LA COUNTY LIBRARY

DIY Library Program

EXPLORING FASHION DESIGN

SKETCH-START YOUR CAREER

Recommended for Ages 12 – 18

If you love fashion, colors, and design, you might be interested in a career in fashion design. The fashion industry is a competitive one, but if you have creativity and persistence, it can be rewarding to see people wearing clothes that you designed. A bachelor or associate degree is usually required, and internships at fashion houses can provide valuable experience to start your journey. However, some designers get a start by simply designing, like Mo Bridges who started selling his work on Etsy at age nine. Or designer Ralph Lauren, who hadn't finished college before launching his line.[1] Whichever track you take, persistence and ambition are a must.

You don't need many materials to start sketching. Simply grab a notepad and pencil and see what designs come to mind. How do you know what your style is? Get inspired the same way fashion designers do; notice what you see people wearing on the street, on TV, and in magazines (see magazines available from the library below), or use fashions from other eras (see *Encyclopedia of Clothes and Fashion,* in the Online Resources section towards the end). When you find a photo, texture, or idea you like, add it to a "moodboard" by pinning it to a bulletin board, or gluing it to a large piece of paper.[2]

Source: Corfee, Stephanie. *Fashion Design Workshop.* 2017.

There are three main categories of fashion design:

1. Haute Couture (French for "high sewing") – handcrafted pieces made with expensive materials that are often works of art
2. Prêt-à-porter (French for "ready-to-wear") – clothes made of high-quality materials in standardized sizes
3. Mass-market – ready-to-wear designs made of lower quality materials.[3]

Knowing what kind of design you are interested in can help pinpoint how your work will look.

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[1] McGinnes, Lisa. *So You Want To…Be a Fashion Designer*. E-book, Atlantic Publishing Group, 2017.
[2] Wood, Alix. *Fashion Design.* E-book, Gareth Stevens Publishing, 2018.
[3] Huoh, Ruth. *Fashion Design*. E-book, Greenhaven Publishing Inc., 2018.

Questions:

- Of the three categories of fashion design (Haute Couture, prêt-à-porter, and mass-market), which one could you picture yourself designing?
- How do you know when an outfit "works" on a person? Do you think there are rules to fashion, or does anything go?

ACTIVITY

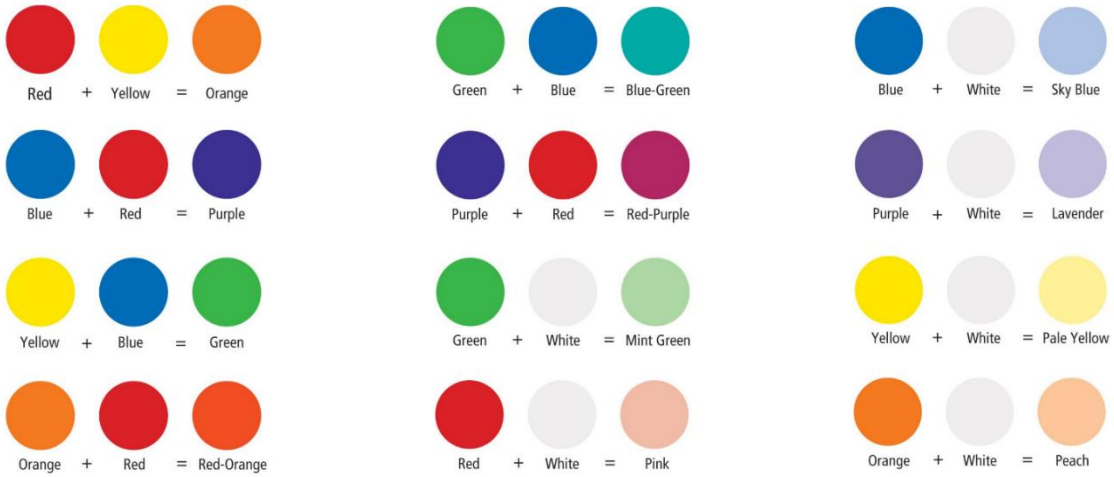
Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Eraser
- Colored pencils
- Markers/gel pens
- Template of model (optional)

Using the templates on pages 6 and 7 or by drawing your own models, practice sketching some ideas for clothes. Have fun with it and try using different textures and patterns.

