

Elements of Design

Unit

3

Unit 3

Elements of Design

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this Unit the learner will be able to:

- Analyse the elements of fashion design
- Explain how to apply The Elements of Design in order achieve a well designed garment
- Explore different types of designs
- Describe the importance of colour in a design scheme.

Introduction to Design

When designing a garment a designer should always consider the three major aspects: structure, function and decoration. The garment should be structurally effective and appropriate for the customer's need but also reflect fashion that is currently popular.

Functionally of the garment means it should be comfortable for the person wearing it when they perform different activities. Garments should also be decorated appropriately. Garments, which are pleasing in appearance, function, structure and decoration have a very strong appeal to the purchaser. The proper function, structure and decoration of a garment are found when the elements and principles of designs are used.

The Elements of Visual Design have been defined as the basic ingredients (or components) that make up a visual design. A designer must know both the potentials and limitations that each element has. Although the elements are unique and important, they do not always work alone, for example, shape cannot exist without line and space. Understanding how, and why, a person responds to the Elements & Principles of Design and knowing how to control and use them effectively is an important aspect in designing.

Elements of Design

When creating a design, one of the components a designer must consider is the Elements and Principles of Design, they are flexible and should be applied within the context of whatever the current fashion is. A design can be defined as "An arrangement of lines, shape, colours and texture that create a visual image" and the Principles of Design are the laws that govern how elements can be combined. Elements therefore can be thought of as the raw materials that must be combined successfully to create an appealing design.

The following are the different Elements of Design:

- Line
- Form

- Shape
- Texture
- Colour

These elements are considered as “Plastics” in art language because they can be manipulated or arranged by the designer to create what the desired effect.

Line

Line refers to the edge or the outline of a garment as well as the lines that divide the space of a garment. The line is an enormously useful and versatile tool that can be used in both visual and verbal ways. A line will always lead the eye in the direction it is going, and divides the area through which it passes (providing a breaking point in space and “cutting” it into sections). Lines define a shape or silhouette and can create a mood or character when used in a garment. Line can also create visual illusions, such as making a person appear taller or wider and it also can make a figure look thinner or thicker.

There are nine characteristics of a line - path, thickness, evenness, continuity, sharpness of edge, contour of edge, consistency, length and direction. These aspects or characteristics of lines makes them a powerful tool in design. Lines can also manipulate space, they can divide it, enclose it, organize it, push and pull it, separate and contour it.

Definition: *Line is an elongated mark, the connection between two points, or the effect made by the edge of an object where there is no actual line on the object itself.*

When used on garments, lines can be categorized in three ways, by type, direction and application. All garments contain a combination of lines from each of these categories.

Line types

According to the type, lines can be divided into three types - straight, curved, and jagged lines (Fig: 1).

Straight line: All garments have some straight lines in them. These lines emphasize angles on a persons body and counteract the roundness of the body. Straight lines are created by seams, darts, hems or by edges, pleats, trims, braids, tucks, and panels. Lines create a feeling of elegance and can have bold and powerful effects in a garment. However, when more straight lines are used in a dress than necessary it can create a stiff look.

Curved lines: These lines can be rounded, circular, a full curve or somewhat flattened out (called as restrained curve). Curved lines are less conservative, formal and powerful than straight lines. In fact, circles and curves make spaces look larger than they really are. They also increase the size and shape of the figure wearing them. They add interest and smoothness and give a soft, gentle, youthful and flowing feeling. However, too many curved lines in a dress at once can create a confusing look.

Full curve: A full curve can emphasize body curves, counters thinness and angles of the body and gives a young, youthful, feminine and dynamic character to the garment. In a dress, full curves are introduced through the use of seams, garment edges and scalloped edges.

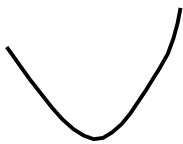
Restrained curve: Restrained curves slightly emphasize curves of the body, yet they have soft, gentle, feminine and graceful effects. Soft, shallow curves suggest comfort, safety, familiarity, and relaxation. These are introduced in dress by the use of seams, garment edges, princess lines, trims, gathers, draping and fabric pattern.

