutral about being single... until they scroll on social media. Ariana (23) says that *"there are days I don't care about dating, but other times, I see my friends' stories/photos [on social media] and think about how cute and sweet it is and perhaps I'm missing out."* Echoing the sentiment of feeling left out, Lisanne (22) said, *"man, sometimes I wish I had someone to watch a Christmas movie with"*.



The 'Timeline'

Everyone has a different version of the romantic 'timeline'. Some Gen-Zs like Mary (23) hold themselves to a traditional path, despite no familial pressure. In fact, she says that her family always tells her, *"you're young, you don't need to be in a serious relationship"*, however she puts pressure on her own dating life and is constantly thinking about her timeline. On the other hand, some Gen-Zs still face a lot of pressure from their parents. Jared (23) describes his dad always asking him, *"did you find any female suitors in LA?"* where he would often reply *"nope, still unlucky!"* At this point in his life, he is used to the comments.



I like you
ME
lol why

I mean...
we all do...
right?



LABELS MATTER

Casual dating, one night stand, open relationship, situationship, FWB, serious relationship... There are a plethora of labels when it comes to modern dating. And, while there are so many options, let's get one thing straight: labels matter.

Having an open and honest conversation with your partner on your official label is important. Jonas (23) explains, *"two people need clarity. If boundaries are not established, it sets people up for bad things to happen."* No one wants to waste their time being confused or misunderstood.

Making it "official", used to be a label for those in a serious relationship, however the meaning has expanded. There is a label for everything under the sun and affirming your label (whatever that might be) outlines clear expectations and prevents one or both individuals from being hurt down the line.

Dating Labels 101

Term	Definition
DTR	Define the Relationship
Situationship	A relationship that has no label on it... like a friendship but more than a friendship but not quite a relationship.
Friends with Benefits	No commitment, no feelings, just convenience and companionship
Simping	Someone who does way too much for a person they like. Basically how Ross acts around Rachel in Friends before they start dating.
Cuffed	Promise... this isn't kinky or anything. Being cuffed is slang for officially being a couple. Cuffing season usually starts in October when the weather gets colder and you want a snuggle buddy but realistically, you're looking for a date on Valentines
Shoot Your Shot	Mustering up courage to talk to your crush
"Thing"	"We have a 'thing'" implies you & your friend/partner/person are indecisive and can't establish any clear labels
Netflix and Chill	You invite someone you like over to watch Netflix (maybe), with an end goal of getting down to business. Essentially - a glorified booty call
666	6ft, 6-pack, 6-you fill in the blank



Swipe Right Pt. 1

Is it normal to meet on an app?

The sentiment around dating apps are as controversial, if not more, than the US presidential debate. It has become a significant (and possibly unfortunate) facet to modern dating especially to the generation of digital natives. Despite over 75% of our Koi Pond survey respondents saying that they have used a dating app, the average response to, “are you a fan of dating apps” was met with a measly score of 35 out of 100.

Dating apps have a reputation of 1) being dangerous, 2) only for hook-ups, and 3) simply non-viable for real relationships. Do the top 3 longstanding stigmas around dating apps still prevail?

While to an extent, those stigmas do hold some truth, there are Gen-Zs who have defied those stigmas. Shannon (23) is currently in a committed

relationship with someone she met on Hinge. She recalls, “in my first [dating app] relationship, I lied and said we met IRL because I was too embarrassed to say that I met my boyfriend on Hinge, no one really has a negative reaction. Most of the time, people will have a similar story to relate.” She recognizes that “dating apps can be dangerous. I’ve had some poor experiences in the past.” Her recommendations? A) Have a rulebook for yourself and establish your boundaries. B) Stick to them.

Whether you’re an advocate for or against the apps, both sides can see eye to eye on one thing: **dating apps are and should become normalized.** Majority Gen-Zs will admit that even if the apps aren’t for them, it can be effective for others. Anyone who wants to try the app scene should be able to without judgement!

A large, abstract red brushstroke graphic that serves as a background for the title text. It consists of several overlapping, textured strokes in a vibrant red color, creating a sense of movement and energy.

SWIPE RIGHT PT 2 DATING APP PROS & CONS

Despite being deeply integrated into our society, 69% of Gen-Zs who are currently in a relationship say that they met their partner in real life. If the success rate of meeting partners IRL is so high - why do we even bother with dating apps? Is there any good that comes out of it?

