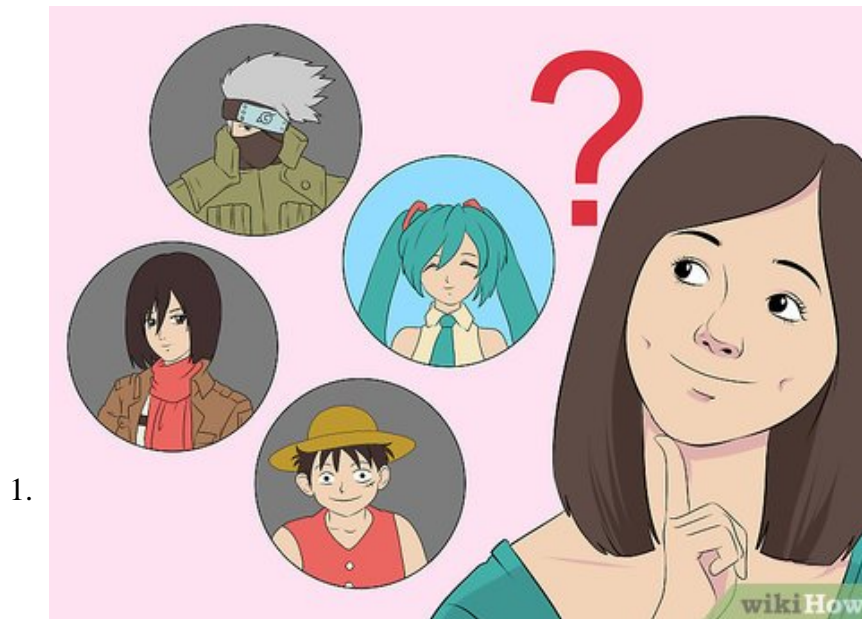


How to Make Anime Cosplay

Making an anime cosplay can be challenging, but with the right attention to detail and construction, you can make it look believable and realistic. This wikiHow will give you the basics of cosplaying an anime character, from deciding on a...

Part 1 of 3:

Choosing and Planning Your Cosplay



Choose a character to cosplay. The character does not have to look like you, or even be the same gender as you. After all, that's what wigs and makeup are for. Instead, pick a character that you find interesting and that you'd feel comfortable cosplaying as.^[1] If you are a seasoned cosplayer, consider doing a complex character as a challenge.

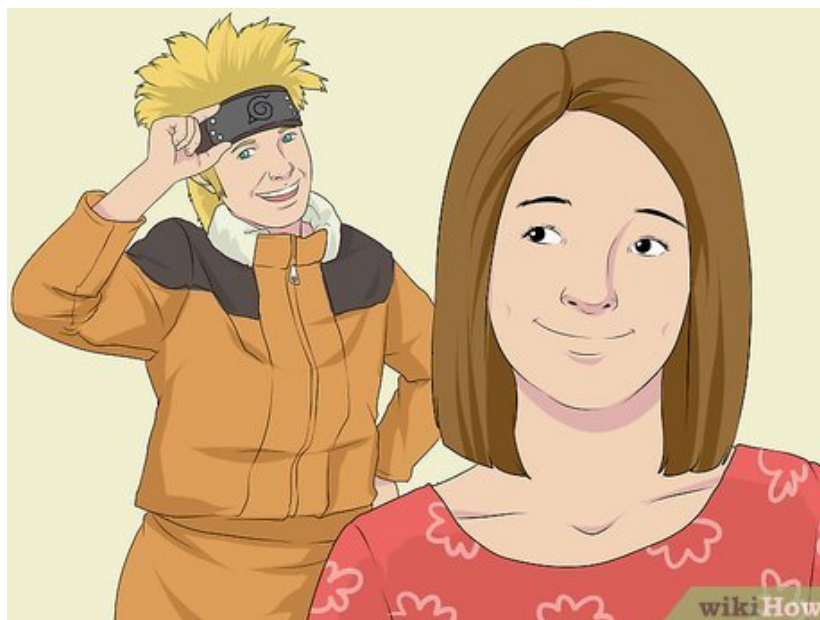
1. Can't decide? See what your friends are cosplaying, and pick a character from that series. You could start a cosplay group!
2. Still can't decide? Pick a character similar to you—or completely different from you. You could also ask your friends for suggestions.