Jagged line: These lines have sharp points like zigzags, which change the direction abruptly due to their points. This type of line gives a feeling of a jerky, busy and excited effect. They also emphasize angularity in the wearers body. When they are used more than required these jagged lines can create a feeling of confusion in dress. As they are very noticeable their use should be carefully done. Decorative fabric pattern and trim like rickrack can lead to this effect.

a. Straight line



b. Full curve



c. Restrained curve



d. Jagged line



Line Direction:

Lines can travel in many different directions: vertical, horizontal, or diagonal.

a) Vertical Line

In Fig 2.1 vertical lines produce an illusion of added height to the outfit. These lines make a short person look taller and thinner.



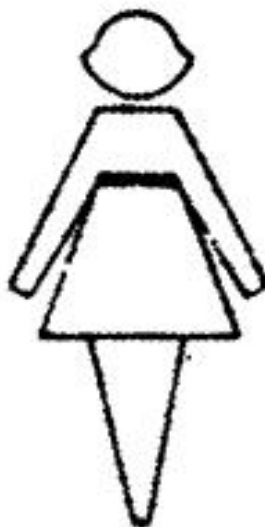
Vertical lines on a garment draw the eye up and down, this creates an effect that makes you look taller and Fig 2.1 slimmer. They are created here by seams, flaps, contrast bands, trim, pleats, or buttons.

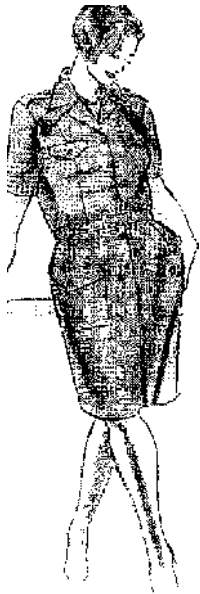
Lines also have the power to create moods and feelings. For example vertical lines remind us of upright, majestic figures and suggest stability.

b) Horizontal lines

Horizontal lines suggest a feeling of repose, quiet, and calm. Horizontal lines make your eye pause, so they should be placed where you to balance out another feature or to draw attention.

These lines (Fig2.2) add width to the garment and decrease the apparent height, hence making a tall person look smaller and broader.





Flaps, pockets, and epaulettes are all horizontal details that can be used to create a shorter and broader effect.

c) Diagonal lines

Diagonal lines can add to or decrease the height of the wearer depending on how they are positioned and which way they slope. Long uninterrupted diagonals tilting almost vertically are the most lengthening and most dramatic of all lines.



Diagonal lines are dynamic, slenderizing, and attractive. In the figure above the diagonal hem, neckline, and drape create a great evening look. Diagonal lines

should be combined with vertical or horizontal lines. If they are used alone for the entire dress the effect will be disturbing.

Application of Line in Garments

Lines are incorporated into clothing in the two basic ways - structural and decorative.

- a) **Structural lines:** Structural lines are most noticeable when the fabric of the garment is plain. They can be introduced through the construction of the garment like seams, darts, fitting tucks and shirring. They can also be introduced by real or perceived edges of the garment, like outer edge of collars, sleeves, belts, hems, pockets etc. Creases and folds created by pleats and gathers also give structural line effect in a garment.
- b) **Decorative lines:** Decorative lines are created by adding details to the surface of the fabric, they are added to decorate the garment and make it more interesting. Lines can also add style and personality to the garment. Decorative lines can be formed by adding rows of buttons, topstitching, braids, piping, bias binding, lace edging, fagoting, ruffles, fringe etc. Patterns in the fabric itself can also create lines this includes stripes, plaids, herringbones, checks etc also add lines decoratively.