Dating apps are a good way to meet a romantic partner.

YAY or NAY

NAY

It is not a good way at all. The whole concept is based on physicality - but what if someone doesn't photograph well? When you go on a first date after matching with someone, all you know is their height, sign, school, age and the fact that you're physically attracted to them. There is no depth or context to it at all.

I trust my own timeline.

YAY

I don't think it is any better or worse than meeting someone in-person. Ultimately, if your goal is to be in a relationship and you are ready for one, you will put in the work whether that's meeting someone on an app or at a bar. The apps give you more options at the very least.

Yes because dating apps are efficient and to the point. When you're swiping, it's like you're shopping - it allows you to be picky with your requirements and have full control over who you choose to meet.

Result: Mixed Feelings. On one hand it can be deemed superficial, and on the other, it's just another platform to meet your life-long partner.

What is your primary reason for being on a dating app?

“Looking for a different kind of friend”

“Trying to get over my break-up”

“I seek validation”

“It helps me start conversations without too much pressure”

Insight: The initial reason for being on a dating app is seldom for relationship/love. Most of the time it's a self-serving purpose which could lead to more.

What is something that deters you from downloading a dating app?

“Meeting up with a stranger gives me anxiety”

“It's too intense. It feels like an interview or audition”

“It's addicting”

“I can't tell what a person's energy is from a photo”

Insight: The thought of being on a dating app conjures negative energy and increased pressure.

After all our learnings, it is safe to say that the likeability of dating apps will always be in flux and vary from person to person. But, every experience has a silver lining. We then asked, “What do you appreciate about dating apps?”

1. **Expanded Reach** - Dating apps have extreme volume and allows you to meet people who you wouldn't ever cross paths with
2. **Ability to “Filter”** - It's a nice way to clear the clutter and connect two individuals who have the same interest or life goals
3. **Comfort** - The flexibility and “anytime anywhere” approach of dating apps are comforting to many Gen-Zs, especially those who find it natural to talk to strangers online before deciding if they want to meet in-person.



Pandemic Dating

Dating apps were a thing before COVID-19, but they became the thing during the pandemic. 60% of Gen-Zs reported downloading a dating app during the pandemic, with “boredom” being the main reason. Whether you had romantic intentions or not, the pandemic skewed many Gen-Z’s perspectives on dating apps in a positive way.

“Before the pandemic, I was super against dating apps. While I wouldn’t say I’m a huge fan [of dating apps], the pandemic has made me realize the value and functionality of the apps.” - Jared (23, in a relationship with someone he met online)

“I didn’t use one during the pandemic, but I’ve seen the pandemic help normalize dating apps. Dating apps became more trendy and less embarrassing.” - Colin (23, single)

SOULMATE OR SOULMATES?

The concept of “the one” has been ingrained in so many Gen-Zs due to watching rom-coms and hearing the older generation talk about falling in love with their high-school sweetheart. Don’t get me wrong, these stories are cute and do happen, but are Gen-Zs sold on the idea of “love at first sight” or having a soulmate? Maybe it’s because we grew up in an overly complicated society or we’re too pragmatic and logical when it comes to real life, but the idea of a singular “one” or “soulmate” is nonexistent amongst Gen-Zs.

From love at first sight to **infatuation at first sight**: Gen-Zs are the first to admit that we are obsessed with image and physical attraction. *“It would be great for love at first sight to exist because then we wouldn’t have to put in the work, but in reality, you can’t gauge a person’s energy straight away - what you see is sheer infatuation and lust.”* - Lisanne (22)

You can have more than one soulmate in life. Oftentimes when we think of soulmates, we restrict ourselves to thinking of only a romantic partner. However, Gen-Zs are the first to say that, *“soulmates are not just love & romance. Soulmates can be your friend, your lifelong career dream, your dog... anything”* - Lisanne (22). If anything, a person’s soulmate can change multiple times in one’s life. Just because it didn’t work out with someone you loved, doesn’t mean they aren’t your soulmate. It simply means that they were your soulmate in that very moment of time and nothing will take away from your relationship or experience with that person.

