

Every autumn a piece of novelty clothing appears, covering the wearer from head to toe, wrapping them in a feeling of embryonic safety. We've had the onesie (as popularised by One Direction and Robbie Williams), the Slanket, the Snuggie, the mermaid tail blanket. And this year we have the Oodie.

Resembling a blanket with a hood and featuring versions covered in doodles of unicorns, cartoon avocados, sloths, pizzas and in shades of tie-dye, it might look like a twee gimmick but its selling point is its comfort level.

Searches for Oodie are up a huge 207% in the last six months in the UK, and 220% worldwide, according to Digitaloft.co.uk, while demand is so high that orders being taken now will only be shipped out in late December. Similar products have appeared in its wake, such as the Snuggly – as worn by *Geordie Shore*'s Chloe Ferry, *The Only Way is Essex*'s Amber Turner and Anna Vakili from *Love Island*.

Perhaps its success is down to the pandemic shifting ideas on what we want from our clothes. For those who are able to work from home, the emphasis is less on the functionality of our garments and more about their cosiness. "It's not necessarily about choosing comfort over cool any more, because comfort is cool," says Tara Drury, a retail analyst from market intelligence company Edited.



The boy band One Direction popularised the onesie. Photograph: Beretta/Sims/Rex Features

Created by Australian brothers David and Todd Fogarty, the idea for the Oodie came to David organically. "I came up with the idea of a really warm blanket but you can't really walk around in a blanket," he explained to Australian newspaper *The Advertiser*. "People are just looking for anything to wear around the house at the moment."