Optical Illusions

Optical illusions are lines or decorations that fool the eye, they make things seem to be different than what they actually are. Lines on garments can create optical illusions with the person who is wearing it's figure, such as making them appear slimmer than they are. An especially important advantage of this is when you are designing for large sizes. Because the eye unconsciously follows a line, designers can use this advantage to draw the eye from less flattering areas and instead to more attractive ones. This means that clothing can alter a person's appearance, helping to hide a persons flaws and makes them appear closer to what society believes is perfection, the current ideal is youthful and slim. The most successful clothing uses optical illusions to make the wearer seem taller and more slender than he or she truly is, in order to please societies ideals. However the Elements of Design should be interpreted for each figure type in order to be successful in creating optical illusions.

Long, unbroken vertical lines are the most effective tool that designers have to create the optical illusion of hight, the longer and more noticeable the line is, the more effective it will be. An example of this is a zipper running down the centre of the of a garment from neckline to hemline.

The power of vertical lines can be further strengthened by adding contrasting trimmings or buttons (an example is the popularity of the shirtwaist dress in women's and half sizes). Probably the most slimming vertical lines of all are princess seams, which create a vertical panel down the front of a dress. The princess seams create an emphasis on the area between the two lines and the side panels seem to recede (making the wearers waist seem thinner). The human eye judges the length or width of something by relating it to the other areas and measurements on the garment. Longer skirts make the person

wearing them appear taller and slimmer because their length is greater than their width. Horizontal lines on the other hand, widen a person's figure, sometimes to their advantage and sometimes not. A contrasting belt on a dress (an example of how you can use a horizontal line on a garment) cuts the figure in half, creating two chunky portions instead of one long, thin one. This problem can usually be avoided by using a self belt instead. The use of illusion is also important in men's wear because generally, men want to look taller and stronger. This means that throughout history producers of men's apparel have used vertical lines to make men seem bigger and more muscular by using them in jacket closings and trousers, as well as using the technique of built-up shoulders.

When lines cross each other (for example in the shape of an X), they draw the viewer's attention to that area. This means that the illusion of width and height, or thinness and thickness can be made by using lines properly in a garment. The use of lines to focus the viewer's attention elsewhere can help to hide figure irregularities and instead draw the viewer's eye towards what is a standard fashion figure.

OPTICAL ILLUSION THROUGH LINES

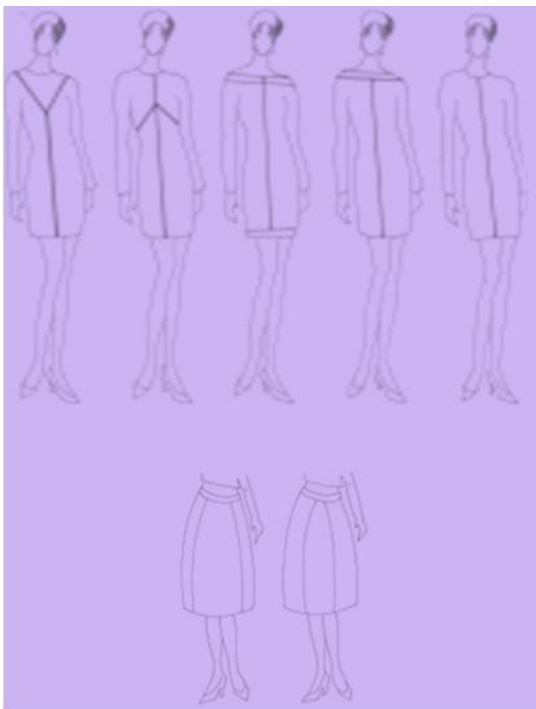


Fig. 3.4

Shapes

The word "shape" describes the outer boundary or contour of an object. Shapes also enclose space and give character to the object it is placed on. Through clothing design, the shape of the human body is often revealed in a natural way, but sometimes is distorted through the use of illusions and lines. The shape of the clothing a person is wearing communicates a message about the person who is wearing the garment.

