

Before the mid-1950s, there was no such thing as 'youth culture'. Most young people wore the same fashions as their parents, and they listened to the same kind of music. But that all changed with the arrival of rock 'n' roll.

It started with the 1954 song Rock Around the Clock by Bill Haley and the Comets. Although the older generation didn't understand rock 'n' roll, teenagers fell in love with it straight away. It was a new sound – lively and exciting – and with it came new fashions in clothing. Young men wore smart suits with skinny ties, like the popular singers Buddy Holly and Elvis Presley. Young women liked groups such as The Supremes, and they wore loose-fitting skirts which looked great when they danced.

In the 1960s, rock bands like The Rolling Stones became symbols of the growing youth culture. Young women wore very short 'mini skirts' – the older generation was shocked! The mid-1960s to the mid-70s was the hippie era. Young hippies were interested in peace and love, and they listened to The Beatles, Dusty Springfield and Joni Mitchell. Men and women alike had long hair and wore flowery clothing and sandals.

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They dressed in second-hand clothes, which they often tore to look more individual, and their hairstyles were colourful and messy. Teenagers were into bands like The Clash and singers like Debbie Harry and Patti Smith. In the 1980s, long curly hair and bright colours were trendy, and people listened to Michael Jackson, Madonna and U2.

By the 1990s, teens were in love with the look and sound of singers like Britney Spears. It was also the decade of 'boy bands' and 'girl bands' – the Backstreet Boys and the Spice Girls were 'top of the pops'. Black American music called hip hop became popular internationally. Hip hop stars wore tracksuits, gold rings and necklaces, and they sang about having money and driving expensive cars.

Today, people are interested in the styles of their favourite YouTubers and tunes by superstar DJs like Calvin Harris. Hollywood actors or bestselling singers such as Taylor Swift and Ed Sheeran are also popular. There are dozens of genres of rock and dance music and, thanks to the internet, music and clothing fashions are here today and gone tomorrow.



1 How many bands and singers from the last century can you name? Read the article quickly. Does it mention any of them?

bands
singers

Write B for band and S for singer

Bill Haley		Joni Mitchell		The Backstreet Boys	
The Comets		The Clash		The Spice Girls	
Buddy Holly		Debbie Harry		Calvin Harris	
Elvis Presley		Patti Smith		Taylor Swift	
The Supremes		Michael Jackson		Ed Sheeran	
The Rolling Stones		Madonna		Dusty Springfield	
The Beatles		U2		Britney Spears	

2 Read the article again. Choose the correct answers.

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| <p>1 Before the 1950s, teenagers
A didn't listen to music very much.
B listened to the same music as adults.</p> <p>3 In the 1960s,
A fashions shocked some people.
B hippies wore mini skirts.</p> <p>5 Hip hop singers of the 1990s liked
A wearing jewellery.
B wearing smart suits.</p> | <p>2 In the 1950s, teenage boys
A joined rock 'n' roll bands.
B wore clothes similar to the pop stars.</p> <p>4 Punks in the late 70s
A wore colourful clothing.
B didn't wear brand new clothes.</p> <p>6 Nowadays, people
A get their fashion ideas from YouTubers.
B wear similar clothing to Taylor Swift and Ed Sheeran.</p> |
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3 Match the **highlighted** words in the article to the meanings.

- 1 fashions or styles
- 2 pulled something in order to break it
- 3 untidy or dirty
- 4 young people in general
- 5 someone's appearance
- 6 what people wear in general