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# Cosplay contacts: Where and how to buy them

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Devoted cosplayers know that to stay true to character, you have to stay as close as you can to replicating a character's entire look — which includes eye color and design.

For some cosplays, you won't need to worry about it because your eye color matches your character's, or you're wearing glasses or a mask. But for many cosplays, you'll want cosplay contacts to complete your perfect look, whether it's for Halloween, comic-cons, virtual

gatherings, social media videos, or just taking pictures around the house.

Think of characters from “Avatar,” “Naruto,” “It,” “My Hero Academia” and X-Men — many of them have emblematic looks that include non-traditional eye colors and designs.

Cosplay contacts are also known as [colored, cosmetic or decorative contacts](#). They can change not only your [eye color](#) but the shape of the [iris](#) and [pupil](#) and other defining characteristics. You can get contacts for cosplay with or without vision correction.

[Prescription](#) cosplay contacts are available in many, but not all, styles. And what about cosplay [contacts for astigmatism](#)? Yes, even people with astigmatism can wear some brands of colored cosplay contacts.

Scleral lenses are designed to cover all or part of the “whites” of your eyes ([called the sclera](#)). These are perfect for characters such as Dark Willow from “Buffy the Vampire Slayer” or a character that has oversized irises.

## Safe cosplay contacts

Are cosplay contacts safe? Yes, for most people — but “most” isn’t the same as “all.” The first and most important step, before you even consider where to buy cosplay contacts, is to find out whether or not your eyes can tolerate cosmetic contacts.

While most people can handle wearing cosmetic contact lenses, there are some eye conditions that may preclude their use. For example, Cogan’s dystrophy (also known as map-dot-fingerprint dystrophy) causes the cornea to tear and erupt easily when the eye becomes dry. The bumpy corneal surface can be difficult for contact lenses and may erode when contacts are removed.

Anyone with a history of [corneal infections](#) or diabetes is also generally advised to avoid contacts.

### Be sure to get a prescription

An [optometrist](#) or [ophthalmologist](#) can examine your eyes and vision and can measure your eyes for contacts. They can provide you with specific instructions for safety and care, including how to put in, remove, clean and store cosplay contacts as well as how often to change them.

It’s important to follow these instructions to lower your chance of eye infection or injury. Many doctors can share horror stories about people who’ve been harmed, or even blinded,

by the incorrect use of cosmetic contacts. No cosplay is worth risking injury to your eyesight.

Your eye doctor will provide you with a prescription that includes your lens measurements. The American Academy of Ophthalmology points out that it's not just dangerous to buy contacts without a doctor's prescription; in the United States, it's also illegal.

## Protect yourself from illegal contacts

Selling contact lenses without a prescription has been illegal since 2005 because of safety issues. Unfortunately, there are many people who illegally sell cosplay colored contacts online, in seasonal pop-up shops and in flea-market booths without requiring a prescription. It's up to you to protect yourself by not patronizing these sellers.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) sent letters to seven brick-and-mortar stores warning them to stop selling contact lenses of any kind without valid doctors' prescriptions. The retailers were notified of potential legal action and civil penalties of up to \$42,530 per violation.

## Safety issues related to contacts for cosplay

In addition to all the usual safety measures needed with contact lenses, cosplay contacts may have some additional risks. They are often thicker and less permeable, meaning that air doesn't get through as easily. That means bacteria can get trapped inside the lens.

It's even more important to follow doctors' instructions to the letter when wearing contacts for cosplay. That's not something Americans are great at. A report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said that at least one contact lens hygiene risk behavior was reported by 85.3% of adolescents, 80.9% of young adults and 87.5% of older adults.

According to the report, "The most frequently reported risk behaviors in adolescents were not visiting an eye doctor at least annually, sleeping or napping in lenses, and swimming in lenses. Among young adults and older adults, the most frequently reported risk behaviors were replacing lenses at intervals longer than those prescribed, replacing lens storage cases at intervals longer than those recommended, swimming in lenses, and sleeping or napping in lenses."

### When in doubt, take them out.

Take out your contacts if:

- You're getting sleepy.

- Your eyes feel irritated because of allergies, eye strain or because of the contacts themselves.
- You're in an area with chemical fumes or other kinds of irritants.
- You've had them in longer than recommended.

## FDA approved cosplay contacts

Contact lenses (even the ones meant for cosplay) are categorized as medical devices — not as cosmetic or over-the-counter products. Because of that, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulates their use.

You can check the FDA's website to verify whether particular contacts have been reviewed and approved for sale. If you're looking for safe colored contacts for cosplay, you should always verify that the lenses you choose are listed by the FDA, regardless of what a manufacturer or salesperson tells you.

The FDA notes that contact lenses are not "one-size-fits-all" and that poorly fitting contacts can cause:

- [Scratches on the cornea](#)
- [Conjunctivitis](#) (pink eye)
- Corneal infections
- Decreased vision
- Blindness

In some cases, this damage can happen very rapidly — within hours, not days — and can be irreversible. Make sure to see a doctor right away if you have any pain or irritation that doesn't go away quickly from wearing colored cosplay contacts.

