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Your Complete Guide to All the TikTok Personas

From e-girls to soft boys, the wide cast of TikTok "characters" users play on the popular app may be difficult to decipher. But if you're a parent of a tween, you've likely already encountered them in real life—whether you knew it or not.

By [Maressa Brown](#) | Published on January 17, 2020



Given that TikTok boasts 1.65 billion downloads to date, it's no surprise that the superhot social media platform sets major trends, including the conception of memes, slang words galore, and challenges that take off like wildfire among Gen Z. But along with trends, the app has also inspired various personas that tweens and teens all over the world have taken on in the name of TikTok.

We're talking about VSCO girls. E-boys. Soft girls. *Wait... What the who?*



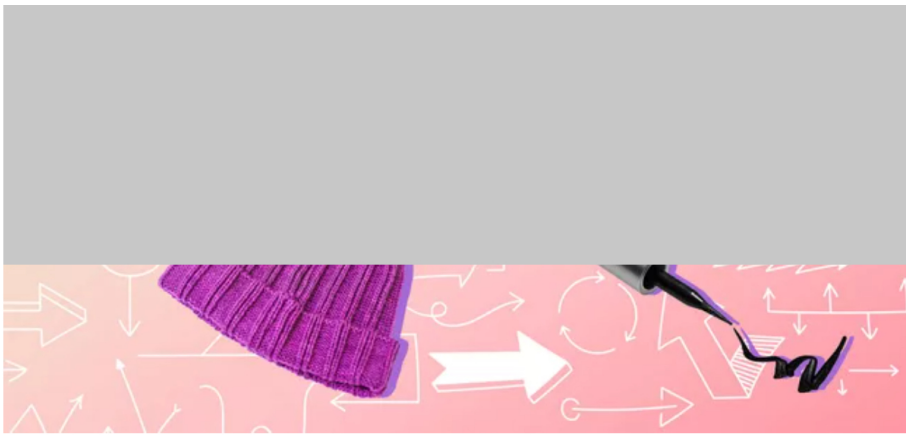


PHOTO: ILLUSTRATION BY SARINA FINKELSTEIN; GETTY IMAGES (4); ADOBE STOCK (2)

If you haven't spent time on the app, we know this new digital cast of characters might seem like incredibly foreign terrain. And since the obsession with such personas may in fact lead to your kid fully *embodying* one of them, we thought we'd help by filling you in on what each one is all about.

Here's a breakdown on the "cast of characters" you'll encounter on TikTok:

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E-girls

The vibe: The persona actually dates back to pre-TikTok days (2013, gasp!), when they were defined on [Urban Dictionary](#) as girls who seek out gamers. The "e" of course stands for electronic. But according to a recent BuzzFeed article, which defines [e-girls](#) as "a whole new kind of cool girl," there are variations and "no one girl embodies every single stereotype." That's why their vibe is a bit hard to pin down; a [Vox](#) exploration of the character type describes it both as similar to the "sad, pretty girls with heavy makeup" who used to populate Tumblr and an "anime cosplayer who listens to Lil Peep."

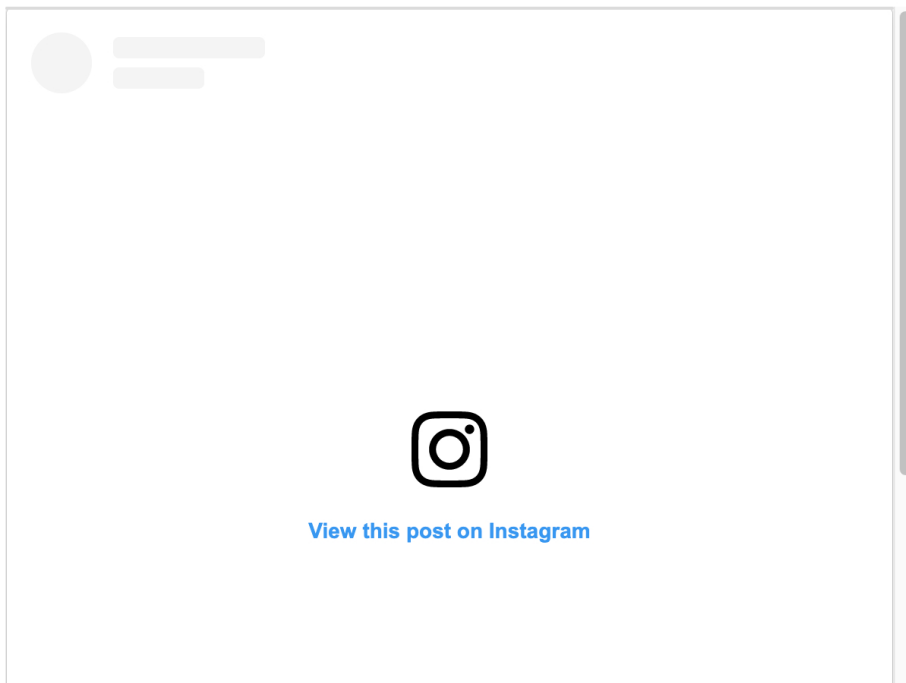
The look: E-girls' makeup is a major aspect of their persona. BuzzFeed describes their signature beauty look: "Thick black eyeliner with wings and cute little shapes drawn with the same eyeliner under the eyes. Usually the shapes are hearts, but sometimes they're dots or x's. Across the cheeks and nose is a bright sweep of blush, with a touch of highlighter just on the button end, usually sitting above a septum piercing. Lips have either a clear gloss or a dark matte lipstick." They wear their generally unnaturally dyed hair in half-pigtails, potentially with snap clips at the hairline—unless they are wearing a beanie—and they generally wear thrifted clothes with [style staples](#) including mesh T-shirts, colorful hair clips, Sailor Moon skirts, and O-ring collars.