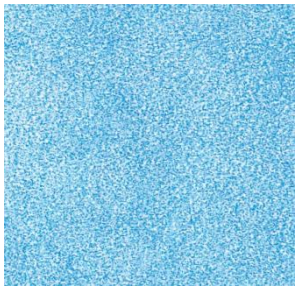
Use the color wheel below to get a sense for what colors are complementary (those colors opposite of each other on the wheel), and which are analogous (the colors that are next to each other on the wheel). Try blending colors using the chart below.

Source: Corfee, Stephanie. *Fashion Design Workshop.* 2017



Now try using a pencil to experiment creating these different textures (For even more, read Stephanie Corfee's *Fashion Design Workshop*).

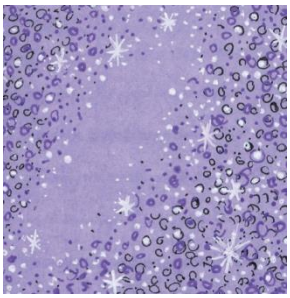
Smooth – control your pencil to produce an even layer of color.



Plaid – use marker for base color and add vertical and horizontal lines with colored pencils in groups of three.

Tweed – use marker for base color and crosshatch with pencils, alternating colors. The key is adding lots of layers. Finish with white gel pen to add definition.

Sequins – use marker for base color and add dots, circles, and starbursts for twinkles.



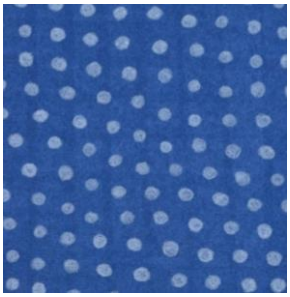
Netting/tulle – choose two or three analogous colors and create a crosshatched pattern with pencil. For a delicate-looking texture, use sharper pencils.

Denim – use a gray/green marker for base and colored pencils to add light crosshatching in several different shades of blue and gray. Keep pencil sharp so you can make out the “woven” texture.

Shiny (patent leather, satin, etc.) – use a bold marker color and leave some areas of white. Add vertical stripes of darker colors.

Layered chiffon – use a light-colored marker for base and build up shading in a vertical pattern using analogous shades. Darken areas around gathers and use white pencil to highlight folds.

Polka dots – use marker for base color and use a colored pencil for dots, using an index card or ruler to keep rows straight.



Source: Corfee, Stephanie. *Fashion Design Workshop.* 2017

After sketching some designs, think about these questions:

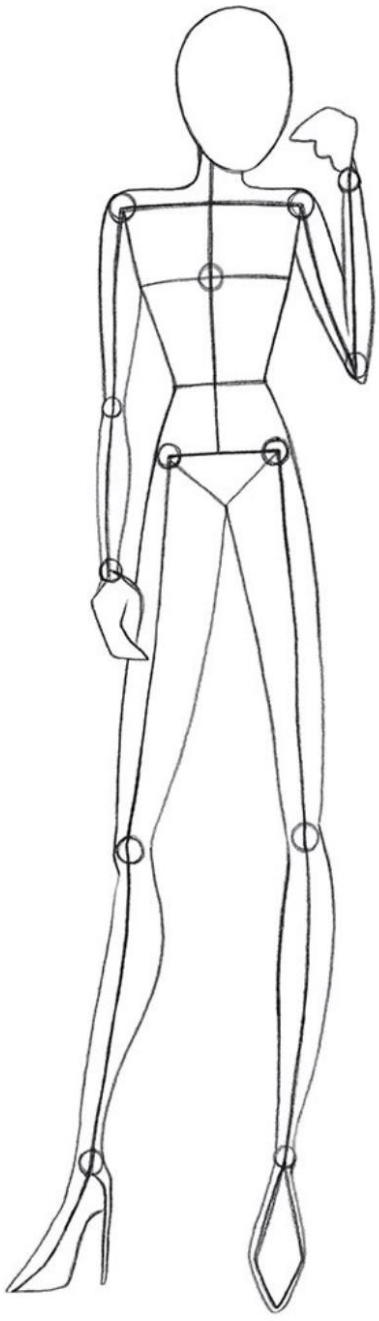
- What textures were easier to work with? Which ones were harder?
- If you showed your work to a friend, were they able to tell what material you were trying to portray?

