

Harry Potter-style invisibility cloaks: A real possibility next Christmas?

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Mums and Dads beware, next year's Christmas wish list could be more out of reach (or sight...) than ever before. Invisibility, a long sought-after speculation in science fiction, has been turned into reality in the laboratory through the use of a theoretical technique called Transformation Optics.

In his article, 'Transformation optics and cloaking', Martin McCall, Professor of Theoretical Optics at Imperial College London, describes how the scientific principles leading to perfect invisibility, or cloaking, are now established.

Published in the academic journal Contemporary Physics, the research goes on to explain that 'Part of the impetus for current invisibility research is undoubtedly its public appeal – every scientist's child, my own included, would like to own an invisibility [cloak](#). However, apart from obvious military possibilities, invisibility research is showing signs of penetrating technology at apparently more mundane, but also more immediate, levels. Transporting and processing optical signals is the basis for global communication, and it is here that we may see the first commercial applications of cloaking technology.'

If Harry Potter-style invisibility cloaks are invented in time for next Christmas, they will surely be the 'must have' gift for children and adults everywhere.

More information: "Transformation optics and cloaking." Martin

McCall. *Contemporary Physics* Vol. 54, Iss. 6, 2013. [DOI: 10.1080/00107514.2013.847678](https://doi.org/10.1080/00107514.2013.847678)

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