2.



Get lots of reference pictures. Chances are, your character will have a few different outfits to choose from. Pick one that appeals the most to you, then find as many reference pictures as you can.^[2] If the anime also has a manga or video game, consider looking those up as well. Action figures and statues of characters also make great references.

3.



Consider doing a twist on your cosplay instead. You can add a unique spin on your character, such as steampunk, post-apocalyptic, or Renaissance.^[3] You can also do a crossover cosplay, such as a Sailormoon/Sailorscout version of a Disney princess. Lastly, you can also do a gender-bent cosplay.

1. Gender bending is not the same as crossplay. It is when you cosplay as the female version of a male character—or a male version of a female character.

4.



Consider how much time, money, and effort you are willing to put in. The more complex a costume is, the more time you will need to do it justice. Don't wait until the last minute. This is where you should also take your skill level into consideration. If this is your first cosplay, or if you can't sew, consider doing something simple.^[4]

1. If you are new to sewing, you can still try a complex cosplay, but give yourself extra time so that you can learn and practice the necessary skills.
2. There is no shame in buying or commissioning a complex piece for your cosplay.

5.



Think about when and where you will be wearing the cosplay. Will you be spending most of your time indoors or outdoors? Indoor conventions are usually air-conditioned, which means you have more freedom as to what cosplay you can wear. If the convention or gathering will be taking place outside, choose a cosplay that is appropriate for the weather.^[5]



Write down everything that you need for your cosplay. This includes the obvious things, such as skirts, shirts, and pants, as well as the less obvious things, such as shoes, belts, and other accessories. It should also include things like wigs, makeup, and undergarments.^[6]



Decide what you can make, modify, or buy. There is no shame in buying some ready-made pieces, especially if they are simple, such as a belt, dress shirt, or slacks. If something is close, but not perfect, you can modify it by dyeing it, painting a pattern on it, or switching out the buttons.^[7]

1. Some items are very difficult to make. If you don't have the skill or time to make them, it would be a good idea to buy them instead.^[8]

Making the Cosplay

1.



Get the patterns. Unless you know how to draft your own patterns, you will need to buy some. Sometimes, a simple pattern will give you exactly what you need. In other cases, you may need to buy multiple patterns in order to make all of the cosplay pieces. You may also have to modify the existing pattern to suit the character, such as adjusting the sleeve or skirt length.

2.

