

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

How to Build a Beginner's Vape Kit

Our Friends · Monday, November 25th, 2024

Embarking on your vaping journey can be both thrilling and daunting. With so many devices, accessories, and e-liquids, making the right choices feels like navigating an endless list. A beginner-friendly vape kit can provide everything you need to get started without hassle. Creating your starter kit lets you choose items that fit your taste and budget.

Here's a guide to help you set up a vape kit for beginners:

Vape Devices

The first step in putting together the vape kit is to pick a device. For those new to vaping, pod systems or pen-style vapes are often the best picks. They're easy to use, usually need little setup, and provide a satisfying experience without too many complex features.

Consider getting a device with adjustable settings for airflow or wattage, which will allow you some flexibility as you get used to vaping. A small design is handy for carrying around. Consider how often you'll use the device when you think about battery life. Frequent users prefer devices with built-in batteries that last longer or ones that allow for external batteries.

Choosing the Right E-Liquids

E-liquid, or **vape juice**, is vital to any vaping setup. It affects the flavour, throat hit, and nicotine level you experience. If you're new to this, start with smaller bottles in various flavours to see which ones you enjoy most. Fruity, dessert, and menthol flavours are popular choices, but don't be afraid to try others too.

When choosing e-liquids, consider the nicotine level. People switching from regular cigarettes might prefer higher nicotine levels, while others might prefer less nicotine or none at all. Also, look at the VG/PG ratio. A higher VG content creates thicker vapour, while more PG gives a stronger throat hit.

Essential Accessories for Your Kit

To round out the vape kit, you'll need some extras. A charger that works with your device is a must, significantly if it doesn't charge via standard USB. It's also wise to have extra coils since they need regular replacements to keep the vape tasting good and working well.

Other practical additions are a case to protect your device and a bottle of safe vape cleaning solution. Keeping your device clean will make it last longer and improve your vaping sessions. Consider including cotton and wire in your kit if you use tanks or rebuildable systems.

Customize Your Setup

Once you've mastered the basics, you might want to tweak your vape kit to match your style. Trying out drip tips in different materials and shapes can change the feel of each puff. If your device is compatible, you might also explore various tanks or pods to see which gives you the flavour and vapour you like best.

Customising your setup can also improve vaping. Upgrading to a tank with improved airflow might bring out more flavour, and switching to a mesh coil could create thicker clouds. Starting small and gradually building your kit over time lets you find what suits you best.

Start with Pre-Built Vape Kits

If starting from scratch seems daunting, consider trying a beginner-friendly vape kit that's already assembled. These kits usually come with a vape device, a few coils, and sometimes a small bottle of e-liquid. They're handy and ensure everything works well together, saving you the hassle.

Pre-built kits are ideal when you **vape for the first time as a beginner**. They build your confidence before you jump into customizing. As you get more at ease with vaping, you can slowly add or swap items in your kit to suit your tastes. It's an easy way to kick off your vaping experience on the right note.

How to Maintain Your Kit

Keeping your vape kit in good shape is essential. Clean your device regularly, focusing on the tank and mouthpiece, to stop build-up that can mess with how it works. If your device has replaceable coils, change them when you notice a burnt taste or less flavour. Likewise, check the condition of the vape juice. You'll need to replace **vape juice that is bad or expired**.

How you store your vape kit is also important. Store it in a cool, dry spot away from sunlight or extreme temperatures. Make sure e-liquid bottles are sealed tightly to avoid leaks and store them upright. These steps will help your kit perform better and last longer.

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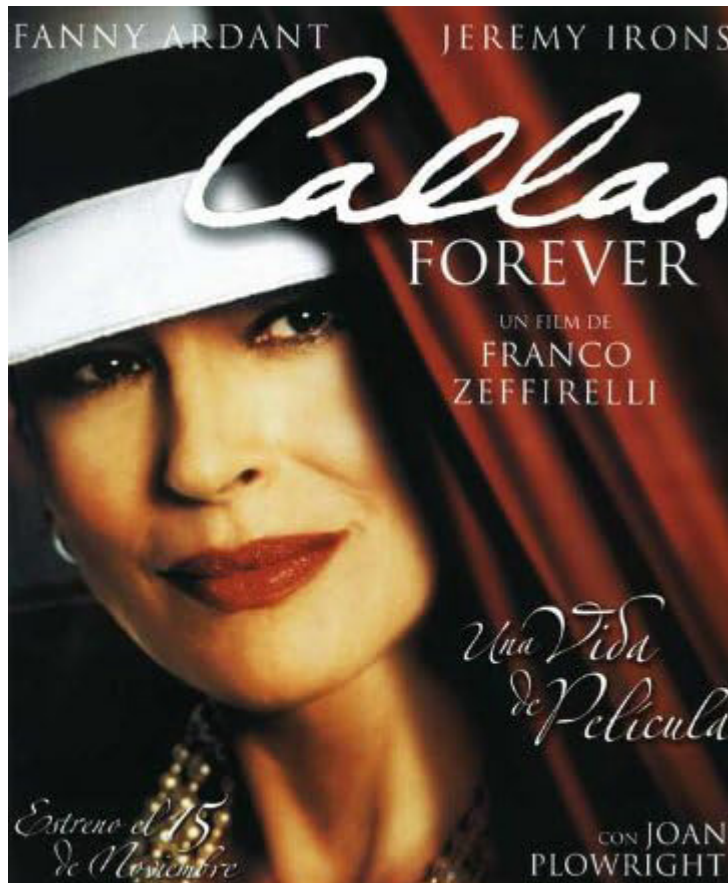
Maria Callas on Film