## Where to buy colored contacts for cosplay

It's important to stick to reputable sellers when you're looking for cosplay contacts — or any other sort of contact lenses. When you buy from websites like Amazon, eBay or Wish, or from Halloween shops, convenience stores, street vendors or anywhere else that doesn't require a prescription from a doctor, you're not guaranteed to find FDA-tested and approved contact lenses. You could wind up with lenses that could harm your eyes.

Instead, visit a local optical store like LensCrafters, Pearle Vision Centers or Vision Source, or choose an independent vision store close by. You can visit any of these stores in person to be examined by an optometrist and get a prescription for contacts. They will be happy to make recommendations and help you order from reputable brands.

Never place an order when a business doesn't require a prescription; you don't know what you're getting from them. If they're skirting laws, you don't want to entrust them with your eye health.

But you can shop around! Just because you get a prescription from an eye doctor doesn't mean that you have to order your cosplay contacts from that doctor.

After an eye exam, your eye doctor is required to give you a copy of your prescription at no additional charge whether you ask for it or not. This allows you to shop for the best price.

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## Cosplays that use colored contacts

Here are some of the characters you might cosplay with colored or designed contacts:

- **Blue cosplay contacts** – Bubbles ("The Powerpuff Girls"), Katara ("Avatar"), Sokka ("Avatar"), Ryo ("Devilman Crybaby"), Junko Enoshima ("Danganronpa"), Princess Peach ("Mario"), Glaceon ("Pokemon"), Ryuko Matoi ("Kill la Kill"), Marceline ("Adventure Time"), Sailor Moon ("Sailor Moon").
- **White cosplay contacts** – Storm (Marvel), The Watcher (Marvel), Kora (Marvel), Nathaniel Malick ("Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D."), zombie (generic), Hinata Hyuga ("Shippuden;" can also use light violet cosplay contacts).
- **Green cosplay contacts** – Nero Claudius (Type-Moon), Hulk (Marvel), Scarlet Witch (Marvel), Black Widow (Marvel), Loki (Marvel), Ant-Man (Marvel), Toph ("Avatar"), Kim Possible ("Kim Possible"), Lulu ("League of Legends"), Harley Quinn (DC).
- **Black cosplay contacts** – Ebony Maw (Marvel), Mantis (Marvel), Black Sky (Marvel), Dark Willow ("Buffy the Vampire Slayer").
- **Purple cosplay contacts** – Kipo ("Kipo and the Age of Wonderbeasts"), Glimmer ("She-Ra and the Princesses of Power"), Sam Manson ("Danny Phantom"), Espeon ("Pokemon"), Sombra ("Overwatch").
- **Yellow cosplay contacts** – Raina (Marvel), Ghost Rider (Marvel), Captain Marvel (Marvel), Zylak (Marvel), Toga Himiko ("My Hero Academia").
- **Red cosplay contacts** – Kirishima ("My Hero Academia"), Bakugo ("My Hero Academia"),

Kurapika ("Hunter x Hunter"), Ursula ("Little Witch Academia"), Jinx ("League of Legends").

- **Pink cosplay contacts** – Mitsuba ("Toilet-bound Hanako-kun"), Nezuko ("Demon Slayer"), Spinel ("Steven Universe"), Madoka ("Puella Magi Madoka Magica"), Jinx ("Teen Titans Go!").

## If you've never worn contacts

If you've never worn contacts before, you may not know what's normal and what you need to do. Here are some things you should know about wearing contacts:

- **Wash your hands** – Make sure to always have clean hands before touching your contacts to insert or remove them.
- **You should not feel them** – Once a lens is inserted, you shouldn't feel it at all if it fits properly. You may be aware of it and you may tear up at first, but once it "settles in," you shouldn't have irritation. If you do, it may be that there's dust or dirt trapped under the lens.
- **They can dry out your eyes** – Wearing contacts for hours can cause your eyes to dry out. Check with your eye doctor about which eye drops can safely be used with your contact lenses.
- **They may move** – Sometimes contacts move around a little in the eye, especially if you rub your eyes. (Try your best not to!)
- **They don't last forever** – Some contacts are meant to be used once and then thrown away. Others are reusable for a limited time when [cleaned and stored properly](#). Check with your eye doctor and read the product literature to know how long you can keep your contacts before replacing them.

Whether you're aiming for recognition as a cosplayer or just looking to have some creative fun, details like contact lenses can make the difference between a good cosplay and a truly standout one.

Which character are you most excited about cosplaying next? Find a nearby optical store and get just the right contacts.

RELATED READING: [Contact lenses: A guide for first-time users](#)

### Sources

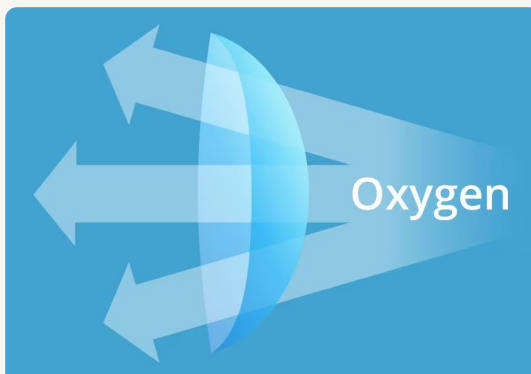


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