A good silhouette is composed of individual parts that each have their own interesting shapes. They can be square shapes or round, oval, rectangular, triangular and many more. When a waistline is added to a garment, it is divided into two new shapes: a bodice and a skirt. The sleeves of a garment are also considered another shape. These parts create spaces for smaller details, such as collars and pockets. the pattern of the fabric can also create smaller shapes on the garment.

Every fashion period through history has a certain garment shape. The shape may have emerged slowly or evolved quite quickly, either way various designs can be created without changing the basic shape of the garment. The shapes can involve either flare or tight fitting, circular or straight and a line or raglan, however it has been observed that an easy fitting shape is more easily accepted and can produce many more variations compared to a tight fitting garment. This versatility also effects how long the style lasts, a loose fitting garment will last longer as a tight fitting garment is suitable to only perfect figure types. Therefore it is better that the designer chooses a silhouette that is easy to keep on create many styles from, for a longer duration.

Basic Shapes

In dress designing there are seven basic shapes — each season adapts of one or more of these shapes to dominate the fashion market. They are as follows:

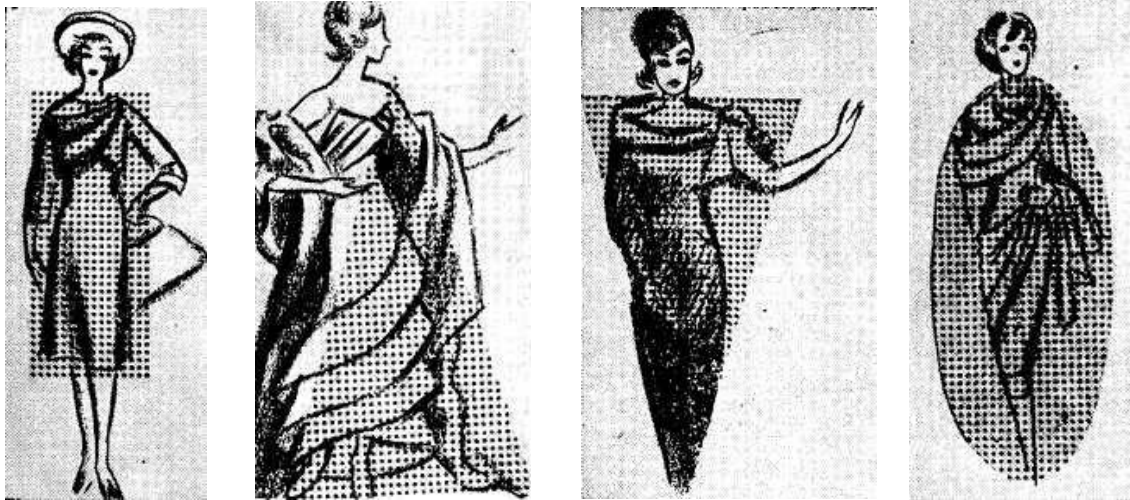


Fig 3.1 Fig 3.2 Fig 3.3 Fig 3.4

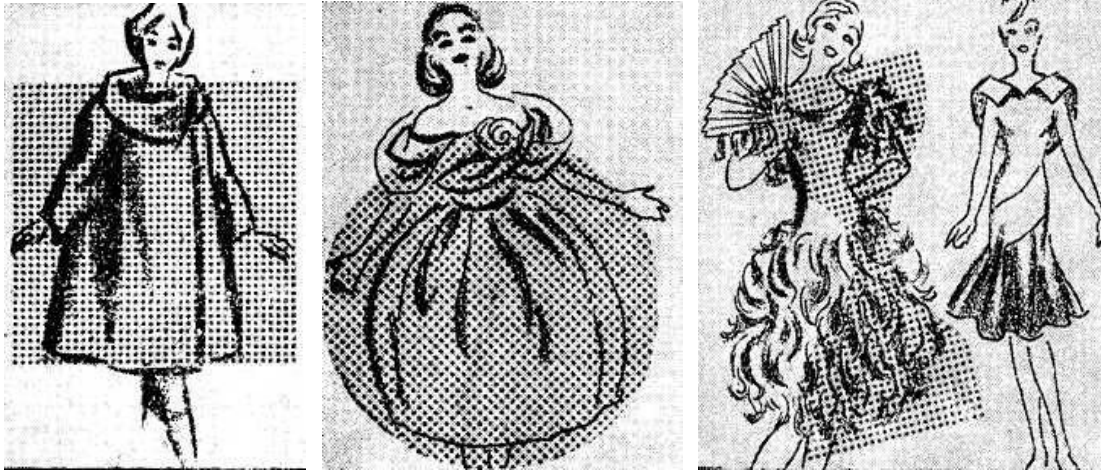


Fig 3.5 Fig 3.6 Fig 3.7

_(Fig 2.1)

a) This shape is long and straight. It hangs in loose, graceful folds (similar to Greek and Roman styles). Straight line sheaths and tailored suits are examples of this shape which has lines that are slenderizing and suitable for the well proportioned, heavier woman.

b) Triangle (Fig 3.2)

This shape is modelled after Spanish styles. It often has a fitted bodice and bell shaped, gently widening skirt.

c) Inverted Triangle (Fig 3.3)

This shape features wide shoulders, a narrow skirt and dolman or raglan sleeves. It is a flattering design style for women with a large bust.

d) Oval (Fig 3.4)

This shape features fabric that is draped and softly moulded and has a very feminine and decorative style. This shape flatters the well proportioned, ideal figure and is especially suitable for afternoon and evening wear.

e) Square (Fig 3.5)

This shape often includes a straight or boat shaped neckline, boxy jackets and capes. Generally this style flatters the very thin figure, however, if the proportions of the garment are well planned it can camouflage many different figure irregularities.

f) Round (Fig3.6)

This shape most often calls for wide crinoline lined skirts, petal shapes and puffed sleeves and it is most suitable for formal wear or afternoon frocks. This *fashion design* is the most attractive on the very young and the very thin figure.