Elisa Leonelli · Sunday, November 24th, 2024

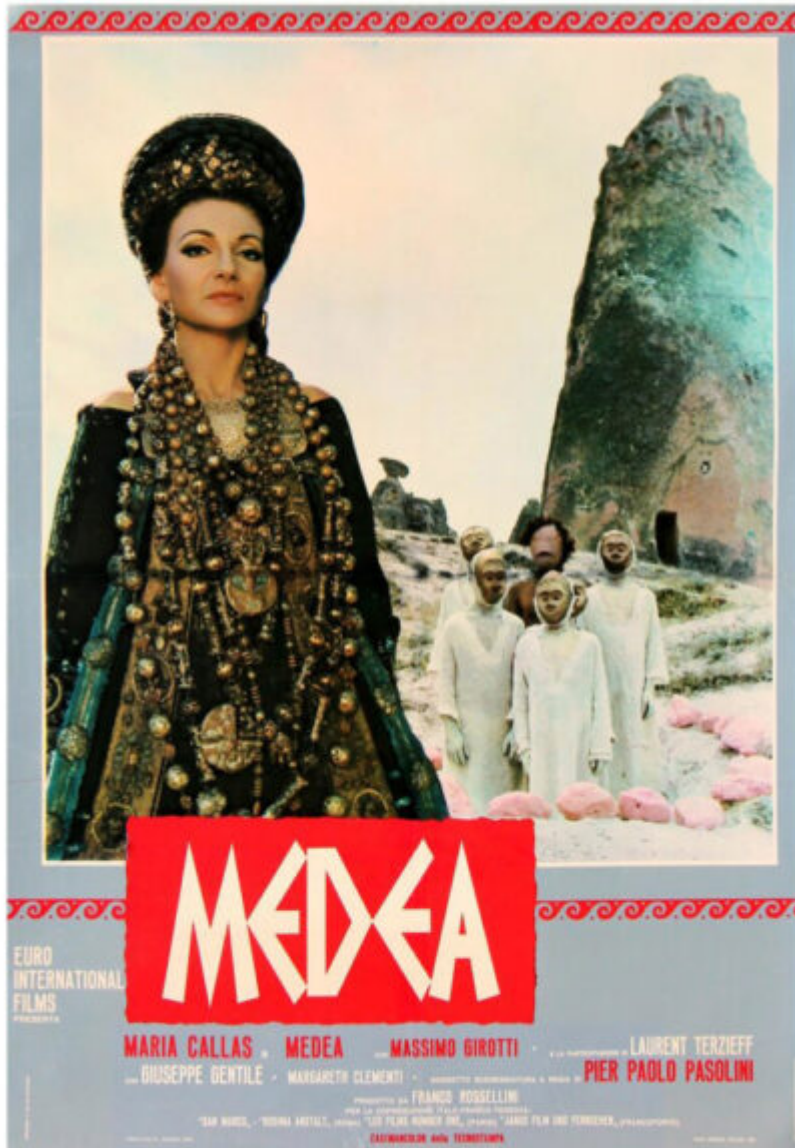


Maria Callas as Turandot 1957

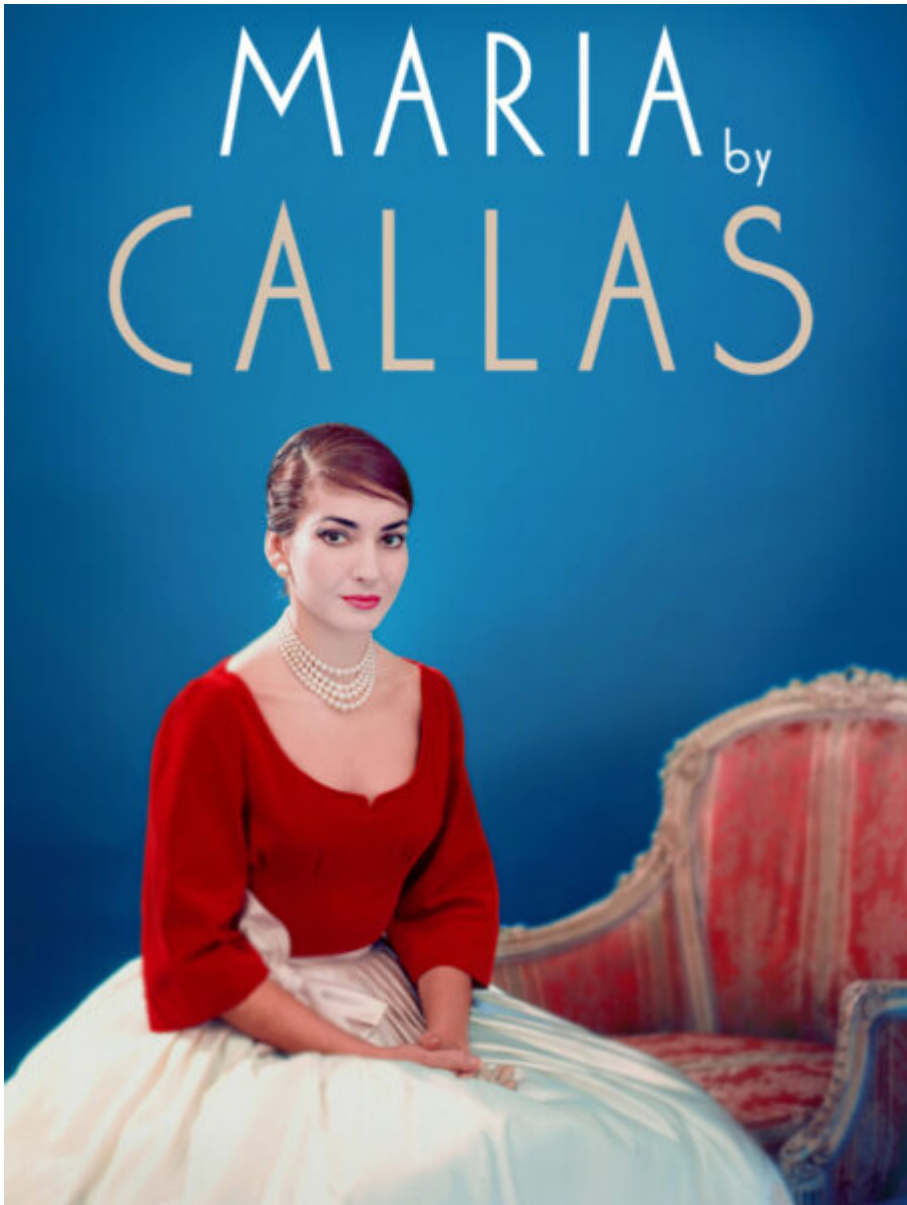
Legendary opera singer [Maria Callas](#) is portrayed by Angelina Jolie in the new movie *Maria* by Chilean director [Pablo Larraín](#), which concludes his trilogy about iconic women, after *Jackie* (2016) with Natalie Portman as Jacqueline Kennedy and *Spencer* (2021) with Kristen Stewart as Princess Diana.



Franco Zeffirelli, who had directed Callas on stage in operas like *La Traviata* by Giuseppe Verdi, *Tosca* by Giacomo Puccini, *Norma* by Vincenzo Bellini, directed the movie *Callas Forever* (2002) starring French actress Fanny Ardant.



Pier Paolo Pasolini asked Maria Callas to star in *Medea* (1969), a dramatic film based on the Greek tragedy by Euripides, not on *Médée*, the 1797 French opera by Luigi Cherubini, that was part of Callas repertory in its Italian version.



If you want to actually see the real Maria Callas speaking and singing, I suggest you look for the documentary *Maria by Callas* on streaming. Read my article for Cultural Weekly [at this link](#). There you will be able to watch the complete arias listed below and filmed on stage. You may click on the aria's name to read the Italian lyrics and the English translation, because even a native Italian speaker like myself has trouble understanding all the words, when a high pitched soprano voice sings them.



Maria Callas as Violetta-La Traviata 1958

“Addio del passato” *La Traviata* 1853 by Giuseppe Verdi. Lisbon, Portugal. March 27, 1958.



Maria Callas as Norma, 1964

“Casta Diva” *Norma* 1831 by Vincenzo Bellini. Concert-Paris Opéra. December 19, 1958. It’s [colorized](#) in the documentary, but [click here](#) to watch it on YouTube in B&W (skip the commercials).



Maria Callas as Carmen

“L’amour est un oiseau rebelle (Habanera)” *Carmen* 1875 by George Bizet. November 4, 1962. Concert-Royal Opera House, London.

You may watch the entire 1962 concert colorized with English subtitles [at this link](#), see Callas sing two other arias from *Carmen* in French, and this aria in Italian

“Tu, che la vanità” *Don Carlos* 1867 by Giuseppe Verdi



Maria Callas as Tosca

“Vissi d’arte, vissi d’amore” *Tosca* 1900 by Giacomo Puccini. 1963 London. Royal Opera House. Watch at [this link](#), followed by duet with Tito Gobbi as Scarpia.

For more info and photos click on [Maria Callas Official Website](#).



Maria Callas as Giulia-La Vestale 1954

That is where I found this aria on video

“[Tu che invoco con orrore](#)” *La vestale* 1807 by Gaspare Spontini. Hamburg May 15, 1959. Watch it [here](#).

You may watch this entire concert and the May 16, 1962 concert in Hamburg at [this link](#). See Callas sing many more arias that I don't list here, but you will find in [this album](#).



Maria opens in theaters on November 27 and airs on Netflix December 11. Get ready to enjoy it more by watching Maria Callas sing some of those classic arias.



Maria Callas as Butterfly 1955

Here's one more aria, my favorite, I can never help crying when I hear it.

“Un bel dì vedremo” *Madama Butterfly* 1904 by Giacomo Puccini.

I could not find a video of Callas singing it, but you may listen to the audio at [this link](#), with lyrics both in Italian and English. Enjoy!

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Boosting Customer Service Excellence: Top Coaching Techniques for Contact Centers

Our Friends · Sunday, November 24th, 2024

In today's competitive landscape, contact centers are no longer just support hubs; they are the frontline of customer experience. Exceptional service can drive customer loyalty, while a single poor interaction can lead to dissatisfaction and negative reviews. One of the most effective ways to ensure consistent, high-quality service is through strategic coaching. This blog explores essential coaching techniques to elevate performance, improve morale, and ensure customer satisfaction.

Understanding the Need for Effective Coaching in Contact Centers

Contact centers have evolved significantly, transitioning from basic customer service centers to strategic engagement hubs. Customers expect prompt, empathetic, and efficient solutions, putting immense pressure on agents to perform at their best. Without proper support, agents may struggle with high-pressure environments, diverse customer needs, and maintaining emotional resilience. This is where **Contact Center Coaching Techniques** comes into play. By providing tailored guidance, contact center managers can address knowledge gaps, boost agent confidence, and improve overall service quality. Coaching isn't a one-size-fits-all approach—it requires a nuanced strategy to meet individual and team goals.

Top Coaching Techniques for Contact Centers

The right coaching strategies can make all the difference. Below are the most impactful techniques for achieving customer service excellence:

1. Setting Clear and Achievable Goals

Successful coaching starts with defining clear objectives. Use the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) framework to set realistic goals for agents. Whether improving response times or increasing First Call Resolution (FCR) rates, these goals should align with business priorities while fostering individual growth.

2. Conducting Personalized Coaching Sessions

Every agent brings unique strengths and challenges. One-on-one coaching allows managers to identify these individual traits and design personalized action plans. Tailored sessions ensure that agents receive the support they need, making the coaching process more effective.

3. Leveraging Real-Time Feedback

Feedback is most impactful when delivered promptly. Use call monitoring tools or AI analytics to assess customer interactions and provide immediate, constructive feedback. This approach helps agents learn and adapt quickly, improving their performance in real-time.

4. Role-Playing and Simulations

Practical learning is often more effective than theoretical training. Role-playing exercises simulate challenging customer scenarios, enabling agents to practice problem-solving and communication skills in a safe environment. This technique fosters confidence and prepares agents for real-world situations.

5. Building Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) is critical for managing customer interactions effectively. By focusing on empathy, active listening, and emotional regulation, agents can handle difficult conversations with patience and professionalism. Coaching sessions that include EI training create a more customer-centric approach.

6. Implementing Peer Coaching

Team collaboration can significantly enhance learning. Encouraging peer coaching enables agents to share experiences, exchange best practices, and learn from each other's strengths. This method fosters a supportive and collaborative work environment.

7. Using Performance Metrics for Guidance

Tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) like Customer Satisfaction Scores (CSAT), Average Handling Time (AHT), and FCR provides valuable insights into agent performance. Use these metrics to pinpoint areas for improvement and tailor coaching sessions accordingly.