RELATED: [Teens' 'VSCO Girls' Trend Is Giving Moms a Major '90s Flashback](#)

VSCO Girls

The vibe: Think preppy, beachy, eco-conscious, and '90s. Although the [VSCO girl](#) name and aesthetic originated from the photo-sharing and editing app [VSCO](#) (formerly called VSCO cam), it's huge on TikTok.

The look: VSCO girls aren't only all about late '80s and '90s fashion like Vans, oversized tees, clothing from Brandy Melville, Pura Vida bracelets, Fjällräven Kånken backpacks, and puka shell necklaces, but they have an enviable collection of various, specific accessories and beauty products: [all of the scrunchies, Burt's Bees lipgloss, and Mario Badescu products](#), as well as green-friendly Hydro Flasks and metal straws.



E-BOYS

The vibe: Like e-girls, e-boys are influenced by a mix of various internet trends. Their vibe encompasses bits and pieces of skate culture, hip-hop, anime, cosplay, BDSM, K-pop, and goth. According to [Know Your Meme](#), e-boys (again, just as much as e-girls) are "internet flirts." Two popular TikTok influencers who exemplify the type: [Chase Hudson](#) (aka lilhuddy) and [Noen Eubanks](#).

The look: According to Vox, "on e-boys you'll see middle-parted hair, chains, and high-waisted pants, though it's worth noting that to be an e-boy does not require being male; both styles transcend gender." They're also known for having black painted nails, black clothes, and beanies. Basically, they're the skater boy of the '90s (think Travis from *Clueless*) but with a modern, gender-neutral twist. [Metro](#) explains, "Pair your Thrasher tee with a chain on your jeans and some black nail polish, as well as dying your hair peachy pink for the e-boy vibe."

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Soft Girls

The vibe: Called the "internet's new favorite girl next door" by *The Guardian*, the soft girl appeared in [BuzzFeed quizzes](#), [viral hashtag challenges](#), and eight separate [Urban Dictionary definitions](#) in 2019 alone. Think of Ariana Grande meets Rainbow Brite: glimmering, pink, super-classic feminine, cute (versus e-girls as more goth-driven) Manic Pixie Dream Girl.

The look: The overall aesthetic was described by Jamie, a 14-year-old West Virginian and creator of Reddit's [r/softgirl](#), to *The Guardian* as "hair clips, soft colors, mom jeans, glossy lips, and overall just a dreamy vibe." Soft girls also wear pigtails, pastels, perhaps faux freckles (or little clouds or hearts), blush, and highlighter on their noses.

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Soft Boys

The vibe: [BuzzFeed](#) explains, "In all cases, 'soft boy' indicates a more tender man, someone who subverts the expectations of masculinity and claims traits that are traditionally coded as feminine." They're generally cisgender and don't feel that dressing in this "softer" way threatens their sexuality or

gender identity. At first glimpse, they might look like "a typical male Urban Outfitters shopper."

The look: Influenced heavily by K-pop, soft boys (or softbois) wear pastels, muted colors, fluffy sweaters. It's bookish and a bit beatnik, according to *Vogue*.

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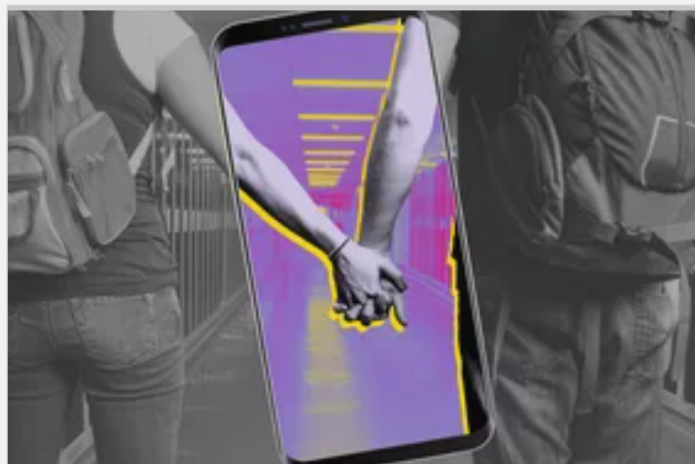
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