

Make your DIY attire stylish and wearable

fashion notes
Hafsa Lodi

Market season is in full swing, with fairs and exhibitions taking place almost every weekend. You may have browsed through various stalls, finding a handful of quirky, one-of-a-kind items that you'd love to buy, only to be discouraged by price tags that start at Dh500. By no means does this necessarily imply that the designer is trying to rip you off – materials and textiles in the UAE aren't as cheap as you think, and market organisers often charge quite a lot for vendors to rent a space, so there are lots of costs a designer must cover before they become profitable.

If you're still hesitant about dropping a lot of cash for one of these garments, why not make your own DIY version at home? Please don't copy the designer outright, because plagiarism is as disrespectful in fashion as it is in literature, but by all means, get inspired by their ideas.

Here's one idea that's both trendy and suited to the winter season – repurposed denim jackets. Take an old denim jacket, and make it street-style-worthy by glamping it up with some patches, lace appliques or embellished baubles. Patches can be created from leftover fabric scraps or trimmings, or bought from craft stores and lace shops in many of the souqs. Give your upcycled jacket added trend appeal by distressing some parts, taking care to keep it all asymmetrical and uneven for a naturally worn-and-torn look. The same decorating tips apply to jeans, which can also look fabulous with the addition of cutesy fabrics and careless rips. Take a look at Dolce & Gabbana's spring/summer menswear, where a pair of blue jeans is quite intricately bedazzled. You can also jazz up an old varsity bomber jacket with pins, badges and patches, like Marc Jacobs has done for his spring/summer collection.

For a toned-down version

of the patches-and-applique upcycling trend, think about giving a basic white blouse a new look with pins and small patches. You can even get a colourful ribbon and tie it round the neck like a scarf, creating a long, droopy bow right under the collar. For quirky, girlie pins, check out the American brand Ban.do – its designs range from flamingoes, lollipops and strawberries to fun mottos such as “Fries before guys” and “I love pizza”. The brand ships internationally, and is also stocked at Virgin Megastores and at the Spontiphoria boutique at Wasl Square, Dubai. If you're looking for kitschy brooches to decorate your garments with, Asos offers some pretty pearl-and-crystal-studded floral designs online.

To give your old handbag a facelift, add patches and pins to it, along with scarves, ribbons and whatever else you can conjure up. Another material to consider playing with is the pom-pom, which was seen adorning basket bags at the Dolce & Gabbana spring/summer show. Buy a few packets of pom-poms, or even tassels, to give a peppy enhancement to a plain old basket, and carry it around like it's the latest It-bag. You can also use these to embellish sandals – perhaps the leather looks worn out, or there's an old stain that needs covering. Instead of tossing them, cover them in colourful pom-poms, as a DIY version of the funky shoes that walked the Dolce & Gabbana runways.

The DIY thing isn't for everybody. If you can afford the real thing, you would certainly buy it, instead of sitting at home in a nest of crafty knick-knacks, running the risk of mistakenly snipping your own hair and gluing your fingers together. But if you're looking for a fun way to repurpose your old belongings into vogueish items, then join the DIY party, grab your glue gun and start modifying.

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DIY-style elements on models for, left to right, Marc Jacobs, Dolce & Gabbana and Libertine. Edward James / WireImage; Catwalking / Getty Images; Fernanda Calfat / Getty Images for NYFW: The Shows



Styling by Hafsa Lodi / The National; photo by Mona Al Marzooqi / The National

Market days

Enjoy the season's weather, food and fashion while looking the part

1. Cap, Dh229, Karl Alley at Virgin Megastore, Yas Mall, 02 565 1319; Mall of the Emirates, 04 341 4353 and elsewhere. **2. Sweater**, Dh280, Riot at Boom & Mellow, Jumeirah Town Centre, 04 344 4512. **3. Necklace**, Dh1,925, Shourouk at S*uce, Marina Mall, 02 681 8650; Dubai Mall, 04 339 9696 and elsewhere. **4. Sunglasses**, Dh455, Barrel & Drum at www.sivvi.com. **5. Pouch**, Dh130, Fyunka at www.sivvi.com. **6. Wallet**, Dh550, Damai at Boom & Mellow. **7. Jeans**, Dh1,375, Filles à Papa at S*uce. **8. Cross-stitch clutch**, Dh1,970, Grav Grav at S*uce. **9. Phone case**, Dh90, Skinnydip London at www.sivvi.com.

trend-ometer this week's highs and lows

▲ Sole intention
Gentlemen, invest in a pair of Santoni monkstrap shoes. They will never go out of style.

▼ Fresh flop
Moschino pander to fools and their money with this idiotic phone cover.

▼ Bright idea?
New-season menswear from Coach? Sorry, no – hideous.

▲ Key benefits
This upbeat fringed keyfob by Zara makes everything instantly better.

▲ Springing into life
We can't wait to shop the new Dolce & Gabbana spring/summer collection.