8. Regular Follow-Ups and Check-Ins

Coaching isn't a one-time effort; it requires continuous monitoring and support. Regular follow-ups help measure progress and identify new challenges, ensuring sustained growth and development.

Best Practices for Successful Coaching Programs

Beyond individual techniques, creating an environment that supports effective coaching is essential:

- **Foster a Supportive Culture:** Agents thrive in a positive and open atmosphere. Encourage feedback, celebrate progress, and recognize achievements to boost morale.
- **Train the Trainers:** Supervisors must possess strong coaching skills themselves. Providing leadership training ensures a consistent approach across the team.
- **Leverage Technology:** Modern tools like AI-driven analytics can enhance coaching by delivering actionable insights. Automating routine tasks also frees up managers to focus on coaching efforts.

Case Studies: Real-Life Examples of Coaching Success

Organizations that prioritize coaching see measurable improvements in both agent satisfaction and customer experience. For instance:

- **Case Study 1:** A telecom company reduced call escalations by 25% by implementing role-playing exercises during coaching. Agents felt more prepared to handle complex queries, resulting in higher CSAT scores.
- **Case Study 2:** A retail contact center improved FCR rates by 15% by adopting real-time feedback and AI analytics. Managers could address issues immediately, leading to faster resolution times.

These examples demonstrate the transformative power of targeted coaching strategies.

Conclusion

Coaching is a vital tool for enhancing customer service excellence in contact centers. By setting clear goals, providing personalized feedback, and fostering a supportive culture, organizations can empower their agents to deliver exceptional service. Implementing these Contact Center Coaching Techniques ensures not only improved performance but also a better customer experience. Start investing in strategic coaching today, and witness the difference it makes in your contact center operations.

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Is Faith Enough to Beat Addiction? Let's Talk Reality

Our Friends · Sunday, November 24th, 2024

Addiction hits differently when you're a Christian. It's not just the internal battle with cravings or the wreckage it leaves in your life—it's the guilt, the shame, and that nagging question of whether your faith is supposed to "fix" this. The truth? Faith plays a powerful role, but it's not a magic wand. If you're struggling, or if someone you love is, let's get real about what healing looks like when you're walking it out as a believer.

Can You Pray It Away?

Let's clear this up first: addiction isn't just a spiritual problem. Sure, prayer can move mountains, but addiction is also chemical, psychological, and emotional. Some Christians wrestle with the idea that relying on therapy or rehab somehow means they lack faith. Spoiler alert: that's not how this works. Think about it like this—if you break a leg, you pray for healing and go to the doctor. Addiction needs the same dual approach.

God doesn't expect you to white-knuckle your way to freedom alone. He designed us to lean on others for support. Scripture talks about bearing each other's burdens, and honestly, there's no shame in needing professional help. Therapy, group support, even medication when necessary—these aren't signs of failure. They're tools God can use to lead you out of the chaos.

Why Do Christians Hide Their Struggles?

Church culture can be a tough place for addicts. There's a pressure to look like you've got it all together, and that creates this toxic vibe where people feel like they can't admit they're struggling. As **C.S. Lewis** once said, "No one knows how bad he is till he has tried very hard to be good." Christians often aim so hard to live "right" that they bury their battles, hoping no one will notice. But that secrecy only feeds the beast.

The irony is, Jesus never asked anyone to be perfect. In fact, He made it pretty clear that broken people are His specialty. When we fake it, we're robbing ourselves of authentic community. And without that, recovery gets a lot harder. Being vulnerable—admitting you need help—isn't weakness. It's the kind of courage that can transform everything.

Does Addiction Make You a “Bad Christian”?

Here's the short answer: no. But I get why it feels that way. Maybe you're caught in a loop of relapse and shame, and the voices in your head are screaming that God must be disappointed. That's a lie. If anything, your pain pulls Him closer.

Addiction doesn't disqualify you from His love. It doesn't cancel your faith. The Bible is packed with stories of people who fell hard—like really hard—but found redemption when they turned back toward Him. It's not about how many times you mess up; it's about your willingness to keep reaching for grace. And let's be real: even Paul, who wrote most of the New Testament, talked about struggling with his own inner battles. So, if you're in a dark place, don't confuse your struggle with failure. It's just part of the story.

What Role Does Faith Actually Play?

Faith gives you hope when everything feels hopeless. It's the reason you can keep fighting when the fight feels impossible. But let's not sugarcoat it—faith alone doesn't mean you won't have cravings, setbacks, or hard days. What it does mean is that you've got access to a strength bigger than yourself.

It also gives you a purpose. A lot of addiction recovery comes down to finding something worth staying sober for, and for Christians, that “something” often involves serving others. Whether it's volunteering, mentoring, or simply living as a light in your family, faith helps you see the bigger picture. It reminds you that your story isn't just about you. That shift in perspective can be a game-changer.

What's Different About Christian Recovery?

Here's where it gets deep. Recovery isn't just about detoxing your body or learning coping skills—it's about healing your soul. Addiction creates a spiritual vacuum, and if you don't fill it with something meaningful, the cycle tends to repeat itself. That's why a **Christian substance abuse treatment** is essential to your recovery.

In faith-based recovery, you're not just focusing on sobriety; you're working on restoration. It's about reconnecting with who God created you to be. You dive into forgiveness—not just forgiving yourself, but maybe others who've hurt you along the way. You learn to lean on God in moments of weakness instead of turning to substances.

What makes this approach unique is the foundation it builds on. It's not just about staying sober—it's about finding freedom, joy, and purpose in Christ. That's a much deeper kind of healing than any 12-step checklist can offer.

The Real Takeaway

Addiction is messy, and recovery is even messier. But faith gives you a compass when everything

feels upside down. It won't magically make the road easy, but it will make it possible. If you're willing to trust the process—leaning on God, people, and professional help—you can come out the other side stronger, freer, and more alive than you ever thought possible.

Let Grace Lead You

Your addiction doesn't define you. What defines you is the God who sees you, loves you, and refuses to give up on you. Whether you're at rock bottom or just trying to stay on track, remember this: recovery isn't about perfection. It's about progress. One step at a time, one day at a time, you're moving toward a life that's not just free of addiction but full of purpose. Keep going. You've got this.

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5 Must-Visit Cultural Destinations for Art Enthusiasts

Our Friends · Sunday, November 24th, 2024

New experiences, different cultures, and other artistic points of view offer anyone looking for inspiration a fresh perspective. It's like seeing the world through a painter's eyes, noticing colors you never knew existed. By visiting different art destinations, you gain insights into the creative minds of past masters.

To give you a head start, we put together a list of must-visit cultural spots for art lovers. Each destination promises a deep dive into various artistic fields, providing an immersive experience that's both educational and inspiring.

You'll discover places where classic meets contemporary and the traditional blends with innovative styles. From galleries showcasing modern works to museums housing timeless masterpieces, these locations serve as beacons for those eager to expand their appreciation of art.

So grab your travel list, and let's uncover the top must-visit sites every art enthusiast should know about!

1. The Timeless Allure of the Louvre, Paris

The Louvre stands as a testament to the enduring power of art and culture. Visiting this iconic museum offers more than just an opportunity to view world-famous artworks – it provides a journey through history!

With its vast collection, including the Mona Lisa and Venus de Milo, every room tells a story from

different eras and regions. It's like walking through chapters of an ever-evolving book on civilization.

Moreover, the Louvre's architecture alone deserves admiration. The juxtaposition of historic grandeur with modern elements like **I.M. Pei's glass pyramid** makes for an unforgettable experience that showcases how art transcends time and formality, creating spaces where the past meets the present.

2. Discover Southern Art in Mississippi

Mississippi, also known as the Magnolia State, has a rich culture and history. The state's artistic landscape reflects diverse influences, from indigenous traditions to African American heritage. This makes it a unique destination for artists seeking inspiration and growth.

The best galleries and **art museums in Mississippi** immerse you in an environment where storytelling through art is central. Southern artists often draw upon personal narratives and regional experiences that evoke powerful emotions and vivid imagery.

They're famous for skillfully blending folk traditions with contemporary styles. This fusion results in artwork that's deeply rooted yet refreshingly innovative, a testament to resilience and creativity amid changing times.

Moreover, understanding this region's contributions helps broaden your own artistic approach. It's about embracing different voices within the broader conversation of art.

3. The Colorful Murals of San Juan, Puerto Rico

In San Juan, you can admire the works of some of **the world's top street muralists** by simply taking a stroll through the city. These paintings tell the stories of local people and culture and serve as visual expressions of identity, resilience, and hope.

The themes explored range from historical events to modern social issues, offering viewers thought-provoking narratives about Puerto Rican heritage.

Artists use these spaces to challenge perceptions while celebrating cultural pride, making art accessible outside traditional museum walls. So, as an artist witnessing these dynamic pieces, you can get better insight into how art shapes public spaces, transforming them into powerful platforms for dialogue where voices echo long after the paint dries.

4. Understand Contemporary Works of Art in Miami

Miami stands as a vibrant hub for contemporary art, blending cultures and styles into a dynamic scene that reflects its diverse community. At the heart of this is Art Basel Miami Beach, which transforms the city into an international meeting place for artists, collectors, and enthusiasts.

