

*The school uniform:  
in Great Britain,  
in the USA,  
in Canada.*

Bushueva M.S.  
8 “B”, school N 40



The question of whether children should wear a uniform to school always makes for a lively debate, and not only among students! In some countries school uniform is normal and most schools make their students wear one. Britain is the most obvious example of this, but in many other countries with strong links to Britain uniform often has to be worn to school - examples include Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Africa and many other African countries. Uniform is also required at almost all schools in Japan. In other countries, particularly in continental Europe, the USA and Canada, uniform is very rare in state-funded schools, although private schools may have one.



This topic looks at a very large number of arguments about uniforms.

### Arguments:

Pros	Cons
Making everyone wear the same school uniform goes against our rights.	Schools with uniforms obtain better educational results. This is because there is better discipline and so the school setting makes learning easier.
Uniform is often not practical or pleasant to wear. Designs are often old-fashioned and ugly.	Uniform is a social leveler - it makes all the children at a school equal no matter what their family background or income.
Forcing children to wear uniform can ignore their religious and cultural needs	Uniform is usually cheaper than letting children choose what they will wear to school.
Wearing a school uniform is not good preparation for working. Only a few jobs require uniforms, and many of these are low-paid service jobs	Wearing a uniform helps to prepare students for the world of work, where uniforms are often worn.

## **School uniform in Britain.**

Pupils at most secondary schools in Britain have to wear a school uniform. This usually means a white blouse for girls with a dark-coloured skirt and pullover. Boys wear a shirt and tie, dark trousers and dark-coloured pullovers. Pupils also wear blazers – a kind of jacket – with the school badge on the pocket. They often have to wear some kind of hat on the way to and from school – caps for boys and berets for girls. Shoes are usually black or brown. And no high heels.





Young people in Britain often **don't like** their school uniform, especially the hats and shoes. Sometimes they do not wear the right clothes. Schools will often give them a warning the first time that this happens but then will punish them if they continue not to wear the correct uniform. Senior students don't have to wear their school uniform.



# School uniform in the USA.

During the 1990s state schools in the USA began to adopt uniforms. At first uniform rules were seen as a way of stopping children dressing in gang colours in troubled urban areas. Later, claims that introducing uniform leads to better discipline and educational results encouraged other school districts and schools to make a change. Both the Clinton and Bush administrations have been in favour of school uniforms.



Until the early to mid 1970s, the uniform for girls almost always consisted of a [skirt](#) or [jumper](#); but it is now common, in the [United States](#), for female pupils to wear uniform shorts or slacks, especially in warmer weather. This is mainly the result of changing societal norms that resulted in a trend for women and girls in most levels of society to wear trousers and shorts, instead of skirts and dresses, for everyday life. Today, most schools require girls to wear skirts, others allow girls the choice of skirts or culottes and pants.



Boys typically wear a collared shirt, tie, and slacks of required colors, although polo shirts have to some extent replaced dress shirt.

Both sexes usually wear a sweater or blazer (or both) when required by regulations or weather.

Some schools have unisex uniforms--most often a distinctive shirt, and sometimes pants of a given color.





rainy, formal (and warm) uniforms described above during the hotter months of the school year in favor of lighter uniform clothing. However, at some schools appearance and formality prevail over comfort, and students must suffer through the warm weather in full uniform, which can include long sleeve shirts, ties, wool sweaters, blazers, wool jumpers, and knee socks or tight



with predominantly Celtic student populations. In some parts of [Canada](#), the skirt has been modified to include an attached pair of shorts beneath, for modesty, called a [skort](#). Bike shorts are often worn under jumpers for modesty. [Culottes](#) are also substituted for a skirt, especially at Episcopal and non-parochial private schools.



for boys, a button-down shirt, a [necktie](#), and dark pants.

Actual school uniforms vary widely by location and individual school.

Nearly all [Roman Catholic](#) schools have a dress code, and most of them (especially students in the lower grade levels) have a uniform policy.



The girls' uniform has become an iconic figure in Western culture. The hit 1998 [music video](#) for [Britney Spears](#)' first single, "[...Baby One More Time](#)" featured Spears and a number of backup dancers wearing a modified version of the Catholic school uniform, making the video somewhat controversial, especially given Spears' young age at the time. This would not be the last time the iconic costume would be used or referenced in a music video in recent years, however.

