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First time braless

I’ve been working from home for over three years now and when people ask me what I enjoy most about it, I jokingly respond with, “Because I don’t have to wear a bra.” What they may or may not realize, though, is that I am being completely serious. Let’s be real ladies, besides orgasming in your sleep, is there anything more enjoyable than coming home after a long day and taking off your bra? Am I right or am I right? Taking your bra off is such a freeing feeling, we even have songs about it. Whether you are someone who likes to let the girls breathe and enjoy some freedom, or you’re a little unsure about not wearing a bra, hear me out—because there are some pretty stellar benefits of going braless. 1. Better breast skin health Wearing a bra can regularly trap dirt and sweat against the skin of the breasts, which can cause clogged pores and irritation—especially under the breasts. Although this is more common in women with larger breasts, you might have experienced this irritation if you’ve ever kept your sports bra on a liiiiiiittle too long post-workout. By going braless, you are allowing the skin to breathe better and remain clear and free of any potential irritants, which may clog pores. 2. Better circulation Wearing a bra for hours on end can feel constricting, suffocating and downright uncomfortable. (Raise your hand if you agree.) Bras can actually reduce blood flow to the back and chest muscles, which can cause aches and pains. By ditching the bra, you can create better circulation to your upper body. Say so long to sore muscles from wearing a bra! 3. Improved muscle tone and breast shape One of the biggest reasons many women are deterred from abandoning their bras is because they’re afraid their breasts will begin to sag without the extra support offered by wearing a bra. Well, I’m here to tell you this is completely false. Lisa Reynolds, co-founder of The Harley Street Skin Clinic, says, “Not wearing a bra greatly enhances women’s breasts. Long-term results of not wearing a bra have demonstrated that more muscle tissue evolves to provide natural protection. This is because the body needs to use the pectoral muscles against friction to firm up the breast tissue.” So, if you’re afraid to go braless because of potential sagging, on the contrary! Going braless can actually strengthen the pectoral muscles in the chest to help support the breasts, ultimately giving them improved muscle tone and breast shape. (I’ll take both, please). 4. Increased comfort over time Many women are so accustomed to wearing a bra that when they go braless for the first time, they feel completely exposed. Take it from the girl who hasn’t worn a real bra since 2017 (with the exceptions of events and holidays), once you adjust, you completely become desensitized to it and you feel more comfortable and free overall. Going back to wearing real bras is so uncomfortable, you won’t ever want to go back. Whether you decide to ditch the bra entirely (and simultaneously save some extra cash money) or you prefer to hang on to your brassieres and take a break from them while you WFH, give the girls a break every once in a while and enjoy the many benefits of going braless. Did this post help you get closer to achieving one of your goals? Yes, that is the question dividing WFH women. Is the bra a casualty of the pandemic or are we going to continue wearing it after this is all over? Before COVID-19 grounded everyone, a woman’s routine for getting ready for work ranged anywhere from half an hour (if they were running really late!) to two hours or more. She can forget her purse or her mobile phone, but she’ll never forget to put on a bra when she leaves the house. And nothing tells a woman it’s the end of a very long day more than taking off her bra and slipping into pambahay or comfortable clothes. For the first time in working women’s lives, they can wear whatever the hell they want to work. Yet the bra still divides them. Personally, I don’t wear one when working from home—unless I have a Zoom meeting and I’m not wearing black—and I find the whole situation liberating. Some friends say they still wear a bra to simulate their office routine and get into work mode. To bra or not to bra, that is the question. The Wall Street Journal calls the bra a “casualty” of the pandemic; Women’s Weekly says, yes, you still should wear it for your breasts to stay “perky”; Shape says sagging breasts (a constant fear of women growing old) is not about going braless but about the density of the breasts. It’s true that even before WFH, bras were considered “breast prison,” and many women junked them. But it’s also true that bras can make women feel good about wearing them just because they’re nice—lacy, sexy, wired, non-wired or sporty—even though no one else can see them (unless of course...). In April, author and feminist Roxane Gay tweeted: “Just put a bra on for the first