Recap:

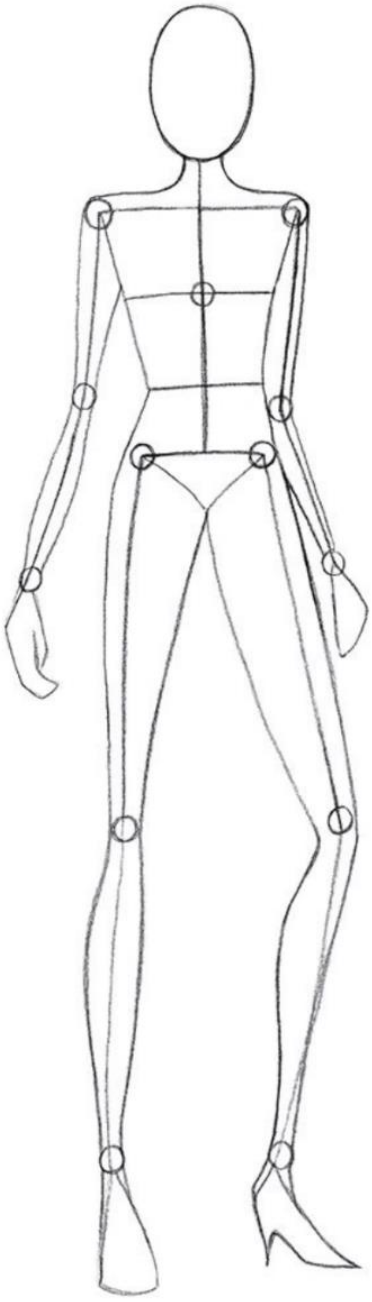
1. Creative careers can be extremely competitive, but don't be dismayed. You can gain a head start with education and internship experience.
2. Designers gather inspiration from various sources and pin these ideas to a moodboard. Make your own moodboard to get a sense of your unique style.
3. Before creating clothing, designers use different artistic techniques to represent different textures on paper.

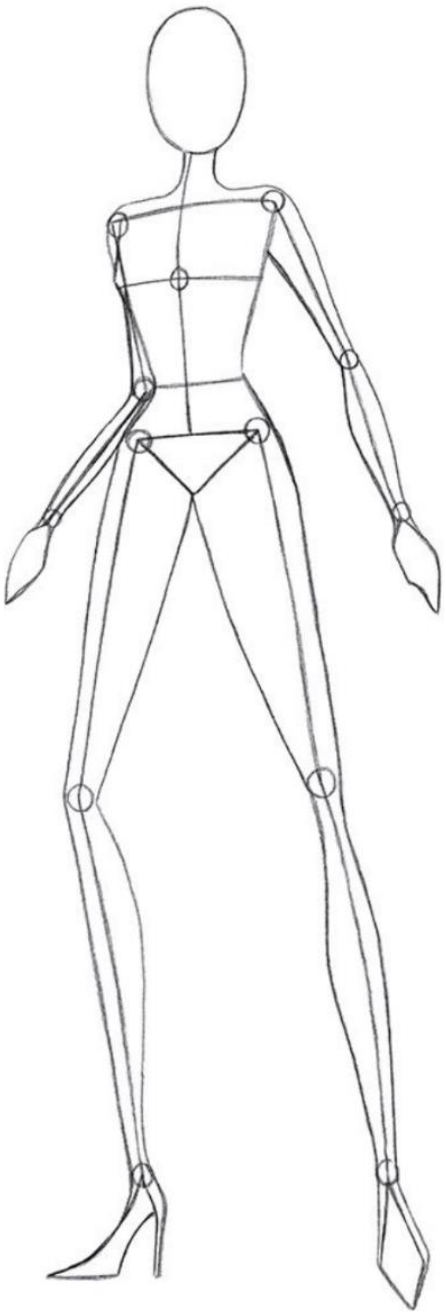
After New York, Los Angeles is the second-largest fashion locale in the United States. Before you can begin a career you need to start at the bottom; get a part-time job in a retail apparel store, and you will have the ability to explore positions that don't require any experience, like design assistant or junior visual merchandiser.[4] You are closer to a career in fashion design than you think!