Every Gen-Z’s definition of a soulmate is very different, but Olivia (22) sums it up well, *“a soulmate is someone you can connect with heart to heart - someone you relate to on that soul level. Someone where you don’t have any guards up and you can be you.”*

Major life events are being shifted back.

Let's be real, it's an expensive world out there. Rent in major cities are skyrocketing, the cost of higher education is increasing exponentially, and starting salaries are not nearly enough to cover student debt. As a result, most Gen-Zs are experiencing financial independence later in life, thus pushing marriage till after their finances are squared away.

TYING THE KNOT

One thing most generations are curious to predict is, "are Gen-Zs still interested in being married?" The answer is yes - but the timeline and reasoning are slightly different compared to previous generations. Here's why:

Gen-Zs are surrounded by divorced parents.

According to a study by Goldberg Jones, the divorce rate for Gen-Xers and Boomers was 36% and 48% respectively. Due to the low success rate, Gen-Zs and Millennials put off marriage or avoid it all together. *"On the parental level, divorce was such a normal thing, that many of my friends wondered 'why would I get married if I'm just going to be divorced anyways?'"* - Mary (23)

Marriage doesn't define love.

Gen-Zs believe that true love is an intimate relationship between you and your partner. Jonas (23) says he *"wants to get married, but at the same time, marriage doesn't solidify my love. It's more of a 'life checkbox' vs. a confirmation of love."*

THE TRUTH ON BEING A GEN-Z DATER

To summarize, we asked all our interviewees this one last question: If you had to explain to someone what the Gen-Z dating scene is like, what would you say?

"It's superficial and requires a lot of patience, but if you stick it out it could be worthwhile." - Jared (23)

"It's exhausting, demotivating and desensitizing. Often, it objectifies humans as a swipe or a like and you become desensitized that this is a real person with a real dream." - Colin (23)

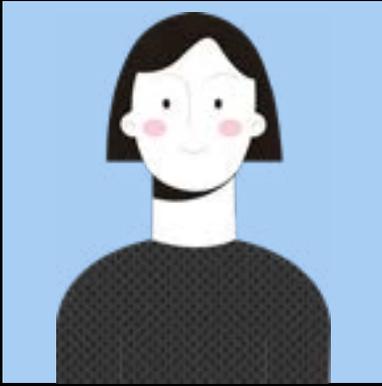
"Gen-Z is a lot more open with "shooting your shot" -- go for things you want, but at the same time be careful. Always be aware of your boundaries and your personal comfort level." - Lianne (22)

"There are so many options and avenues to choose from and by the time you get to the 'perfect' person, you're too exhausted already." - Ariana (23)

"Gen-Zs have an insane fear of commitment. More people now have been hesitant to settle down with one person. Gen-Zs want to experience more - whether that's exploring sexuality or multiple partners, we're curious beings." - Olivia (22)

For the most part, this generation is new to romance and dating, and are slowly figuring out what values are important to them and what old traditions can be replaced. While there are a lot of layers to unpack, Gen-Zs are experiencing change and forging paths for new dating beginnings.

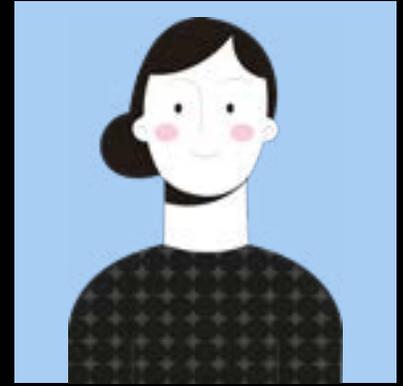
Interviewee Profiles



Name: Shannon
Age: 23
Relationship Status:
Taken, met on a dating app



Name: Ariana
Age: 23
Relationship Status:
Single



Name: Mary
Age: 23
Relationship Status:
Taken, met in real life



Name: Matti
Age: 17
Relationship Status:
Single



Name: Lisanne
Age: 22
Relationship Status:
Single / Never been in a
relationship before



Name: Oliva
Age: 22
Relationship Status:
Single



Name: Jonas
Age: 23
Relationship Status:
Taken, met on a dating app



Name: Colin
Age: 23
Relationship Status:
Single



Name: Jared
Age: 23
Relationship Status:
Taken, met on a dating app

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Gen-Z Creatives

Many thanks to the Gen-Z creatives for participating!