time in who knows and my boobs said, Bitch what?” Support for the girls Some women find that wearing a bra is like “wearing a shield” to protect them from ogling men. To this day, nipples showing through a shirt while you’re walking in a mall is still considered by many as trying to attract sexual attention. In a country where a TV host blames a rape victim for wearing shorts, freeing the nipple is not as easy as it seems. The bra is still hanging on even as women are working from home wearing house clothes. Culture and politics aside, women (especially with big breasts) can suffer from posture problems without the support of a bra. Robin Lansman of the Institute of Osteopathy told Elle, “The key to wearing or not wearing a bra comes down to encouraging the body to learn how to work, not just bracing it tightly for a quick fix solution to back pain and postural problems. “The bra’s main function is to support the weight and structure of the breast. However, women often have a lot of tension and stiffness localized where the bra strap is placed. Tight bras can also severely affect the ribcage, as well as cause back and neck pain. “Like changing swimming strokes, variety is good when it comes to wearing a bra. You should monitor how you’re feeling and what activities you’re doing that may require structural support more so than others.” Yeah, still not wearing one while WFH. #NoBraDay started as a breast cancer awareness campaign. #NoBraDay Today, Oct. 13 is the official No Bra Day, which can be traced to an event called “BRA Day” by a Toronto plastic surgeon who wanted to raise awareness on the availability of reconstructive surgery among women who have had a mastectomy. He called it “Breast Reconstruction Awareness” (BRA) Day. It was also intended to raise awareness on breast cancer symptoms and early screening. The first No Bra Day event was created by anonymous user named “Anastasia Doughnuts” in 2011. It was originally observed on July 9 but was moved to Oct. 13 in 2015 to become part of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. No Bra Day was promoted with these words: “Women are magnificent creatures, and so are their breasts. Let us spend the day unleashing boobies from their boobie zoos. Breast Cancer is something you should take seriously and be checked for.” No Bra Day is not without critics. Living Beyond Breast Cancer CEO Jean Sachs finds it offensive. “Breast cancer is a life-threatening illness. It has nothing to do with wearing a bra or not wearing a bra.” It has also gotten to the point where photos with the hashtag #nobraday have become increasingly sexual. But it’s social media—anything that starts out as a meaningful movement can morph into something, well, trivial. Or even sexual. Women in 1968 throw their bras into the Freedom Trash Can Going braless as protest Back when women were fighting for equal rights, going braless was a political protest, a symbol of women’s freedom and feminism. The “burn the bra” movement became famous but no bra was actually burned. In 1968, women protesting against the Miss America beauty pageant literally took off their bras and threw them into a bin marked “Freedom Trash Can” in New Jersey. Along with the bra, they threw in high heels, lipsticks, pots and pans, corsets, Playboy magazine, curlers—things they considered “instruments of female torture” or enforced femininity. In a BBC interview on the 50th anniversary of the protest, one of the organizers, Robin Morgan, said, “We were young radicals, just discovering feminism because we were tired of making coffee but not policy.” “Because we were tired of making coffee but not policy.” “Some feminist historians mark it as the real beginning of the current wave of feminism. While flattering and quite lovely to hear, it is not true. There were already groups like the National Organization for Women in existence.” In San Francisco in 1966—the epicenter of the hippie era—a law was proposed that would require women to wear bras. Two women students from the San Francisco State College protested by walking topless near the campus. Every woman working today—as CEO, president of a bank, head of a government agency, senator, teacher, running her own business or in the military—owes these women a debt of gratitude. They burned their bras—and lit the way to the boardroom. I wake up in the morning, put on a dress, no bra, and admire my braless, bare-all look in the mirror. Cool, I think to myself. Nipples and breasts are a natural part of everybody’s body but have been deemed inappropriate on women. Today, I personally feel my most confident and empowered when I’m braless. Not only is going braless more convenient (shout-out to the wide range of backless shirts I can now wear), but it’s also a symbolic middle finger to a society that says women’s breasts should always be caged in a bra and that we should be prim, proper, and pretty at all times. Let me explain... Free People I’d like to begin with