
THE ITEM/ FLANNEL SHIRT

The popularity of the flannel shirt in the '90s is indisputable. Emerging from the outdoorsy style of the Seattleites, it was soon the trademark of the grunge movement since Seattle, up to this day, is known as the birthplace of grunge. Whereas flannel shirts were usually worn for their useful features, like keeping its owner warm against the often unpleasant and rainy Seattle weather, teenagers in the '90s had a different approach to wearing them.

And the approach was surrender. Trapped in the Generation X, they no longer had the obligation to follow into the footsteps of their parents but were able to choose what they wanted to do with their lives, which was overwhelming.

As it happened time and again, the music scene was a place for those teens to find sympathy. In their songs Kurt Cobain (Nirvana), Chris Cornell (Soundgarden) and Eddie Vedder (Pearl Jam) addressed exactly these issues of the '90s youth. And they also chose to show their dissatisfaction in putting as little thought into their appearance as possible to just say "Screw it all"—and the flannel, with its simple checkered pattern, expressed exactly that.

It became a sign of revolution against a life that offered just too many opportunities, a life that was unfulfilling, unfair even, because no one felt prepared for what life had to offer.

Nowadays, the flannel shirt is much more a fashion phenomenon than a cultural one with It girls like the Olsen twins wearing it as a T-shirt alternative. *[Photo: Native Youth]*

