

Old Money Trend

Social media has become a breeding ground for trends, and the latest one takes us back in time, not with a vintage filter, but with an entirely new aesthetic known as Old Money. This trend, garnering billions of views on platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, revolves around imitating the perceived lifestyle and fashion choices of established, wealthy families. But beneath the curated imagery lies a complex discussion about class, wealth disparity, and the evolution of aspiration in the digital age.

“The Old Money aesthetic emphasises quiet luxury, timeless elegance, and a focus on quality over showing off wearing luxury brands”, explained Mahira Sharma, creator of an Instagram account focused on old-money inspiration with over 10,000 followers. Quiet luxury is at the heart of this aesthetic, preferring understated elegance over flashy displays. It's about showcasing wealth subtly, valuing an item for its quality rather than its brand name or appearance. “Gone are the days of flaunting designer logos and flashy displays of wealth”, said Sunvi. Instead, there's a growing appreciation for the understated sophistication that defines the Old Money aesthetic. It's a celebration of heritage, tradition, and enduring style—a testament to the enduring appeal of refinement in an age of excess.

The popularity of the Old Money trend can be attributed to several factors. In an era of economic uncertainty and rising inequality, the idea of belonging to an established, wealthy family holds a significant allure. Aspirational content creators showcase their effortless elegance and curated lifestyles, offering viewers a glimpse into a world perceived to be idealistic.

This shift in focus is a stark contrast to the New Money aesthetic, often associated with loud designer brands, conspicuous consumption, and a show-off mentality. The Old

Money trend seeks to redefine wealth as something that transcends mere financial resources, instead reflecting a sense of history, refinement, and understated confidence. “Before the Old Money aesthetic trend came on social media, as a fashion influencer, I would feel the need to wear branded clothes with flashy logos to gain followers because I thought people would engage with my content more if I wear an outfit from a prominent brand. However, with the coming up of the old money trend, as an influencer, I have started wearing white linen shirts, tailored trousers, and classic cashmere sweaters, paired with understated jewellery and elegant accessories, and have noticed people engage with my content way more now that I focus on following this trend” said fashion influencer and model, Imane.

However, the emphasis on achieving a specific aesthetic can lead to feelings of inadequacy and social comparison among the middle class. “In the tapestry of modern consumerism, trends are the threads woven by societal desires, reflecting aspirations and identities. Yet, amidst the allure of Old Money aesthetics and minimalist ideals, lies the paradox of conspicuous consumption. What appears as the 'cool thing' is often a manifestation of deeper yearnings and societal pressures, where social comparison and aspirations intertwine, shaping the narrative of our digital era” said Professor Hasan Mahmud.

The Old Money trend on social media presents a fascinating paradox. While it rejects displays of wealth associated with New Money, it nonetheless fosters a new kind of conspicuous consumption focused on quiet luxury and curated lifestyles. This trend reflects a yearning for stability and a desire to belong in an age of digital validation.