

How Cinema Influences Indian Fashion — Insights from Karan Johar

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Bollywood filmmaker and style icon **Karan Johar** sat down with *Hollywood Reporter India* to explore the deep connection between Indian cinema and fashion — and how both influence popular culture in the country. In a wide-ranging conversation, Karan shared anecdotes from his childhood, discussed the evolution of his own style, and weighed in on the role of social media in shaping fashion discourse.

A Childhood Passion for Style

Karan explained that his fascination with fashion began early in life. As a child, he would pour over magazines and observe people's clothing with intense curiosity. That early interest, he said, evolved in tandem with his love for films and eventually became a defining part of his personality and creative expression.

Bollywood's Fashion Footprint

According to Karan, Indian films have long shaped what people wear all across the country. From classic saris and patterned suits of the 1960s to the modern trends seen on red carpets and streets today, cinema has played a powerful role in influencing fashion tastes. He highlighted how iconic outfits — whether it's the *cool* necklace from *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* or sangeet-era dresses — have transcended screens to become cultural staples.

Instagram, Critics and Modern Discourse

Karan didn't shy away from discussing contemporary trends either. While he acknowledged Instagram's role in democratizing fashion and giving more voices a platform, he also criticised how the app's commentary culture has spawned "unqualified" critics who analyse looks without understanding the craft or design behind them.

Personal Style vs. Public Perception

When asked about his own fashion journey, Karan described a continuous evolution — from flamboyant sequins in his 40s to a more nuanced, age-appropriate wardrobe today. He emphasized that he dresses first for himself, not for the audience, though he admitted balancing personal expression with public expectations isn't always easy.

Beyond Costumes: A Broader Influence

The conversation also touched on how costumes from films often get reused or rediscovered in new productions, a testament to how cinematic fashion continues to echo through time. Karan framed fashion not as mere decoration, but as an extension of cinema's storytelling power that connects emotionally with audiences.

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