a full disclaimer: This story is not meant to be a rant hating on men. As a feminist, I am not a man hater (as some misconceptions may lead you to believe). I believe in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes. There’s nothing more to it. I grew up in a family full of all women (except my dad, bless him), so gender roles never really crossed my mind. My sister and I were raised to feel like we could be whoever we wanted to be, and do whatever we wanted to do. Gender never affected that. I never felt inferior to boys or felt like I couldn’t do something just because I was a girl. I had my first realization that sexism is, in fact, a thing when I was 12 years old. I was in the sixth grade, and a girl in my class had started to develop early. All the boys in my class took notice. I watched them gawk at her like she was a shiny new iPod or a freshly prepared sandwich as she walked through the classroom. At the time, my adolescent mind envied her. Why weren’t boys looking at me like that? I was jealous that she was already starting to grow breasts when I was still flat as a board. Looking back now, I realize that was my first, real experience with the male gaze. Of course, being under the boys’ gaze, feeling ogled at and then talked about like a puck in a game isn’t flattering; it’s insulting. I just didn’t realize it at the time. As I grew out of my awkward phase and entered high school, I started to comprehend how unbalanced the whole gender system really is. I wanted so badly to ignore it because there was no way my stubborn pride would ever let me admit that just because I was a woman, my opportunities in life would be limited. My second experience with sexism happened like this: I was a senior in high school and a dress-down day was coming up (I went to a private Catholic school, so we had a dress code). I wanted to wear leggings, but unfortunately, they weren’t allowed, which I didn’t understand. I thought we should be allowed to wear them. I mean, they’re comfy and easy and basically are a cuter version of sweats. My friend decided to ask the dean why we couldn’t wear leggings. Her direct response: “It distracts the boys.” It. Distracts. The. Boys. So since the boys at my school had zero self-control, we were punished? It’s safe to say my friends and I weren’t very happy. That was when I realized that men had control over certain parts of my life that I didn’t want them to have control over, like what I wore. It’s a symbolic middle finger to a society that says women’s breasts should always be caged. AliExpress Once I reached my freshman year of college, my sociology teacher laid it all out right in front of me. The male gaze exists, the glass ceiling is real, and women still don’t get equal treatment. Again, I was in denial. I was honestly offended. I pride myself on being a strong, self-possessed person, and I hated someone telling me that I was essentially still living in a world that belonged to someone else. However, once I heard the words I’d been thinking for so long finally be said out loud, I admitted to myself that it was true. Fast-forward a year or so later, and I woke up one morning and decided, You know what? I am not going to wear a bra. I remembered I felt free the entire day. Empowered. Quite frankly, I felt like a badass. Why? Because for the first time, maybe in my whole life, I was finally in control of my body. After a lifetime of uniforms and no leggings and wondering what I could wear to make the boys think I was beautiful, it was something I could do in protest. Sure, it was a small change, and it’s likely that no one even noticed, but it wasn’t about that. It was something I got to choose to do with my body, in a world where I feel like I don’t have control over my body. (Plus, I’m lazy, and honestly visible nipples are hot.) Now, I hardly ever wear bras on a daily basis (besides work or if I’m in the mood for a little lace). I’m lucky that now, unlike my Catholic school days, I’m no longer in an environment where someone would ever chastise me for not wearing a bra. I’m also lucky to feel comfortable with my cup size (I’m a C) since I know there are plenty of women out there who prefer the support a bra provides. But I think we can all benefit from a “braless” attitude. For example, maybe if you’re not totally comfortable going bra-free, next time you buy a bra, choose one purely for the comfort or support—or maybe choose one made by a sustainable or female-run company, like Lively, Fortnight Lingerie, or Thirdlove. My point is that no matter what you choose to do with your body, you deserve to feel empowered in a world where it’s easy not to. So whether you like wearing lacy bras, going braless, growing out your body hair, getting a wax—whatever your thing is that keeps you feeling empowered—keep doing it. Because we can’t afford not to. Next, read about the problem with ethnic beauty stereotypes.

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