Contemporary works here are like a living dialogue, ever-changing and reflective of current societal themes. They challenge traditional boundaries by experimenting with new mediums and ideas.

This encourages viewers to question norms while embracing fresh perspectives.

5. Street Art Explosion in Berlin: Beyond Galleries

Berlin is another world city that enjoys turning its streets into canvases. The city pulses with creativity, becoming an open-air museum where anyone can find inspiration.

Street art here is not just decoration; it reflects the city's history, culture, and socio-political landscape. Each piece offers commentary on current events or historical narratives unique to Berlin's character.

Key Takeaways

Cultural diversity in art exploration enhances your creative perspective. This is why it's essential to experience varied art destinations and artists to enrich your understanding and appreciation of artistic expression.

By immersing yourself in these diverse experiences, you broaden your horizons, fostering a deeper connection with global communities through their unique stories and artistic contributions.

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Is Bitcoin Showing Consistent Bullish Signals?

Our Friends · Sunday, November 24th, 2024

Bitcoin made a reputation for itself as the most important cryptocurrency in the world, boasting the highest market capitalization level and consistently remaining the top choice among traders. The beginning of 2024 was set to be the start of one of the best years in the history of BTC, but since Q2, the coin has been unable to hold momentum and has plunged to new low levels. Investors who have been looking to **buy Bitcoin** made the most out of the price plunges, looking to add assets to their portfolios in order to consolidate them. And while there's no denying the fact that prices have not been performing as well as some were expecting, there's also no denying the fact that corrections are nowhere near as severe as they used to be.

But the question remains: How can investors expect the market to evolve over the next few months? Having a rough idea about how the ecosystem will continue to evolve is crucial in order to come up with a comprehensive strategy that can take your investments forward and allow you to maximize your gains.

Network difficulty

August has historically not been a very good time for cryptocurrencies, with metrics amassed over

the years showing that cryptocurrencies tend to lose value during the last month of summer. The first day of August recorded the lowest levels in several weeks, a movement attributed to decreasing optimism. The distribution of almost 50,000 BTC from a now-defunct exchange, as well as lowered expectations regarding US interest rate cuts. Most investors believed that there was a possibility for Bitcoin to retest the \$57K level, a prediction that ended up being too optimistic as August 5th saw the market plunging to \$52,838 as part of its corrective actions. In spite of these signs that could be interpreted as clear downgrades and a problem for the market, many traders are confident that this tendency won't last very long, especially as derivatives remain resilient and there are no signs of stress on the market.

Investor strategies

Even though Bitcoin is considerably more robust than it used to be and has already been around for several years now, investors must still create complex strategies to keep their portfolios profitable. There are several factors that have the potential to impact the market's movements, and they can even significantly affect the price action in both the short- and the long-term. Macroeconomics is one of the most essential factors for the crypto marketplace, apart from the supply and demand metrics. On July 31st, the US Federal Open Market Committee announced its decision to keep interest rates at 5.25%, an unchanged figure that is also in line with general market expectations.

The reasons cited were the growth of gross domestic product levels and the confidence in the rate of inflation reduction. There's a possibility that a rate cut could take place in September, which could support the market even further. As a result of this news, investors immediately increased their bets in the United States Treasury, actions that caused the five-year yield to reach its lowest level in half a year. Analysts see this as a result of the challenging geopolitical situation affecting many parts of the world. There are also market participants who are convinced that the US economy is set to enter a period of recession.

Jobless claims climbed to an eleven-month high while construction spending, an economic indicator measuring the monthly expenditures that go into new construction work, including labor, engineering, and materials, continued to decline for two consecutive months. The quarterly results of major tech giants will also influence marketplaces and determine price evolution for the next few months. The transfer of roughly \$3 billion worth of crypto on July 30th from an exchange that ceased all operations a decade ago has been good news for the investors who have been waiting for the payout for ten years, but others are concerned that it will bring price levels even lower.

Options and futures

The Bitcoin derivatives metric is also fundamental when it comes to understanding the impact of the retest and the strength of the \$62,000 support level. The monthly futures have been performing very well, with the prices displaying levels between 5% and 10% relative to the regular spot exchanges to adjust to the more extensive settlement period. The futures premium plunged 7% on the first day of August, reaching the lowest level in the span of three weeks but remaining in the neutral range nonetheless, an essential consideration for investors. As such, although users became less optimistic about the market's prospects, it would be inaccurate to say that they have become bearish.

One way to determine if the sentiment is only related to the futures markets is to analyze the 25% delta skew of the options. This figure demonstrates the difference between implied volatility and

general perception. It helps investors by offering measurements about the relative demand for sell and buy options, also known as put and call. When there's a negative skew, the demand is higher, with the neutral markets being anywhere between -7% to +7% delta skew, showcasing balanced pricing between the instruments. As of the first week of August, the 25% delta skew of Bitcoin stands at -5%, meaning that the sale is dealing with a slight discount, a key indicator of neutral marketplaces.

This figure has remained the same since the end of July, showing that the sentiment on derivatives hasn't changed. Although the intraday decline shouldn't be ignored, more investors appear confident that more intense price corrections will not likely occur soon.

Conclusion

If you're an investor, you want to do everything you can to remain profitable and ensure that you're not losing capital. During times of market volatility, with prices continuing to drop, you need to remember that holding on to your assets or consolidating through buying are the best game plans. Don't make rash decisions; they're more likely to result in capital losses than gains. Although the Bitcoin market is the most reliable in the entire crypto environment, fluctuations can still affect your list of holdings and take you away from your goal. The most important thing when operating in this market is to have a solid plan since that will take you further than anything else.

Photo at top: Traxer via Unsplash

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Recognizing the Signs of Cocaine Addiction and Abuse

Our Friends · Saturday, November 23rd, 2024

Cocaine addiction is a serious problem that can have catastrophic consequences for people. The overt signs of addiction are track marks or severe weight loss. These can be common in advanced stages, but early intervention will often stop the problem from spiraling out of control. Understanding these subtle symptoms of cocaine drug abuse can help individuals seek the right attention and start their recovery.

The Sneaky Nature of Cocaine Addiction

Insights on cocaine-related substance use expose its addictive nature and versatility factors as among the most silent menace factors for individuals and society. With different presentation forms, such as powder, crack, and injectable solutions, cocaine ensures flexibility in its consumption methods. This allows the user to keep on with the antics of living a normal life while

secretly indulging in the said compound. Such flexibility increased with its very potent stimulant effects, thereby increasing the possibility of severe dependence with extremely unhealthy health effects.

Recognizing the Early Warning Signs

Although their experience and manifestation are unique, everyone involved with addiction often reveals some common symptoms of early-stage cocaine abuse.

Behavioral Changes

Cocaine use often elicits a temperament shift that is clearly visible. The user may become violently irrational in one moment and limp-depressive in the next. They may withdraw themselves from friends, family, or social life and function better alone than in society. This can cause them to neglect their occupation, schoolwork, or family chores.

There are also financial problems that a person may put themselves into, like odd spending habits, borrowing cash, or even selling part of what belongs to them to feed on the addiction. Other symptoms include appearance changes like low standards of personal hygiene or unexplained weight loss.

Physical Symptoms

Physical symptoms of cocaine addiction can sometimes manifest visibly. Nasal bleeding or a runny nose may be signs for several users of cocaine who use the drug by snorting. Sleep patterns may be affected, causing either insomnia or excessive drowsiness. Loss of appetite is also common because cocaine suppresses hunger.

A person may be hyperactive and restless because of the stimulation of the central nervous system by cocaine. In extreme cases, there will be considerable physical body tremors or twitching.

Psychological Symptoms

Cocaine abuse greatly affects a person's mental health. Anxiety and **paranoia** increase, thus leading to fear, mistrust, and suspiciousness. The person becomes irritable and displays aggressive tendencies by impeding judgment and impulse.

Depression, together with mood swings, is inevitable as a user goes through a love-hate scenario of euphoria for a while and enters into profound sorrow occasionally. People have even reported instances where they experienced hallucinations and delusions, where they perceive reality.

Taking Necessary Action

If you catch some of the aforementioned symptoms within yourself or another family member, you need to take action now. Early intervention offers considerable change during successful recovery and treatment. Here is what you can do:

Tell Them The Truth

When you suspect that your loved one is consuming cocaine, approach them with empathy and care. Never use accusatory language because that will increase their defensiveness and further

isolation. Instead, air your concerns in a calm and supportive manner, emphasizing your intention to help.

Encourage Professional Help

Behavioral intervention to treat cocaine addiction includes seeking professional help. Encourage the client to seek help from a medical provider or treatment professional. Appropriate personnel shall provide adequate diagnosis, treatment recommendations, and aftercare for the client.

Consider Intervention

An intervention is a planned series of meetings with family members and friends wherein their concerns are made known, thus persuading them to seek treatment. Intervention can be quite an effective tool, but it should always be done sensitively and under the auspices of a trained professional.

Seek Assistance

You don't have to fight with addiction alone. In support groups or counseling services, you get emotional support, available wisdom, and a sense of community. Those sources will also be helpful when dealing with stress and anxiety conditions related to addiction and also provide you with the ability to help the recovering loved one.

