

🎵 Hair, Don't Care: How Tik Tok is Redefining Hair Trends

By Erin Renzi



When Layla Pagan, a sophomore business management major at Siena College, tried the hair color filter on TikTok, she felt like a badass. She never thought about dyeing her hair before, but suddenly a filter on the popular social media app made her rethink the way in which she styled her long waves.

Since the rise of TikTok, trends have flooded the application, inspiring users to partake in them. While Gen Z sat in on Zoom classes and stayed home during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, TikTok trends such as whipped coffee, the “Savage” dance, and bleach tie-dyeing clothes filled their spare time. More recently, hair dyeing has taken over the social media platform.

When you're part of “hair tok” on the app, videos of people dyeing their hair funky colors flood your “For You page” (FYP). Some users decide to dye just one section of the underlayer, while others dye their whole head. When someone sees funky colored hair on the app — whether it be from actual hair dye or an experimental filter — they are sometimes inspired to color their hair.

“I always thought I would stick with my natural hair color forever,” says Pagan. After seeing the purple hair filter on her FYP and trying it on herself, she made the decision to go to a salon, where the hairdresser bleached everything but her roots in order to give Pagan a beautiful purple balayage.

Ithaca College sophomore and film major Sarah Borsari had a similar experience. Borsari always wanted to dye her hair, but refrained until she saw a TikTok video.

“[Dyed hair] is not something I saw a lot,” says Borsari. “Not a lot of people in my town had dyed hair, at least funky dyed hair. When I saw on TikTok all these kids had it, especially all these kids who are very similar to me, I was like okay, maybe I’ll do it.”

Borsari is on the Harry Potter side of TikTok, which is where she saw people dyeing their hair like the character Draco Malfoy. The underside of his hair is dyed bleach blonde. The character’s hairstyle is what inspired Borsari to take the leap of faith and go to the salon, where she put her own spin on the style and dyed her hair purple.

Famous TikTok influencers are also responsible for hair dye videos trending on TikTok, and therefore impacting the beauty industry. When Charli D’Amelio dyed the underside of her hair blue, more and more videos of people coloring their hair in a similar way populated the app.





Certain styles of haircuts have also been popularized through TikTok. Curtain bangs, a style of bangs that make a curtain framing the face, have made a comeback through the app. Many Gen Zers cut their own curtain bangs or visited salons after the style began trending.

When Gen Zers see those who have a hair color or style similar to their own, they are more likely to jump on fashion trends. Erica Caruso, a sophomore dance major at Towson University, wanted bangs for a year. She says she finally decided to get curtain bangs cut after seeing a girl on her FYP with dark hair like her own sporting this style.

TikTok is not only introducing new trends and redefining fashion, but also increasing users' confidence when it comes to their hairstyle. Pagan, for instance, says she is happy with the results of her purple hair and was left feeling confident and powerful.

Oftentimes, people are reluctant to visit salons after receiving a haircut or hair dye job which wasn't what they originally wanted. Borsari used to be someone who hated getting her hair styled at a salon. Before dyeing her hair, she showed her hairdresser a photo of TikTok star Charli D'Amelio's hair as inspiration.

"Usually when I get my hair done I hate it, always," says Borsari. "This was the first time that I walked out and I thought 'This is awesome. I love it.'"

Experimenting with a new hairstyle can allow people to better show off their personal style. After Caruso got curtain bangs, she learned to be unapologetically herself. The confidence curtain bangs gave her allowed her to be more expressive through her personal style.

"I just kind of stopped caring so much about what I wear. If I like how something looks, I'm gonna wear it despite what other people may think of me," says Caruso.

All social media platforms create a bandwagon effect. When popular influencers are seen engaging with a specific fashion or beauty trend, users will often jump on the trend as well, especially if they look up to that specific influencer. Emma Chamberlain's influence on social media has caused many Gen Zers to buy yoga pants, even though they have not been seen as a fashion statement since the early 2000s. While it's hard to predict the trends that will be created through social media platforms one thing is for certain: TikTok has become a leader in trends that sparks users' confidence and allows them to express themselves through experimental style trends.