g) Hourglass (Fig 3.7)

The hourglass shape features wide shoulders, a natural or wasp waist. Smooth fit over the hips and full skirt. This design compliments the tall, thin figure.

h) Combinations

A combination is mixing any current fashion silhouettes with another. They can be altered and adapted for the specific figure type of the person it is being made for. This customization insures that irregularities or unideal figure proportions can be minimized, while still having the effects of the current fashion design style.

Space

Space is generally known as the area between shapes. Busy space, with lots of patterns and decorations, becomes distracting and tiring to look at.

Lines in a design provide a path for your eye to travel along. Curving lines seem more natural when compared to human bodies. Vertical lines tend to make the body seem slimmer, while horizontal lines create the illusion of width. Both the repetition and extreme contrast of a line, shape, space or form will produce emphasis.

Colour and Texture

When we talk about the Principles of Designing, or when we start off a design with a given theme, the first thing that comes to mind is the colour and texture of the fabric we want to use. Every season, or sometimes sporadically, a new colour emerges in the fashion scene which has been chosen by the leading manufacturers, exporters and textile experts of the fashion world. While choosing a colour, the designer must be very careful, as colour creates the first impression, meaning it can create a positive or destructive first impression on the buyer. Even a simple silhouette may be enhanced by using the right colour schemes. Texture also plays an important role, it is the feel, drape and stiffness/softness of the fabric, which creates a visual effect upon the wearer. Given a small swatch of fabric, a designer is able to visualize the texture and the way the fabric will fall, which helps him to design the entire garment.

Types of Design

There are two kinds of design.

1. Structural design
2. Decorative design

1. Structural design

When the structure of something on the garment is the centrepiece of the design, it is called a structural design. Examples of structural design in a dress include collars, sleeves, yokes, pockets, skirts, seam lines etc.

The requirements of Good Structural Design are...

- It should be suited to the purpose
- It should be simple.
- It should be well proportioned
- It should be suited to the material which is being used
- Silhouette should fit the body and reflect fashion trends of the time
- Design is appropriate to the needs of the wearer
- Each part is well proportioned and offers unity as a whole
- There is a sense character and individuality added by line, form or texture

Structural design is far more important than decorative design because it is essential to if the garment will function, compared to decorative design which is an added luxury.

