

Barbie Makes a Comeback

For those with other things in their life besides controversial plastic dolls, Barbie has had a rough time of it in the last few years. For almost five decades, Barbie has been the leading icon of fashion the world over. But in an instant all that changed. The classic good looks, multiple vehicles and dream houses weren't good enough – new fashion dolls had arrived in a big way.

Bratz

The four teenage dolls who dressed in urban fashions offered something new to girls looking for updated playthings. Barbie might be a modern princess, but these four girls were "real." Bratz had an edge that Barbie simply couldn't compete with, and that was a dramatic shift in 2001, after four decades of essentially no competition in the fashion doll marketplace.

Barbie Stumbles...But Recovers

Hit by an urban onslaught, Barbie didn't have much of an initial response. The same style of doll had been updated over the years to reflect current styles and current demographics, but even the different styles of Barbie still maintained a more preppy look. Bratz weren't preppy, and they weren't always sweet and helpful. Not only are Bratz slightly younger, and therefore more appropriate for youthful styles, they are stealing away girls who have always wanted something edgier from Barbie.

Barbie felt the sting of rejection as sales of the popular doll slumped thirty percent in the United States in three years. But Barbie wasn't out of the game just yet. Not only did she still have a huge fan base including girls of all ages, she also had a great deal of fighting spirit. In 2004 Barbie broke up with Ken to try out the singles scene.

The split did the couple well as Ken underwent some changes and came back more attractive and stylish than ever. The changes made many curious about a renewed romance, but publicists for Barbie at least deny a new relationship. Then, possibly seeing the benefits a make-over, Barbie has one herself. Her wardrobe expands and her looks change slightly in 2007. The interest over Ken and now a revamped Barbie started the blonde's comeback.

The Fight Intensifies

Barbie isn't moving out of the top position without a solid fight, and so far she's not pulling any punches. In fact, Bratz might be feeling the heat. In 2005, Bratz manufacturer MGA Entertainment sued Mattel over the My Scenes dolls, of which Barbie was a part. The lawsuit is still pending, and the My Scene dolls are already fading in favor of other doll lines, but Mattel left no question that the Bratz couldn't simply arrive without resistance.

Not only are new doll lines being created to compete with each other, Barbie is continuing her comeback online. Barbie games on the internet are giving Barbie new grounds to reach fans and expand her fan base. Girls who might not enjoy an actual Barbie doll are playing dress up games with Barbie online and loving it. Online versions of Barbie have endless wardrobe possibilities and unlimited accessories. New styles are released daily and no plastic doll can compete with that.

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About the Author

Anna Reid is one of the top dress up games developers. She invented many types of online games including Barbie makeovers and many different Bratz games. Her most popular flash designs are Dress up Games that let girls develop sense of style in fashion. You can find some of her games on [Barbie Dress Up Games](#).