Conclusion

The first step in solving the problem posed by cocaine abuse is early intervention. This intervention includes recognizing subtle signs such as behavioral changes, physiological signs, and psychological signs. At that stage, a person shows evidence of being anxious, frustrated, or uneasy. It is that period of time when someone who is an addict needs to be approached with delicate care and sympathy and ask such people to go for professional help.

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How Anxiety Can Wrap Our Perception of Reality

Our Friends · Saturday, November 23rd, 2024

Someone with anxiety will always feel stranded on an island of their thoughts while being surrounded by obsessive ideas that never seem to end. Such experiences are exhausting, and due to this, people with anxiety often are not in touch with reality.

While looking for a **therapist in New York City**, you should find someone who can help you with anxiety, find a stable footing, and gain control over your thinking patterns. And after this, you can expect a gradual recovery from anxiety and the perception of thoughts affected by this. Anxiety has a direct impact on our emotional health, making it challenging for an individual to focus on what matters. That is why having professional support is important.

Anxiety and Brain

Our body reacts to uncomfortable situations and stresses in various ways, like increased heart rate, rapid breathing, and excessive sweating. Sometimes, even if we are not in a stressful situation, the body's flight or fight response can make it nearly impossible to center one's focus and go about their day without feeling like they are on the edge. Prolonged exposure to such intense emotions can make it challenging to break the thinking pattern. As such, the person always looks at things in a worried and exaggerated manner.

When trying to understand how **anxiety affects the brain**, it is often thought that the emotional processing center gets affected instead of the higher cognitive centers. Gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA) also significantly decreases inhibitory signaling, causing the imbalance.

Not So Obvious Signs To Look For

Anxiety can show up in different aspects of our lives. Be it deciding what to have for dinner or making a plan for the weekend. Let's understand how anxiety affects us on a deeper level:

Psychological Symptoms

Commonly observed psychological symptoms of anxiety include:

- **Getting distracted easily** – Anxiety can negatively affect your ability to concentrate, making it easier for a person to get distracted even by the slightest of things. This, in return, increases the time a person will take to complete the task at hand.
- **Staying organized is difficult** – It is common for people with anxiety to forget where they have kept their belongings. Due to this challenge, people with it often find it difficult to organize their belongings. These instances are also very frustrating, eventually discouraging a person from choosing to stay organized.
- **Decisions are tough to make** – Brains of people with anxiety are actively overthinking and analyzing everything in utmost detail. Be it the conversation they recently had with their neighbors or an extra punctuation mark in the text they received from their loved ones. The thoughts seeding from anxiety are often pessimistic, making it challenging for a person to decide what they need to do.
- **Getting overwhelmed** – The never-ending chain of thoughts makes it almost impossible for a person with anxiety to stop and take a moment's pause to rationalize what they want. The constant loop of ifs and buts makes it challenging to process information clearly, eventually leading to the brain working more than its capacity.
- **Intrusive thoughts** – Intrusive thoughts are often disturbing and, in some cases, frightening. Even when everyone has thoughts and is thinking something every time, intrusive thoughts make it seem like something's wrong with you and not everyone thinks the way you do. Such thoughts are discouraging and make it challenging to have a conversation without having thoughts like 'They definitely hate you' or 'Are you even listening to yourself.'

Physical Symptoms of Anxiety

The constant fight or flight mode a person lives in makes it difficult for them to let go. Physical symptoms include:

- Dizziness
- Loss of appetite
- Teeth grinding
- Muscle tension and pain
- Frequent headaches

Bottomline

Anxiety is often deeply rooted in a person, making it challenging for them to live life to the fullest. Recognizing early signs and getting treatment is immensely beneficial, as is learning how not to acknowledge negative thoughts and beliefs. It will take time to get used to such healthy coping mechanisms, but the overall positive effects will be worthwhile.

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What is the Significance of Group Therapy for Mental Health and Addiction?

Our Friends · Saturday, November 23rd, 2024

In recent years, the global conversation has focused more on mental health and addiction issues than ever before, with people facing these struggles turning to different types of therapy for support in their healing journey. Group therapy has emerged as an approach, alongside counseling, with its own set of advantages that can enhance the overall treatment process. So, read on and gain valuable insights.

Understanding Group Therapy

In **group therapy in Chicago** or any city, people with shared experiences come together regularly to talk about their thoughts and emotions in a setting?. This method allows members to gain insights from one another?, fostering recovery and personal development?. A professional therapist usually leads these meetings??., directing the discussions and creating a space for everyone involved??.

Benefits of Shared Experiences

Group therapy offers a benefit through the bonding that occurs over shared experiences among participants, who gain comfort in knowing they are not facing their challenges alone. Listening to others share struggles creates a sense of community and diminishes feelings of loneliness. This mutual support fosters a feeling of being heard and embraced by others, which can lead to healing.

Learning Through Different Perspectives

Participating in group therapy provides enlightening insights for those engaged in the process. Uncovering perspectives and coping techniques allows individuals to expand their comprehension of challenges. This exposure aids in cultivating approaches to problem-solving and equips them with skills to navigate future obstacles effectively.

Building Communication Skills

Group therapy also **boosts communication skills** among participants. Participants are encouraged to discuss their thoughts and feelings during sessions, which can help them express themselves more effectively, not just within the group but also in their personal relationships, by learning to communicate their needs and set boundaries confidently.

Developing Empathy and Compassion

Empathy and compassion flourish in group therapy settings as individuals share their stories and hardships with one another to build a connection with emotions and foster a supportive environment within and outside the group dynamics. This enhances personal relationships and promotes a kinder society overall.

Accountability and Motivation

Participating in group therapy can greatly enhance motivation and a sense of responsibility among individuals on their recovery journey as they share goals and progress with peers. It not only fosters a commitment to personal growth but also provides encouragement and support from fellow members that can inspire positive behaviors and attitudes.

Reducing Stigma

Engaging in group therapy is also essential in combatting the stigma surrounding mental health and addiction issues. The candid conversations on these topics aid in making them more commonplace and dispelling prejudices and misunderstandings. As people grow more at ease sharing their challenges openly, it fosters a change towards inclusivity and empathy.

Cost-Effective Therapy Option

Group therapy is often seen as a cost option compared to one-on-one counseling for individuals seeking support services. Considering that the expenses are divided among participants in each session makes it more accessible to a range of people, resulting in access to professional therapeutic assistance. The reasonable cost not only diminishes the level of care provided but also makes it a convenient choice for those in need of assistance.

Fostering Long-Term Recovery

Engaging in group therapy can support individuals throughout their recovery journey in the long

run, as it fosters a sense of community and encouragement that goes beyond just the therapy sessions themselves. These lasting connections and bonds can offer support to participants in staying on track with their healing process and avoiding setbacks.

Conclusion

Group therapy is extremely important for individuals struggling with health and addiction challenges. The support from others' diverse viewpoints and improved communication abilities acquired through participation provide significant advantages. Cultivating empathy, minimizing stigma, and encouraging responsibility make group therapy a potent aid in the journey to healing. As the world progresses, adopting these therapeutic approaches can pave the way for a more empathetic and understanding society?.

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How a Personal Injury Lawyer Could Help Food Poisoning Victims

Our Friends · Saturday, November 23rd, 2024

Did you know that the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that approximately 48 million Americans, or one in six people, suffer from food poisoning yearly?

Food poisoning often results in serious health complications, huge medical expenses, lost wages, and emotional trauma.

People who fall victim to food poisoning may not be informed that there are legal options available for them.

According to **food poisoning lawyer Douglas D. Shaffer**, a personal injury lawyer helps food poisoning victims deal with the legal system. Their expertise guarantees that you receive the compensation you deserve.

Legal Expertise in Food Poisoning Cases

When seeking legal assistance for food poisoning cases, choose a lawyer who is an expert in dealing with complicated laws and regulations.

A lawyer with experience in cases related to this can help you understand your rights and options for seeking compensation. They'll know the laws that apply to food safety, liability, and negligence.

According to an **Irvine personal injury lawyer**, a lawyer specializing in food poisoning cases has a ready network of resources to draw upon. They have already built relationships with medical experts who can provide testimony about the effects of such a poisoning on your health. This makes it easier to build a strong case that is favorable to you.

Investigation and Evidence Collection

Having solid evidence is very important when proving your claim in food poisoning cases. Your personal injury lawyer will gather important information such as medical records detailing your illness, receipts or documentation of the food consumed, interview with witnesses who dined with you, and any communications with the establishment where the contamination likely occurred.

Your legal team will analyze all the collected relevant evidence to build a strong case for your compensation claim.

Negotiation With Insurance Companies

Your lawyer can negotiate with insurance companies on your behalf. The lawyer will be the one to handle the discussions, counteroffers, and settlement terms.

Insurance companies often aim to settle claims quickly and for as little as possible. With solid evidence, your lawyer can advocate for a fair settlement that adequately compensates you for the physical, emotional, and financial trouble caused by the food poisoning.

Representation in Court Proceedings

Your personal injury lawyer will be by your side every step of the way throughout the legal process. This includes helping you in filing the necessary paperwork and representing you during hearings and trials.

Your lawyer is in charge of presenting a compelling case and handling all communication with the court. This allows you to focus on your recovery and relieves you of unnecessary stress that might be caused by court proceedings.