Structural design depends on the silhouette and fabric and is created by the physical design of the garment. Any detail that is an important part of the garment is a structural design (ex. seams, collars, pockets).

2. Decorative Design

Decorative design is when the surface of a garment is decorated beyond the needs of the structural design. Any line, colour or material that has been applied on top of the structural design to add a richer quality is called a decorative design. Decorative design is only a luxury and has no use to the garment beyond decoration. Examples of decorative design include appliqué, embroidery, painting or any trimmings.

Requirements of Good Decorative Design:

- It should be used in moderation
- It should be placed at structural points to strengthen the shape of the object
- The decorative design should be suitable for the material and appropriate to the occasion.
- There should be enough background space to give an effect of simplicity and dignity to design
- Surface pattern should cover the surface quietly

Types of Decorative Design:

They are 5 types of decorative design.

- a. Naturalistic
- b. Conventional
- c. Abstract
- d. Historic
- e. Geometric

a. Naturalistic Design: When objects from nature are selected and reproduced exactly as they are in their habitat (with photographic correction) it is known as naturalistic design.
eg: Flowers, leaves, animals and landscape.

b. Conventional Design: When an object from nature is changed to suit the purpose of the design and becomes decorative, it is no longer considered to be naturalistic.

c. Abstract Design: A design which does not have nature as the source of inspiration but rather, is a combination of lines to create an irregular form that is not easily recognized. Modern art is an abstract design.

d. Historic Design: The piece refers to or is inspired by a famous monument or building of historic importance. For example a temple.

e. Geometric Design: It is created from circles, rectangle, triangle, parallel lines and so on. It is not in any way inspired by nature.

The basic requirement of a good decorative design for clothing, is that the design must be attractive when it is created in real life (size and structure) and must look appealing when created with the chosen textile.

Common combination of textures includes:

- Fine embroidery for fine fabric
- Ricrac for medium weight cotton
- Sequence for shiny fine material

Colour

Colour can be the base or inspiration for a whole group or line. It is the first element that consumers respond to and, because people relate personally to colour, they decide whether or not they buy a garment based on its colour appeal. This means that designers must consider their customers and provide colours that are both appealing and flattering to them. People's background affects their colour choice too, people in agricultural countries, who have deep roots in folk traditions, have been exposed to different uses of colour than people who live in business-oriented Western countries. People also connect certain colours with holidays and seasons, they expect to see the colours of autumn leaves in fall clothing, reds and greens for the winter holidays, the pastels of flowers in the spring, and refreshing

white for the summer. All manufacturers include some of these colours in their lines to please consumers.

Colour Dimensions

Colour has three different dimensions:

Hue, value, and intensity

a) Hue

Hue is what allows us to tell one colour from another, such as red from blue or green.

b) Value

Value refers to how dark or light a colour is, it is how strong the light appears in a colour. The value scale runs from white to black, white is pure light and black is the total absence of light. Adding white lightens a colour while adding black darkens it. Lighter values are often called *tints* and darker ones are called *shades*

Every garment has elements that contrasts it's values, even if only shadows created by normal gathers and folds. Strong value contrasts are very bold (pure black against pure white is the strongest contrast). Contrasts between values that are very close to each other create a more conservative, refined impression that is easier for the average person to accept compared to the stark effects of strong contrasts.

c) Intensity

Intensity is the relative brightness/strength or paleness/weakness of a colour. Bright colours are considered high-intensity and pale ones low-intensity, for example when you add water to paint it becomes paler, the intensity of the colour is lowered. Another example is found within the blue hue, marine blue is high intensity and soft pastel blue is low. Generally, colours should be combined with others of the same intensity in order to create a balance. However, balance can also be achieved when large amounts of pale or dark colours are used in combination with a touch of bright colour (in a trim, top stitching, or embroidery for example).

