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GEN Z & MILLENNIALS THINK THIS CLOTHING BRAND HAS MORE UNIQUE STYLES THAN NIKE

OUR YOUTH BRAND TRACKER ASKS GEN Z & MILLENNIALS WHAT CLOTHING BRANDS HAVE THE MOST UNIQUE STYLES—AND ONE BRAND KNOCKS NIKE FROM THE TOP OF THE RANKING...

A few years ago, we explored the idea that sameness had become passé among young consumers in our trend [Unique is the New Cool](#)—and we’ve continued to see Gen Z and Millennials prize individuality. While young people in previous generations wanted nothing more than to fit in, now standing out is the goal. [Ypulse’s shopping and fashion survey](#) this year found that 54% of 13-36-year-olds say they would rather stand out than fit in, and 78% say they like to dress in their own unique style. The desire for unique looks has even helped give rise to the still-going-strong [intentionally ugly trend](#)—giving unexpected brands [like Crocs](#) a boost among young shoppers. Young consumers are seeking out brands and styles that help them to feel one of a kind—and one brand stands out as the place they think has the most unique items.

Our youth brand tracker [Ybrands](#) launched in January and has collected over 61,000 interviews so far this year, tracking brands across a variety of variables. Last week, we told you which fashion retail brands young consumers [think are the hottest right now](#)—but we also keep track of which brands offer one of a kind or unique styles. Here is the top ranking of the fashion retailers they see as the most unique:

Most Unique Styles

| 13-36-year-olds |
|-----------------------|
| 1. Hot Topic |
| 2. Nike |
| 3. Jordan |
| 4. Free People |
| 5. Supreme |
| 6. Vans |
| 7. Adidas |
| 8. Converse |
| 9. Uniqlo |
| 10. Polo |
| 11. Zara |
| 12. Under Armour |
| 13. Forever 21 |
| 14. PINK |
| 15. Victoria's Secret |

**[Ybrands](#) measures young consumers’ relationships with a brand based on a weighted 6-point scale, ranging from “Never heard of this brand” to “This brand is one of my favorites.” For fashion and apparel brands, we also ask respondents “Which of the following offer ONE OF A KIND OR UNIQUE STYLES?” These are the top brands that were rated “one of a kind/unique,” among those who are aware of the brand. The brands on this list are among the almost 300*

brands included in the brand tracker as of 12/11. Rankings are subject to change as more brands are added and removed.

There you have it: Hot Topic is at the top of the ranking of retailers that offer unique or one of a kind looks according to 13-36-year-olds, beating out Nike, and fast fashion retailers. Now, Xers and even older Millennials might remember Hot Topic best for its emo/light goth styles. But there is a very different reason that Hot Topic is top of mind for young consumers when it comes to one of a kind looks: they've made a new reputation for themselves as a go-to source for [Next Level Fandom](#) fashion. The retailer is the clear leader in fandom retail, an area that [too many have historically ignored](#), with a "Pop Culture" section that allows shoppers to browse clothing created for major fandoms like *Harry Potter*, *Supernatural*, *Dr. Who*, and *Adventure Time*. Their products reflect the rise of fandoms' importance in youth culture. [Marketplace reports](#): "Chokers, black rubber bracelets, black band t-shirts and studs were [Hot Topic's] specialty. However, as the niche market for alternatively-inclined teens changed, Hot Topic needed to rebrand itself to keep up. It still sells band t-shirts, but it is noticeably less-goth and more fandom-centric." Hot Topic has become a fandom haven, and one of the only major retailers that provides a full range of fan-related clothing.

When we look at the ranking of unique clothing style retailers by age group, we see that their approach has worked across several groups:

Most Unique Styles

| 13-17-year-olds | 18-24-year-olds | 25-36-year-old females |
|------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1. Hot Topic | 1. Supreme | 1. Hot Topic |
| 2. Vans | 2. Nike | 2. Jordan |
| 3. Jordan | 3. Hot Topic | 3. Nike |
| 4. Nike | 4. Vans | 4. Free People |
| 5. Free People | 5. Free People | 5. Zara |
| 6. Supreme | 6. Adidas | 6. Vans |
| 7. Converse | 7. Jordan | 7. Adidas |
| 8. Zumiez | 8. Uniqlo | 8. Converse |
| 9. PINK | 9. Polo | 9. Fashion Nova |
| 10. Under Armour | 10. Converse | 10. Under Armour |

Hot Topic tops the ranking among 13-17-year-olds as well as 25-36-year-olds—only falling to third place among 18-24-year-olds, who are more likely to say that Supreme provides the most unique looks, followed by Nike. There are some other slight differences between groups here: 13-17-year-olds are more likely than others to say that PINK offers unique styles, 18-24-year-olds are more likely than others to say that Uniqlo does, and Fashion Nova makes the top ten ranking among 25-36-year-olds.

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