Maximizing Compensation for Victims of Food Poisoning

Your lawyer will see to it that everything is accounted for in your compensation claims. The extent of damages will be carefully assessed to determine the maximum compensation that should be awarded to you.

If a settlement can't be reached, your lawyer will be prepared to take your case to court and fight for your compensation through litigation.

Conclusion

Hiring a personal injury lawyer can greatly benefit food poisoning victims. Don't hesitate to seek legal assistance if you have suffered from food poisoning. The benefits that they offer greatly outweigh the cost of hiring one.

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What is Roulette and How Do You Play?

Our Friends · Saturday, November 23rd, 2024

Classed as a casino classic, Roulette is a game that has grown in popularity since its creation. Since bounding onto the casino scene in the 18th century, the game has evolved with the times, and can now be played in both physical casino establishments and [online casino](#) platforms.

In light of this, we wanted to delve further into Roulette to find out exactly what it is, and how you play.

What is Roulette?

Roulette is a classic casino game that involves a spinning wheel and a small ball. The wheel has numbered pockets ranging from 0 to 36, and in the American version, an additional pocket is marked 00.

Each number on the wheel alternates between red and black, while the zero pockets are green. The game's objective is to predict which numbered pocket the ball will land in after the wheel is spun.

You can place several types of bets in Roulette, ranging from specific numbers to broader categories, such as colour or number ranges. The game offers various betting options, each with different odds and payout rates based on the likelihood of the outcome.

Roulette is designed to be a game of chance. Each spin is independent, and the outcome is random, with no connection to previous results. This straightforward format makes it widely accessible and easy to follow.



Roulette is always a fun group game of chance. Photo: Canva

How to play Roulette

Now that you know what Roulette is, how do you play it?

1. Placing roulette bets:

At the start of each round, you place chips on the Roulette table to indicate your bet(s). You can bet on a specific number, a group of numbers, or certain characteristics, such as red/black or odd/even.

Common types of bets include:

- **Inside bets** can be placed on specific numbers or small groups of numbers, such as:
 - Straight up: A single number bet.
 - Split: A bet on two adjacent numbers.
 - Street: A bet on three numbers in a row.
 - Corner: A bet on four numbers that form a square on the table.
- **Outside bets** cover larger groups or categories, such as:
 - Red/Black: Betting on all red or all black numbers.
 - Odd/Even: Betting on all odd or all even numbers.
 - Dozens: Betting on a group of 12 numbers (e.g., 1-12).
 - Columns: Betting on an entire column of numbers.

2. The roulette spin:

Once all bets are placed, the dealer spins the wheel in one direction and rolls the ball in the opposite direction. The ball travels around the wheel's rim before losing momentum and dropping into one of the numbered pockets.

3. Outcome and payouts:

The pocket where the ball lands determines the winning bets. The dealer announces the winning number, and the table automatically updates to show which bets have won.

Payouts are made according to the type of bet. For example, a straight-up bet on a single number offers a higher payout due to its lower probability, while bets covering larger ranges, like red/black, offer lower payouts.

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8 Common Myths About Biohazard Cleanup Services

Our Friends · Saturday, November 23rd, 2024

Biohazard cleaning services are frequently surrounded by misunderstandings that can impact safety and health maintenance significantly. The presence of misconceptions about these services may result in confusion and prevent people from seeking the help they need. This article seeks to debunk myths and highlight the contributions made by professionals in the field of biohazard cleanup.

Myth 1: Any Cleaning Service Can Handle Biohazards

Some individuals wrongly believe that regular cleaning services are equipped to handle materials when, in fact, this is not the case at all. **Biohazard cleanup services** entail dealing with substances that could pose a threat to health and safety, necessitating training and handling tools. Those working in this field have the knowledge and skills to guarantee both safety and adherence to regulations.

Myth 2: Biohazard Cleanup Is Only for Crime Scenes

Biohazard cleaning services extend beyond crime scenes; they also handle issues like hoarding situations and unattended deaths, industrial accidents, and **medical waste incidents**. Professionals are equipped to deal with a variety of scenarios, emphasizing the importance of expertise in each instance.

Myth 3: Insurance Never Covers Biohazard Cleanup Costs

Lots of people think that insurance won't pay for cleanup costs upfront. In truth, many insurance plans actually have clauses that cover these situations, which can lower the amount policyholders have to pay out of pocket. Consultation with the insurance company can provide information on

what is covered and help people better grasp their financial obligations.

Myth 4: Biohazard Cleanup Is Unnecessary if No Visible Blood Is Present

Just because you can't see any blood doesn't mean there's no need for a cleanup! There could still be fluids and dangerous substances around that pose a threat to health and safety, even if they're not visible to the eye! Hiring professionals to handle the cleanup ensures that everything gets properly decontaminated to deal with any risks—whether obvious ones you can see or not!

Myth 5: Only Large Companies Require Biohazard Cleanup

There is a misconception that biohazard cleanup services are primarily required by companies and industrial environments only. However, in reality, businesses of varying sizes and individual homeowners may also find themselves in need of such services at some point in time to address incidents, like home accidents, medical emergencies, and small business mishaps, effectively, with professional assistance, ensuring all hazards are properly handled.

Myth 6: Biohazard Cleanup Takes a Long Time

Some individuals are discouraged from seeking assistance with cleanup due to the perception that it's a time-consuming task. Nevertheless, professionals aim to be efficient by striking a balance between thoroughness and managing time. The length of the cleanup process varies depending on factors like the extent of contamination and the unique situation at hand. Experts work diligently to return things to normal as quickly as they can.

Myth 7: DIY Cleanup Is a Safe and Cost-Effective Option

Trying to handle cleanup on your own comes with dangers. You may not have the proper protective gear or expertise to handle harmful substances safely and effectively, as professionals do, keeping you safe and compliant while minimizing health risks.

Myth 8: Biohazard Cleanup Services Are Extremely Expensive

The expenses associated with hiring biohazard cleanup services can sometimes discourage people from seeking help. Despite the costs involved in these services, which cover the expertise of the professionals and the safety equipment used for cleanups, many service providers have pricing. Collaborate with insurance companies to help alleviate customers' financial strain.

In Summary

Exploring the truth about biohazard cleanup services can debunk misconceptions and promote informed decision-making practices for individuals and businesses alike. The crucial role these experts play in upholding safety and adhering to regulations cannot be overstated. Acknowledging their skills and contributions and trusting that they are equipped to handle situations effectively is key. Dismantling prevalent misunderstandings nurtures an understanding of the impact biohazard cleanup services have on sustaining clean and secure environments.

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Light and Energy Meet in Norton Simon, Caltech Shows

Stephen West · Friday, November 22nd, 2024

American art in the 1960s expanded, and sometimes exploded, the ideas of what painting and sculpture could and should be. Pop art took images from the commercial world — think Campbell's soup cans — and created new meanings for them. It also experimented with new tools and materials, from high-tech lasers and holograms to commercial neon signs.

The [Norton Simon Museum](#) in Pasadena, California, has mounted a small gem of a show, *Plugged In: Art and Electric Light*, featuring Pop works from 1964-70 that are powered by electricity. Across town, [California Institute of Technology](#) has organized *Crossing Over: Art and Science at Caltech, 1920-2020*, a group of contemporary artworks and historical collections across the campus. Both exhibitions display the power of light and energy and fit in nicely with the Getty's sprawling [PST Art series](#) of exhibitions across Southern California called *Art & Science Collide*.



Robert Rauschenberg (1925-2008), *Green Shirt*, 1965-67, neon and enameled metal; Norton Simon Museum, gift of the artist, © 2024 Robert Rauschenberg Foundation / Licensed by VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