[4] McGinnes, Lisa. *So You Want To…Be a Fashion Designer*. E-book, Atlantic Publishing Group, 2017.



Source: Corfee, Stephanie. *Fashion Design Workshop.* 2017



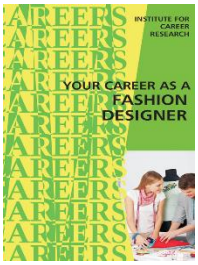


Source: Corfee, Stephanie. *Fashion Design Workshop.* 2017

DIGITAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE THROUGH LA COUNTY LIBRARY

eBooks & Audiobooks

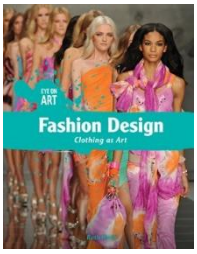
LA County Library offers numerous resources that can help you learn more about fashion design. Here are just a few, all of which are available as eBooks on Hoopla, the Virtual Reference Library, as well as OverDrive and Libby:



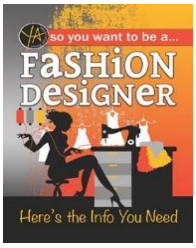
Your Career as a Fashion Designer **by Institute for Career Research**
This book walks you through all aspects of a career in fashion design, including the benefits and downsides to each job as well as educational requirements. It also includes some candid interviews with successful fashion designers.

Fashion and Apparel **by Ferguson's Careers in Focus**
Explore job profiles not only in fashion design but also costume design, cosmetology, and others. A quick breakdown for each job includes minimum education, salary range, personality traits, etc., followed by expanded information on various aspects of each.

Fashion Design Workshop **by Stephanie Corfee**
Includes the basics on color, drawing techniques, and tools for fashion sketching. Tutorials on sketching models and various styles of clothes make this a hands-on reading experience that you'll need when sketching your own designs.



Fashion Design **by Ruth Huoh**
Consider various perspectives on fashion and whether something that has a functional everyday purpose can, and should, be considered art.



So You Want To Be A... Fashion Designer **by Lisa McGinnes**
All the information you need to break into the fashion industry. This title includes information on education, patternmaking, bookkeeping, advertising, and more.

Other Library Resources

- *RBdigital*. Browse dozens of magazines, including *Vogue* and *Allure* for the latest fashions.
- *Universal Class*. Take a free online course in Fashion Design 101.
- *Encyclopedia of Clothing & Fashion*. Check out this great digital encyclopedia for high school students and older. Search this book by keyword or browse chapter by chapter. Learn about fashion from the olden days to more recent history.
- *Lynda.com*. Learn about technologies currently used in fashion illustration by watching course on Lynda.com. Sign in with your library card and pin number to access all Lynda.com courses and videos for free.

ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

- *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*. Find data on employment outlook and pay, as well as how to become a fashion designer and information on similar occupations.