

Have You Heard About...Cosplay?

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**By Mallory York**

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The word "cosplay" is actually a blending of the words "costume" and "play". Cosplayers are called this because not only do they dress up like their favorite characters, but they also act out skits and pose for pictures as the characters—just like actors in a play.

Most cosplayers dress up for conventions, where they can participate in on-stage skits and costume contests. They mingle with other like-minded people who will often recognize their character on sight. Many web sites post galleries of pictures of cosplayers they spot at conventions, and some people even have stores where you can purchase a costume if you don't feel like making your own.

Cosplayers gather from all over the world to attend conventions. Some practice speaking like the character and stay in character during the entire convention, especially while having photos taken. Others simply enjoy wearing the same outfit as their favorite character and don't act any different than normal.

Occasionally cosplayers will pose for gag pictures in which they are doing something the actual character would never do. An example would be an extremely violent character suddenly hugging everyone and doing the peace sign at the camera with no weapons in sight.

In fact, some cosplayers' entire costumes are parodies! They will dress up as a made-up character that is obviously parodying the outfit of an existing one (example: Sailor Meatball Head.) Sometimes they dress up as an inanimate object—like a box of Glico's much-loved snack food, Pocky.

These cosplay parodies are funny to see and infinitely more amusing if you've seen the show or read the book that features the things they're making fun of.

Those who cosplay seriously often make their entire costume from scratch. This means sewing their costume—creating such items as swords and bejeweled shoulderpads. Depending on the character,

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they might even make prosthetic limbs! Any cat-girl cosplayer can tell you that having a well-made set of cat ears and a tail can really make the costume.

Others wear wings for angelic or demonic characters, apply makeup for characters who have unique complexions (like the indigo blue or obsidian black drows) and wear false fangs or long fingernails to emulate a character's exact look. Many wear wigs, but some determined cosplayers even grow their hair out or cut it short and color it to match their cosplay character.

Cosplayers dress up solo or with friends and family, and sometimes they form cosplay groups. These groups all dress up as characters from one particular story, so that when they attend a convention it will look like the whole cast of the show or book is present! It's much more fun to act like a character if you have another character from the same story to act with.

Many cosplay groups do skits, as they have the whole story's cast at their disposal. Cosplay groups

generally know each other in person, but I've found a few on the internet who only meet up to cosplay at conventions and don't live anywhere near each other in their everyday lives.

Cosplayers come in all shapes, sizes, races and ages. There is no age limit for cosplay and often adult cosplayers will bring their children along dressed up as characters too! Some couples cosplay as characters who are in love with each other. Some couples, if not for cosplay, would never have met each other!

Cosplaying is a hobby. As with most hobbies, it can get expensive and time-consuming. But any cosplayer who has had the pride and enjoyment of wearing the costume they created themselves and being recognized by other fans as that character can tell you that it's worth it.

If you are interested in learning more about cosplay, or would like to see pictures of cosplayers in their various costumes, try visiting these great cosplay sites!

-- [Cosplay.com](#)

-- [American Cosplay Paradise](#)

-- [Lord of the Rings Costume](#)

? [Ushicon](#)

Mallory York has been drawing since before she knew how to date a picture, and has been creating anime art for four years. Among her favorite anime series are Fushigi Yuugi, Gundam Wing, and The Slayers. You can read some of her fanfic at

and view more of her artwork at

and also at

## **Residents Of Seattle: Invest In Rainwear**

**By Analeese Burnabaker**

Probably everyone that knows anything about Seattle has heard vast rumors about the city. You have probably heard that it is green and lush and filled with innovation. You have likely heard that Seattle residents are proud of their city and that they are a mostly liberal bunch who love to be out of doors as often as possible. If you drink coffee, then you know that Seattle is the coffee capital of the world. If you have heard all of these "facts" about Seattle than it is likely that you have also heard about the need to invest in rainwear before you get there.

I have heard from countless places about the large amount of rainfall that Seattle is blessed with each year. I can hardly have a conversation with someone about this city and not have the issue of rainfall come up. I find it quite comical, but I guess people all over the world have heard about Seattle and our rain. You see, I moved to Seattle about ten years ago. No one warned me about the high level of rainfall back then or that I should invest in rainwear for myself and anything I valued.

I have found that the rumors about Seattle's climate are accurate for the most part, yet overblown when you are living there. We do get a lot of rain, that is true, and while it is true that rainwear is really wise, our rainfall is not as hard or longlasting as I had imagined it would be. In fact, our rain "storms" are sometimes like mists and quite often like gentle rains that last only a little while.

I would suggest that you don't visit Seattle without rainwear, but not because you'll experience constant downpours consisting of buckets of rain. In fact, you'll probably enjoy the majority of your visit with pleasant weather that is interrupted by quick and gentle rains. So bring your rainwear but know that you won't have to wait long to outlast the weather.

Make plans to visit Seattle today. It is truly one of the best kept secrets of our country. I love living here and I am constantly discovering new things to do and new reasons to love my city. Bring your rainwear and get ready for the vacation of a lifetime. You might just want to move here too by the time your trip is done!

Analeese Burnabaker is a writer for a magazine based in Seattle. She loves to speak against the myths of constant rain while encouraging people to pack rainwear. See

for

goods to prepare yourself.

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