Wearable Technology

Wearable – that is the term used for technological advances that are converted into clothing or accessories that can be worn. From purses that prevent overspending to manicures used as a subway card, there are seemingly no limits to the possibilities of “wearable” tech.

Today, most consumers dress up technology with stickers and special phone cases in order to make a statement in the same way they select the clothes that they wear. Only now, our technology is becoming the wearable accessory. In some ways, it may have all started with the watch that communicates with our cell phone - wearable and partly fashionable technology. That single watch opened the door to a world of new fashion that has a potential runway as far as the eye can see.

Maybe its thanks to the tiniest RFID chips and beacons that pack such a powerful punch. Or, maybe it’s our growing need to have our gadgets on our person at all time that integrating technology into a wearable condition made this clash of technology and style a necessity.

The skirt that lights up the galaxy on the folds of its material is astonishing, until you see the many different articles of clothing that light up with simple LED lights. Companies, like [Electric Styles](https://www.electricstyles.com/), create light up shirts, pants, shoes, etc. Clothes with lights are eye-catching, but they don’t compare to the more advanced technology available in wearable fashion.

From a student inserting an RFID chip in an acrylic nail, we see manicures on the horizon for people who don’t want to worry about misplacing their Oyster Cards or rummaging through a bag before entering the subway. Though this is technically not legal yet, this project has opened the door to many more possibilities. (Read the whole article on [CNN.com](http://www.cnn.com/videos/tech/2016/08/05/high-tech-nails-london-underground-oyster-card-orig.cnn))

In fashion, there are few things as coveted as a designer handbag. Then, the iBag steps onto the scene, and then iBag2 - designer purses that use RFID technology, as well as GPS and beacon signals, to monitor spending. Working with designer Geova Rodrigues, the iBag2 is not only useful, but definitely in-style.(Learn more about [iBag2](https://www.finder.com/ibag))

For those in fashion or the tech industry, this is all old news. Forums and work compilations have been going on for years. The first smartwatch came out in 2000 by IBM. Though it wasn’t that well- received or fashionable, it was the start of a desire to build something better; to not only create, but design something both functional and aesthetically pleasing. From there, many many more smartwatches have attempted to make a statement in the wearable world, as evidenced by the article, [A History of Smartwatches in Pictures](http://www.zdnet.com/pictures/before-the-iwatch-a-history-of-smartwatches-in-pictures/).

Of course, none of the wearable, technological advancements would be possible all on their own. Where there’s a smart watch, high-tech handbag, or RFID manicure, there are beacons, GPS and scanners that exchange information with these wearables in order to provide the wonderful experiences that wearable technology offers. Though people may not see or notice the discreetly hidden beacons in stores, those are what communicate with objects like the iBag, notifying the purse when it’s within range, which then alert the bag’s owner with lights and vibrations.

Though the world may only see the beauteous handbag or nails, they are still looking at a very versatile, highly purposeful, and extremely glamorized RFID system that is slowly becoming an intricate part of our everyday life.

Who knew that one day fashionistas would be working alongside the tech industry, or that computer science grads would be creating gadgets worn on the runway? The seemingly cold, metallic world of tech has merged into the fashion industry. Somehow, the mix has been made. Somehow, two worlds have collided and are creating new standards in both fashion and technology.