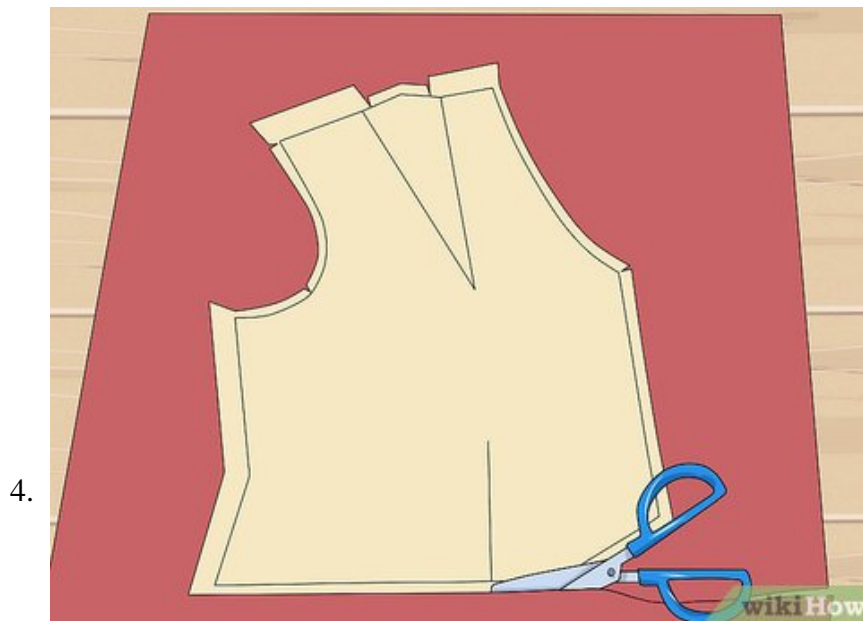


Adjust the cosplay to suit your body type. Anime characters often have unrealistic figures and proportions. What looks great on an anime character may look terrible on you. Luckily, this is easily fixed through clever alterations, such as lengthening a hemline, adjusting the waistline, or using a slightly different collar. Most of these changes won't be outwardly noticeable. Your cosplay will still be recognizable. Best of it, it will look *great* on you!^[9]

1. If you plan on wearing any shapewear with your cosplay, put it on *before* taking your measurements.



Choose the fabric wisely. Just because something looks pretty doesn't necessarily mean that it suits the garment type. In these cases, fabric choices for real-life clothing will also apply to cosplay. For example, a military-style trench coat would be made from felted wool. A school uniform skirt might be made from wool suiting. A fancy gown may be made from silk or satin. Most patterns will have fabric recommendations on the back.^[10]



Make your cosplay with care. Follow the instructions on the pattern. Remember to clip the corners and cut notches into curved edges. When you are done, press every seam and hem. These are small details that often go unnoticed, but they can really take your cosplay to the next level and give it a professional touch.^[11]

1. Not all patterns will match your cosplay exactly. You may have to modify or combine some of them.
2. A dress form will help drastically. If you can't afford one, make a body cast from a T-shirt, duct tape, and stuffing.



Add some details. Outfits in animated films often lack detail to make things easier and quicker to produce. Adding some details will make the cosplay look more realistic and memorable.^[12] If you have a lot of time on hand, and are willing to put in the effort, consider the following:

1. If your cosplay has delicate gold or silver detailing, consider embroidering it instead of painting it on.
2. If you are cosplaying a princess, consider adding some tiny rhinestones or jewels—not enough to be obvious, but enough to add some sparkle.
3. Look closely at the buckles and clasps. If the cosplay calls for it, consider using fancier ones.
4. Consider jacquard material for historical outfits. They add some texture and pattern without using a multitude of colors.

6.



Remember to wear supportive undergarments. These include things like pushup bras, sports bras, shapewear, and dance belts. The right undergarment can make your cosplay lay smoother and look better on you. Make sure that they fit properly, however, or they will make your cosplay look even worse!^[13] Listed below are common types of supportive undergarments and their purposes:

1. If you will be wearing a ball gown, you will most likely need a crinoline, Hoop Skirt, or petticoat. A corset may also help.^[14]
2. If you will be crossplaying as a male, try a sports bra or binding your chest.^[15]
3. Wear thongs or seamless underwear with skintight cosplays.^[16] A dance belt is a *must* for men.
4. Try full body shapewear or highwaisted briefs for added smoothness.^[17]

7.



Don't forget the shoes. Shoes are often overlooked, but are an important component of any cosplay. If you can't find the right shoes, you can always modify them by making shoe covers or painting them.^[18] Comfortable shoes that fit are also very important, especially if you plan on walking a lot.

1. If you can't see your character's shoes because they are covered by a long dress, try some dance heels or character shoes. Paint or cover them with fabric to match the dress, and consider adding a pretty embellishment.

Part 3 of 3:

Adding the Extras



Put on some makeup to help you look better in photos. It is highly recommended, even if you are male or cosplaying a male character.^[19] Start with a clean face, then apply some primer, foundation, concealer (if needed), and powder.^[20] Next, add some eyeliner, mascara, lipstick, and eyeshadow.^[21] Step up your game with the following:

1. Add further definition by applying false lashes and filling in your eyebrows.
2. If you are cosplaying a male character, wear a neutral or earth-toned lipstick color. Try some contouring.
3. If you are cosplaying a female character, wear red or pink lipstick, or even lipgloss. Add a healthy glow with blush.

