

# Clothes

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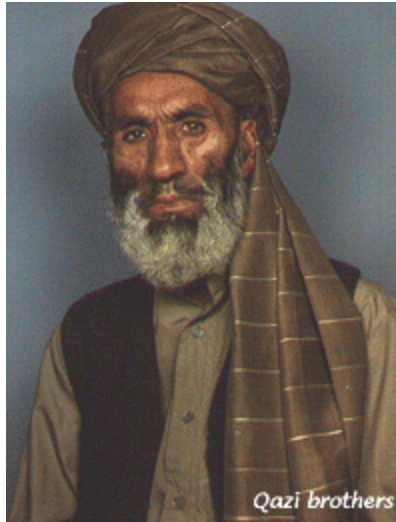
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Traditional clothing in Afghanistan is generally loose-fitting and conservative.



Photo courtesy of zarinas.com

Women typically wear a dress with loose-fitting pants, called a *tunbaan*, underneath that goes down to the ankles. A *chador* (headscarf) is worn to cover the hair. The use of a *hijab*, typically worn by women in Iran and other Islamic countries, is also a common way Afghan women cover their hair today. Only very conservative women wear an all covering *burqa*. During the Taliban rule, all women were forced to wear a *burqa* when going out of the house. Today, one can find some women, even in Kabul, still wearing a *burqa* as they claim it makes them feel safer, and prevents them from being harassed by men. On formal occasions, women wear fancier dresses that have intricate embroidery on it – sometimes small mirrors are sown on the dress. Each region has its own style.



Traditional clothing for men consists of a *peraahan tunbaan* (shirt/pants) outfit. The *tunbaan* is made so that the waist is adjustable, and it is adjusted and held up using a cloth cord (*azaarband*). Men also like to wear some sort of head wear, especially during formal occasions. The head wear differs according to the region the person is from. The most common form of head wear is a *lungee* (turban). There are numerous variations on how the turban is wrapped, each region has its own style. Among the Pashtuns, tribal leaders will wear turbans from fancier cloths and tie them differently in order to signify their status in the community. Hats made from wool are common among the Tajik and the Turkic people of northern Afghanistan. A triangular shaped *karakul* hat, made from the fur of the *karakul* (*qaraqul*) sheep can also be seen. It is past, it was common to see Afghan royalty wearing this hat. The hat became more widely known to westerners after Hamid Karzai became president. On formal occasions, men will wear a vest, sometimes embroidered, over their *peraahan*, or some sort of *chapan* (coat). Both the *karakul* hat and *chapan* originated from northern Afghanistan.

Today, in the major cities, such as Kabul, more and more young Afghans are wearing western clothes, and reserve their traditional Afghan clothing for special occasions, such as weddings or to celebrate major holidays like Nowroz or Eid.