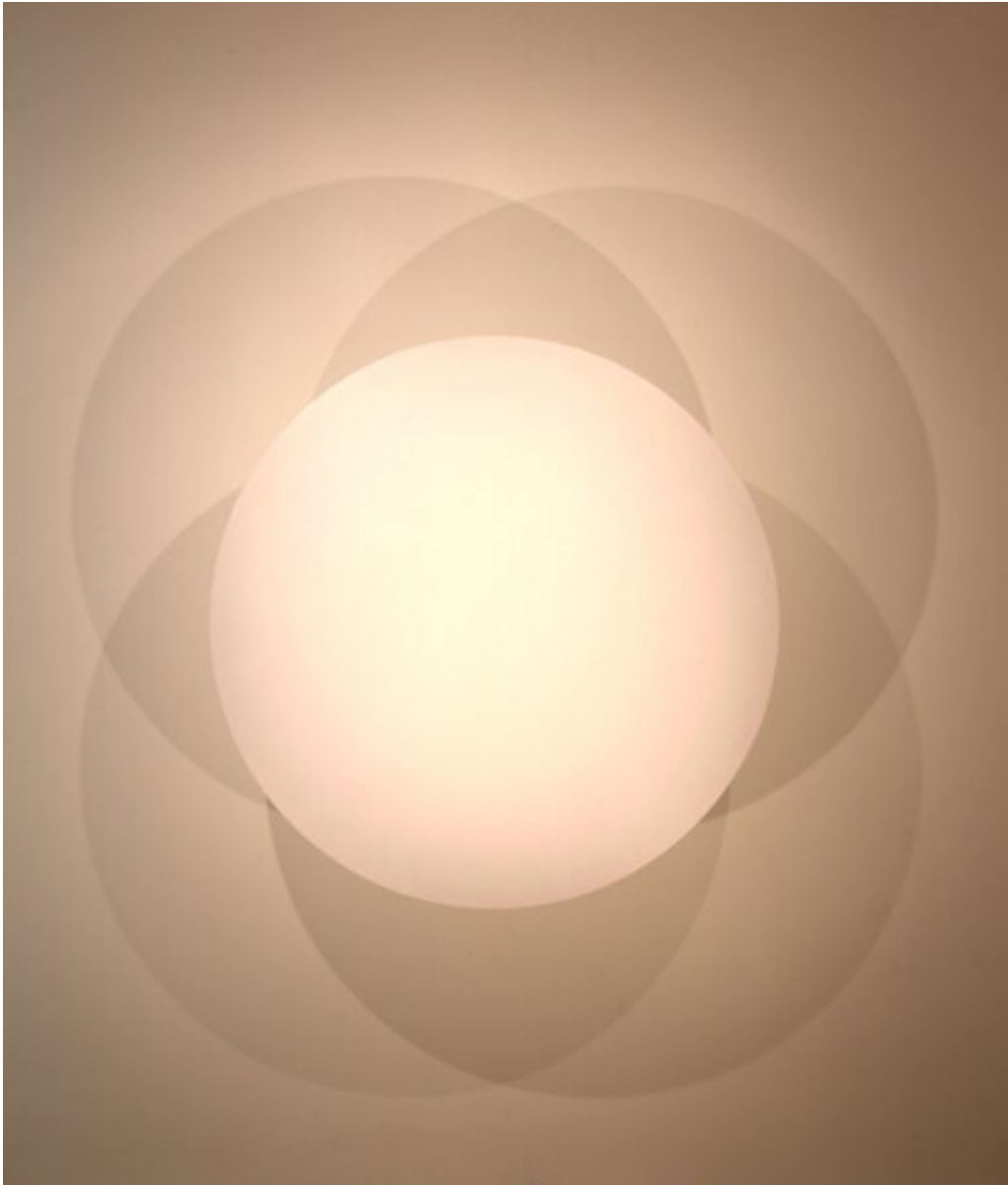
One of the most spectacular works at the Norton Simon is Robert Rauschenberg's *Green Shirt* of 1965-67, a 20-foot-wide panel supporting a dozen images created with neon lights. There's the green shirt of the title on the left, as well as a young blond woman riding in a saddle and another looking at herself in a mirror. There's a pair of orange pigs and a flying blue bear, a yellow bicycle and a striped necktie.

Shaped like a billboard, the work is really an advertisement for itself. It exudes the optimism (and chaos) of the 1960s in an explosion of imagery.



Dan Flavin (1933-1996), *“monument” on the survival of Mrs. Reppin*, 1966, warm white and red fluorescent light; Norton Simon Museum, Museum Purchase, Fellows Acquisition Fund, © Stephen Flavin/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; courtesy of David Zwirner, New York.

Some of the works in the show are minimal in the extreme. Laddie John Dill, for example, uses neon tubing to create a single horizontal line with a dozen foot-long segments at eye level in a variety of colors. Dan Flavin’s *“monument” on the survival of Mrs. Reppin* of 1966 consists of one red and three white, fluorescent lighting tubes, ordinary commercial products that are artfully arranged in a corner. Both works have a simple elegance that catches your eye.



Robert Irwin (1928-2023), *Untitled*, 1968, synthetic polymer paint on metal disc and arm; Norton Simon Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene M. Schwartz, © Robert Irwin / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

A much showier sculpture, Robert Irwin's *Untitled* of 1968, presents a slightly convex, creamy white disc, 5 feet in diameter and seeming to float in front of the wall. It's lit by four spotlights above and below that cast four different but symmetrical shadows on the wall, creating a complex of overlapping shadows that surround the disc like a halo. The work seems simple at first glance, but the more you study it and move around it, the more complex it becomes.

Plugged In: Art and Electric Light runs through February 17, 2025, at the [Norton Simon Museum](#), 411 West Colorado Boulevard, Pasadena, California. The museum is closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Top image: Robert Rauschenberg (1925-2008), *Green Shirt*, 1965-67, neon and enameled metal; Norton Simon Museum, gift of the artist, © 2024 Robert Rauschenberg Foundation / Licensed by VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.



Shana Mabari, *Spectrum Petals*, 2024, acrylic and mirror; courtesy of the artist; photograph by Stephen West.

***Crossing Over* at Caltech**

If you enter the Caltech campus from the west side, walking along the grassy Bechtel Mall framed by the oldest buildings at the school, the first things you see of the *Crossing Over* series are Shana Mabari's *Spectrum Petals*. This wonderful series of seven sculptures – each a smooth plastic disc about 3 feet in diameter and 6 inches thick – are spread across the lawn, standing on edge as if they just landed from outer space.

The discs — in red, blue, green, yellow, orange — look like semi-transparent lenses, perhaps designed for a large telescope. In fact, they're slightly reflective, casting odd bands of color on the grass. (The squirrels foraging on the lawn near a disc seem spooked by the appearance of an identical squirrel looking back at them.)



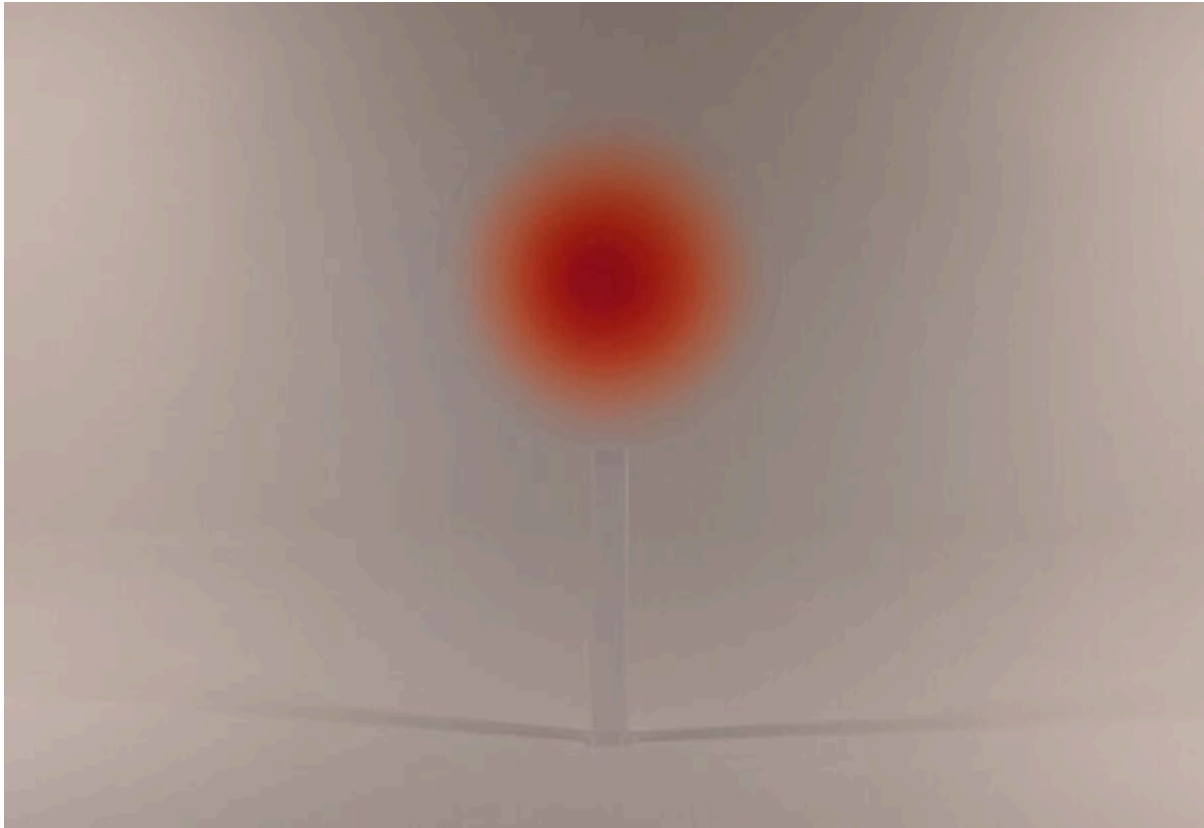
Lita Albuquerque, *This Moment in Time*, 2024, artificial gold leaf on vinyl and concrete; courtesy of the artist; photograph by Stephen West.

Farther down the mall, environmental artist Lita Albuquerque has created another striking outdoor artwork, *This Moment in Time*. She's covered a small bridge over a reflecting pool with a synthetic gold leaf material that looks a lot like a shag rug. The metal fabric reflects the sunlight, sways in the wind, and would be right at home with Judy Garland in *The Wizard of Oz*.

Inside three buildings flanking the mall are small exhibitions showing how Caltech scientists have made important contributions to modern science. Using historical documents, photos, and prints, the installation in Linde Lab focuses on the development of modern astronomy, including the building of the Mount Wilson and Mount Palomar observatories. There's also an elegant new artwork, a glowing golden disc mounted on a blue background titled *Helium Blaze*, also by Albuquerque.