2.



Wear a wig, if needed. Purchase a high-quality wig from a trusted wig shop; avoid the cheap Halloween wigs.^[22] Cut and style the wig on a Styrofoam wig head. Pin up your hair, put on a wig cap, and then put on the wig. Secure everything with bobby pins.^[23]

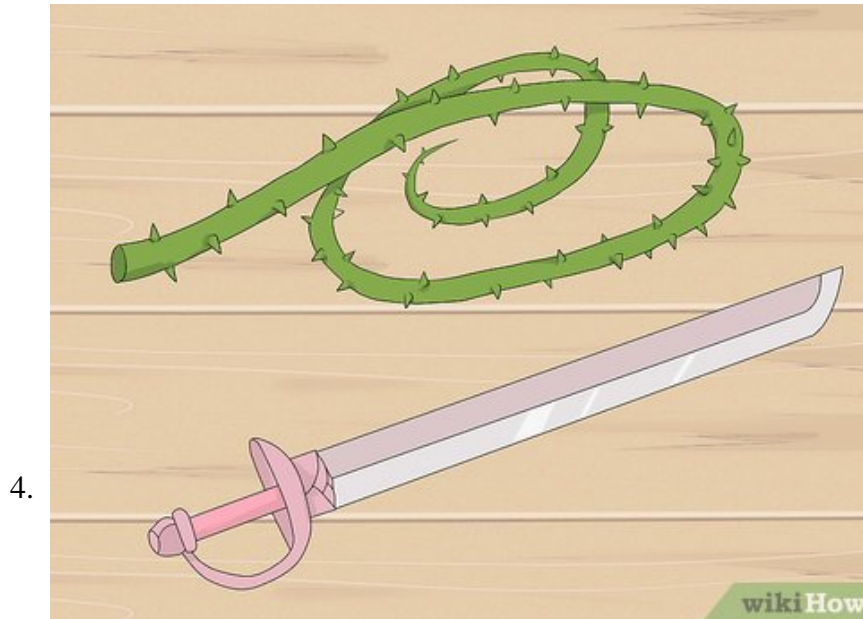
1. Try to use bobby pins and wig caps that match your wig color. If you can't find the right colored bobby pins, paint them with nail polish.
2. If your character has floor-length hair, consider sacrificing a few inches and avoiding a tangled mess.^[24]
3. If your hair is the right color but the wrong length, consider cutting it or adding extensions to make it the correct length.

3.



Accessorize! Most anime characters will have little accessories that really make the costume. This includes the obvious things, such as belts, gloves, and hats. It may also include the less obvious things, such as glasses, pocket watches, jewelry, and hair clips.

1. You can find replica pieces online. Some of them are official replicas, while others are handmade.
2. You can also find similar, but not exact pieces, in various online and brick-and-mortar shops.
3. You can also make your own pieces out of foam, clay, Worbla, etc.



Don't forget the props. This is not absolutely necessary, but you can really take your cosplay to the next level. A prop can also make your poses for pictures more dynamic and interesting. Watch your character's episodes again, and take note of any props they frequently use. It can be as simple as a rose or tea cup to as fancy as a fantasy sword.

1. You can make props out of all sorts of materials. Wood, Worbla, and foam are the most popular choices.
2. Try to make the prop as light as you can. You will be carrying it around all day. Even the lightest things start to feel heavy after a few hours.^[25]
3. Check the convention's prop rules. Some conventions don't allow over-sized props or guns.^[26]



Consider adding some special effects. Does your character have a different eye color from you? If so, try colored contacts. Circle lenses are great for giving you that large, anime look.^[27] Does your character have scars? You can get pretty realistic scars with liquid latex, scar wax, or even latex scars. And what is a vampire or demon without fangs?^[28]



Act the part. This is not completely necessary, but it can help make your cosplay look more believable. Watch the episodes where your character appears, and take note of how they move and carry themselves. Try to replicate that when posing for pictures.^[29]

1. If you come across another cosplayer from the series, try interacting with them in character. Don't force them to play along if they don't want to, however.

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