

# BRITISH EVER SO NORDIC

NORDISKAMUSEET.SE



# Welcome to the exhibition British – Ever So Nordic

In the exhibition you can see how influences from Britain have affected clothes, fashions and lifestyles in the Nordic countries.

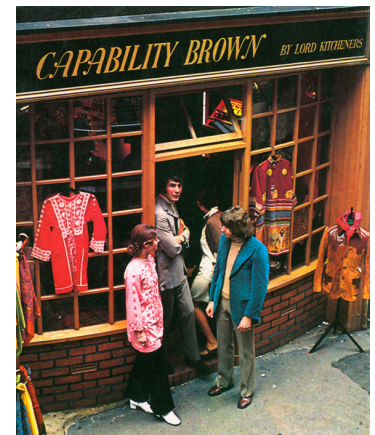
Besides protecting our bodies from the weather, clothes are a means of communication, almost like a language, which can tell us about people's lives and historical events. For example, we can read about how British trade connections and culture have influenced us here in the Nordics. Use the texts in the exhibition to answer the questions. The map shows where the questions can be found.



Left image  
Photo: LightField Studios.



Middle image  
Photo: Peter Segemark / Nordiska museet.



Right image  
Photo: © Rights Managed.

1. Think of the word “British” and write down the first thing that comes to mind.

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2. Do you think that you have anything British in your wardrobe? What?

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3. Britain has influenced clothes and lifestyles in the Nordic countries for a very long time. Back in the sixteenth century, when Erik XIV tried to get the queen of England to marry him, he bought English dresses to give to his sister. The oldest object in the exhibition is a piece of embroidery from the fourteenth century which once adorned a priest’s cope, a kind of cape. The embroidery was incredibly expensive and exclusive.

In the eighteenth century there were laws against luxury imports, known as sumptuary laws, which prohibited Swedes from importing and using certain goods, such as coffee and silk. The laws were intended to ensure that money stayed in the country and that domestic production increased in Sweden. There was a lot of smuggling of forbidden material. Give an example from the exhibition of a garment that contained material prohibited according to the law.

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4. Lots of people travel to England today, especially to London, for the shopping. Many people consume clothes for large sums of money, both luxury items and cheaper clothes. Do you think there are any reasons for introducing a law on luxury imports today? State reasons for your answer.

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5. In the 1960s many young people took inspiration from England. The pop group the Beatles, for example, were famous over much of the world and created a new fashion. Give an example from the exhibition of a typical youth fashion from England.

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6. Do you own pyjamas? Many of the garments, patterns and materials we know today have been exported all over the world by the British. One example is pyjamas, which the British started using after travels in India and Persia, and which is now a word and a garment that we use so often that it has become a part of our everyday life and of the Swedish language.

Do you know why the British travelled so much in India? It was because Britain was a major colonial power, with India as one of its colonies between 1858 and 1947.

The teardrop-shaped pattern in the picture came from India to England. The name of the pattern arose in the nineteenth century when the pattern became the height of fashion. What is the pattern called and why?

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Left image

Photo: Erik Holmén / Nordiska museet.

Right image

Photo: Peter Segemark / Nordiska museet.

7. Corduroy cloth is an example of a material and a word that came to us from Britain. In Swedish it is called manchester after the city in Britain where it was made. There are garments and materials that have changed social status and have been used by different people in different periods. Corduroy is one such example.

Select two corduroy garments from the exhibition and give examples of how they signal different status or social class.

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8. Find garments or accessories in the exhibition which can be described as:

Rebellious .....

Outdoor or leisure garments .....

Male .....

Female .....

Give reasons for your answers .....

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Photo: : Carl Öst Wilkens.

9. Many young people have taken inspiration from Britain, especially since travel, television and the Internet have made it easy to make new contacts and gain fresh impressions. Through British music, such as the Sex Pistols, the Beatles and David Bowie, many young people have found their clothes style and lifestyle.

Do you watch British television series, or listen to British music? Where do you get your influences from and what are they?

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10. Through clothes and accessories one can express social identity. Look at the doll dressed like a skinhead and think about what the clothes style says to you. Write down your thoughts.

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11. The same clothes style can have different meanings depending on who wears it. Read the text about the skinhead's clothes. Does the text agree with the answer that you wrote to the previous question? Is there anything that differs from what you wrote?

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Left image  
Photo: Erik Holmén / Nordiska museet.

Right image  
Photo: Peter Segemark / Nordiska museet.

12. Much of what we surround ourselves with originated in Britain although we do not think about it. Reflect on your answers to questions 1 and 2. Will your answer be different after you have seen the exhibition? Do you still think of the same thing when you hear the word “British”?

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13. Are you wearing anything British today or do you have anything British at home in your wardrobe?

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14. Why do you think there are so many British influences in our lives?

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Photo: Liam Seskis.

## EXTRA TASKS

15. Give an example of how the British have influenced fashions and lifestyles in the Nordics via

Materials .....

Patterns .....

Words .....

Influences from historical events .....

Influences from a person or group .....

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16. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries industrialisation gained momentum in England. Making fabrics and clothes had previously been very expensive and time-consuming. It was therefore profitable to develop the textile industry in order to increase production, reduce prices and increase exports. The British were first with many improved inventions, but also with various new types of garments or shoes. Give an example of this from each of the two small showcases along the wall.

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17. In the exhibition there are different garments whose names are British loanwords. Names that we use so often in our everyday life that they have become a part of the Swedish language. Write down British loanwords that you use in everyday speech, such as wow. If you can't think of any word, search the Internet and write down the words you find.

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18. In what way has Britain influenced various sports, such as football and golf?

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Left image  
Photo: Erik Holmén / Nordiska museet.

Right image  
Photo: Peter Segemark / Nordiska museet.