

Difference Between Leotard and Bodysuit

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Key Difference - Leotard vs Bodysuit

Leotard and bodysuit are two garments that look almost the same; this is why the difference between leotard and bodysuit is unknown to most. The key difference between leotard and bodysuit is that **a leotard is a skintight, one-piece garment which covers the torso of the wearer but leaves the legs exposed** whereas **a bodysuit is a one-piece, form-fitting garment that covers the torso and the crotch of the wearer**. The event or occasion of wearing either is also largely different from one another.

What is a Leotard?

A leotard is a skintight, one-piece garment which covers the torso of the wearer but leaves the legs exposed. In that sense, a leotard is very similar to a swimsuit. Unisex garments, leotards are worn by performers who require overall body coverage without hindering flexibility. Leotards are commonly worn by dancers, gymnasts, acrobats, and contortionists. Leotard is also a part of the [ballet](#) dress and is worn beneath the ballet skirt.

Leotard has an extended history; it was first introduced in the 1800s, by the French acrobatic performer Jules Léotard (1838–1870), from which the name of the garment was derived. Originally leotard was designed for male performers, but it became popular with women in the early 1900s as a swimsuit. The Early leotard was referred to as the maillot by Jules Léotard.

Today, leotards are available in a variety of colors and materials, preferably lycra or spandex (a material with an exceptional elasticity that helps to shape the body better). There are also sleeveless, short-sleeved and long-sleeved leotards. Further, various necklines can also be found in modern leotards such as crew neck, polo neck, and scoop-neck.

For performers such as gymnasts, contortionists and [circus](#) performers, it is important that their precise body movements are seen clearly by the audience. Leotard enables this due to its skintight nature. Many dancers use leotards instead of adorned costumes since leotards are very simple in nature and do not divert attention from the dance like a decorated costume.



Figure 01: Leotard

What is a Bodysuit?

A bodysuit is a one-piece, form-fitting garment that covers the torso and the crotch of the wearer. A bodysuit is seemingly very similar to a leotard or a swimsuit. The major difference is that a bodysuit has snaps or hooks at the crotch unlike in a leotard or a swimsuit. Bodysuits are available in a variety of materials (such as lycra and spandex) and colors. Bodysuit is not considered as a form of athletic wear or sportswear. A progression from the leotard, bodysuit was first presented in the 1950s by fashion designer Claire McCardell. Bodysuit became a fashion item for both men and women in the 1980s.

Today, bodysuits are generally worn by women with trousers or a skirt and available with sleeves and without sleeves. Bodysuits can be used as a part of casual and semi-formal wear, paired with long sweaters and blazers. They are usually worn with skinny jeans, high waist jeans, and skirts of various styles.

Bodysuits are also available for younger children and toddlers and are called **Onesies** or **snapsuits**. A counterpart to bodysuit is also available as a close-fitting shirt or blouse which is referred to as a **bodyshirt**.



Figure 02: Bodysuits can be coupled with trousers.

What are the similarities between Leotard and Bodysuit?

- Both leotard and bodysuit are one-piece skintight garments.
- Both of these garments do not cover the legs of the wearer.

What is the difference between Leotard and Bodysuit?

Leotard vs Bodysuit

Leotard is a skintight, one-piece garment which covers the torso of the wearer but leaves the legs exposed.

Bodysuit is a one-piece, form-fitting garment that covers the torso and the crotch of the wearer.

Use	
Leotard is most commonly worn by dancers, gymnasts, athletes, and contortionists.	Bodysuit is used as a piece of style garment often coupled with trousers and skirts.
Gender	
Leotard is a unisex garment.	Bodysuits are worn by females.
Origins	
Leotard was introduced by acrobatic performer Jules Léotard in the 1800s.	Bodysuit was introduced by fashion designer Claire McCardell in 1950

Summary - Leotard vs Bodysuit

The difference between leotard and bodysuit is not a seemingly distinct one. However they mainly differ in their use; leotards are used by performers such as dancers, gymnasts, acrobats, and contortionists while bodysuits are worn by women in general as casual and as a part of professional wear. Further, while leotard is a unisex garment, bodysuits are worn by females.

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Image Courtesy:

1. "Jade Barbosa, floor routine, 2007" By Original photograph by Wilson Dias/AbrDerivative by Keraunoscopia - Derived from File:Jade Barbosa 16072007.jpg ([CC BY 3.0 br](#)) via [Commons Wikimedia](#)
2. "[Pastel Donut Print Bodysuit, White Jeans, a Mint Green Satchel and Blue Wedges](#)" By Jamie - ([CC BY-SA 2.0](#)) via [Commons Wikimedia](#)

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