The installation in Gates Annex, called *Time Stream*, also focuses on astronomy and physics and displays rare first-edition books by Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler, among others. At Dabney Hall, the *Powers of Ten* explores the idea of scale, from the vastness of the universe to the subatomic. It also documents the important contributions made by Caltech scientists to the

sobering topic of the Manhattan Project, which developed the atomic bomb during World War II.



Helen Pashgian, *Untitled*, 2023, cast urethane;
courtesy of Helen Pashgian ; photograph by Stephen West.

A fourth mini-exhibition, at the Chen Building north of the mall, features a single artwork by Helen Pashgian. This spooky, untitled work of 2023 employs a resin-based “radiant lens” to project a glowing red-orange fuzzy ball of light in a darkened room. The image seems to pulse slightly, changing shape and color just a bit if you move around the room and meditate on the mysterious work. You might consider it a high-tech, 21st-century descendant of Robert Irwin’s glowing white orb at the Norton Simon.

***Crossing Over: Art & Science at Caltech, 1920-2020* runs through December 15 at [California Institute of Technology](#), 1200 East California Boulevard, Pasadena, California. A catalog is available. The installations are closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.**

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Winter Street Style Around the World: Fashionable Adaptations to the Cold

Our Friends · Friday, November 22nd, 2024

Winter is more than just a season; it’s a canvas for self-expression through style, with diverse and creative adaptations that reflect culture, practicality, and individualism. From sleek coats in

cosmopolitan cities to bundled layers in rustic towns, how people dress during winter has cultural roots and modern twists. Street style, a phenomenon that thrives on creativity and trend-setting, highlights how winter fashion adapts to harsh elements while making a statement. As temperatures drop, fashion enthusiasts around the globe embrace inventive [winter outfit ideas](#) that blend function and flair.

Cultural Influence in Winter Street Style

In every corner of the world, winter clothes are influenced by the culture of the society of a given country. Consider Scandinavia, where nothing is more appreciated than the clean lines and simplicity, even in the middle of the winter. Some Danish and Swedish cities illustrate people who are equally comfortable in form and style. Consider tailored parkas, monochromatic knitted wear, and sturdy boots for snow-covered terrains. Such simplicity is typical for the Scandinavian mentality, but they add a hint of style to the coat, a stylish scarf, or a hat.

However, as it has been seen, the streets of Tokyo represent a much bolder approach. Winter fashion is all about being bold, whimsical, layered, covered, and full of bright and bold hues. Harajuku fashion is a vivid and intensive mix of textures and patterns with no mistakes and mistakes in proportions. One can also notice the love for experimentation and the uniqueness of Japanese winter streetwear. The necessity to be warm is interwoven with the desire to dress fashionably. Thus, practical clothing becomes an artwork.

However, modern winter style has made a historical mark in countries such as Russia, where long coats with fur and big hats are not only historical but also functional. Today, they are replaced with fake fur, but the luxurious and theatrical lines inherent in Russia's winter look are still present. These influences find their way into streetwear culture, presenting themselves as luxury and necessity.

Trends for Modern Winters

Winter street style is not a static phenomenon; it adapts to new trends and the conditions of a progressively different climate. In big cities such as New York, layering is functional and a way to communicate with the audience. A puffer jacket, a tailored blazer, and classy capes share the same space, enabling New Yorkers to switch from daily subway rides to formal meetings. Due to rapid development and freedom, streets in such cities can be seen as more flexible in embracing variability. Comfortable sneakers for winter, along with beautiful woolen coats, represent the style of the 'business casual' look.

London, however, expels vintage and punk in its clothing styles in the winter. It is rebellious with a retro touch, including trench coats, military jackets, and tartan scarves. Although providing warmth, these items signify rebellion and memories, which are the ingredients of London's streetwear. Traditional motifs are reborn with such essentials of today's wardrobe as Chelsea boots or fake leather pants.

In other parts of the world, such as Seoul, South Korea, [fashion during the winter](#) season has been influenced mostly by popular culture, music, and K-pop. Fashion enthusiasts on the streets wear tight-fitting blazers over turtlenecks, padded shoulders, big berets, and chunky jewelry. Their clothes are undoubtedly posh but wearable because most are inspired by the clothes that fashion enthusiasts witness on television and social networking sites. South Korea's winter streetwear has received international attention thanks to its capacity to both set and amplify trends.

Balancing Practicality and Expression

Winter street fashion is about finding the right balance between comfort and style. Overalls and other thick clothing, including quilted jackets and thermal vests, can be seen as practical, but aesthetics of texture, color, and design can be added. For instance, in Berlin, the principle of practical fashion is dominant. Military-inspired features such as reinforced shoes, vests, and durable materials are combined with urban motifs and form a functional style that reflects the spirit of the metropolis, exacerbated by an avant-garde note.

Equally important are accessories that must complement the dress, and the shoes and bag must match the dress. Coats, scarves, and mittens, apart from being valuable accessories, are often focal points that complete an outfit's overall look. The Parisian winter street style, which people know to be elegant and timeless, is a great example. Parisians use berets, cashmere scarves, and leather gloves to accessorize their timeless coats, making their outfits look more casual yet chic. This is why Paris is a winter-style icon, all because of the clash of glamour and functionality.

Conclusion

The selected photos give an insight into how people dress for the freezing temperatures across the globe during winter. From the Scandinavian style's simplicity to Tokyo's wild layers, winter clothing has a cultural and trend history. Regardless of historical, technological, or popular cultural references, each region's approach to winter clothing speaks to the unchanging need to look good and feel good. Winter fashion continues to enthrall the world, and this photo collection shows that the best dress code is the season's chill

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Emerging Trends in Alternative Medicine and Wellness Practices

Our Friends · Friday, November 22nd, 2024

Alternative medicine has been widely in use during the past decade. However, there's still so much we don't know about it. Alternative medicine is basically a wide range of medical practices not accepted by western medicine or verified by studies. The early definitions of alternative medicine defined it as treatment that is not taught widely in medical schools, not generally used by hospitals, and not necessarily reimbursed by insurance. Considering the developments in alternative medicine in the last 20 years, this definition is probably going to change soon.

Alternative medicine dates back to ancient Chinese medicine and Indian Ayurvedic medicine.

These philosophies are still in practice today, but they've also given way to new experiences and methods that are more accessible and convenient for the modern individual. Yoga and herbalism, the use of plants to prevent or treat illness, are wellness practices stemming from ancient Chinese and Indian Ayurvedic medicine. These philosophies believed in balancing the body's innate vital energies, which is a concept still being used in developing new alternative medicines.

Emerging Trends

Alternative medicine has always been used, but it's now becoming increasingly accessible. In fact, alternative and contemporary medicine is now also being incorporated into traditional ways of treatment, ushering in a new era of medicine.

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy has been practiced for centuries. It involves using essential oils for therapeutic benefits. When inhaled, the scents from liquids and oils travel from the olfactory nerves directly to the brain, impacting the brain.

When absorbed by the skin during massages, these oils help relax tight muscles. Nowadays, skincare companies have started using these aromatic oils in their products, such as bath salts. Clinical trials have shown that aromatherapy has alleviated conditions like **anxiety**, depression, nausea, and insomnia.

Ibogaine Therapy

Ibogaine is a novel medication derived from the roots of the rainforest shrub *Tabernanthe iboga*. This plant is a psychoactive drug indigenous to West Africa and is traditionally used in spiritual, religious, and healing ceremonies.

Ibogaine treatment has shown remarkable effects in treating various substance abuse disorders, including addiction to heroin, prescription opioids, cocaine, methamphetamine, fentanyl, and alcohol.

Ibogaine has also helped people struggling with anxiety, depression, and PTSD. Ibogaine initiates an introspective episode when it enters the body, creating a deeply personalized experience and helping patients uncover the underlying reasons behind their issues.

Medical Marijuana

The use of medical marijuana has been extensively growing over the last 20 years. In fact, many states in the US have also legalized the use of medical marijuana in certain cases. You can purchase up to 20 fluid ounces of medical cannabis with a valid condition and **medical marijuana card**.

Conditions that **medical marijuana** can help with include Aids/HIV, Alzheimer's Disease, chronic pain, cancer, Crohn's disease, epilepsy, Parkinson's Disease, and more.

The ideal way to consume marijuana for medicinal purposes is through edible products like squares, tinctures, and lozenges, or tinctures.

Hydrotherapy

Hydrotherapy involves health-oriented **water baths** and drinking spa water. It became popular in the nineteenth century thanks to a farmer, Vinzenz Priessnitz, who believed the water on his land could heal. This healing power of water has also been connected to religious places.

While Western practitioners agree that being immersed in water is relaxing for the mind and body and can directly improve injuries and diseases, they do not generally believe in water's healing powers.

New Trends in Medicine

Other emerging alternative medicines include hypnosis, massage or physical therapy, naturopathy, radisthesis, reflexology, shiatsu, biofeedback, osteopathy, and acupuncture. New trends in alternative medicine and wellness practices have been emerging rapidly and growing around the world, becoming more accessible and convenient over time.

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