Warm Colours

Red, *yellow* and *orange* are considered warm colours because of their association with fire and the sun. Warm colours are stimulating, aggressive, and lively.

Red has come to represent valentines, love, and romance, however it is also exciting, fiery, and dangerous. A popular colour for sportswear and evening wear, red is one of the few colours that can be used in every season and in high intensities. *Yellow* is bright, sunny, cheerful and is thought of as friendly and optimistic. However it is often a difficult colour to wear because it conflicts with many skin tones. *Orange* combines the sunniness of yellow and the warmth of red, but it can also be a difficult colour to wear. Intense orange can be

irritating and overpowering to viewers and is often toned to a softer peach or apricot, or just limited to use in active wear.

Cool Colours

Cool colours, as the term implies, are refreshing in contrast with warm colours. Cool colours such as blue, green, and purple remind us of the sky and the sea.

Blue

Blue is a quiet, restful, and reserved colour. It is usually used in either very high (pale blue) or very low (navy blue) values. Navy blue is one of the most popular clothing colours and for that reason most manufacturers include it in at least their spring or summer line.

Green

Green is the most refreshing colour, it suggests peace, rest, calm, and quiet. Although popular for interior design, it is for an unknown reason the least popular colour for dresses. Instead it is often used in a dark value in fall sportswear lines or mixed with neutrals to create earthy olive or loden.

Pur

Purple is historically associated with royalty and represents wealth, dignity, and drama. Because it can be sad and somber when dark and intense, it is most often used in a paler violet.

Neutrals

In clothing, neutral colours such as beige, tan, brown, white, grey, and black are even more popular than the main colours mentioned above. The main reason they are so popular is because they provide a pleasing background without drawing attention to themselves. Neutrals are part of every season's fashion picture, as either a strong fashion statement or a way to balance a main colour. White is associated with purity and cleanliness, which is why doctors and nurses have traditionally worn it. Also because it reflects light, it is cool in the summer.

Colour Naming

An exciting colour name can be important to promote a fashion look, sometimes fashion colours reappear with new names to make them seem fresh. A colour called Plum one year might return renamed as Aubergine the next year. Oil paint colour lists, as well as books featuring the names of flowers, trees, wood, fruit, vegetables, spices, wines, gems, and animals, can provide colour-name ideas. To add interest, colourists and fashion journalists even incorporate moods and emotions with names such as *China blue*.

Colour Selection

Every fashion line should include a range of colours that appeals to a variety of customers. Within the line, each group of garments is usually created around a colour plan consisting of two or more colours. Colour choices must reflect the season, climate, and type of garment. Active sportswear, for example, requires more vivid colours than spectator sportswear. A fashion line's colour story usually includes some of the colours selected from research made by trade associations, fibre companies, or design report predictions. By using these predictions to choose colours the designer has some sort of assurance that the collection will be liked by mainstream fashion consumers. Sometimes a designer will select one or two colours from the predictions and then add his or her own colour choices to balance everything out. The group of chosen colours is then further balanced out with staple colours such as neutrals, darks, white, or black. In any case, the colour story must be meaningful and related, not just a group of unrelated colours. However a colour story could be all bright, or all muted, or a balance of darks and lights.

Colour Relationships within a Garment

There are several systems which all use a sort of measurement to guide a designer when selecting colour combinations. Primary and secondary colours can be different from one system to another, but looking at a rainbow will show you the basic order of each colours relationship to one another. Red, yellow, and blue are the three **primary colours** from which all other colours are derived, mixing yellow and red paints creates orange, red and blue create purple and blue and yellow

create green. The three colours that were just created, orange, purple and green, are the three **secondary colours**. Mixing primary and secondary colours together will create every colour in between. The entire spectrum is often arranged into a colour wheel to show this concept more clearly, however, the fashion industry pays little attention to colour relationships, and instead bases colour selections on their intuition and researched colour forecasts.

There are set rules for the use of colours, however, *two colours are thought to be harmonious if one colour enhances the beauty of the other*. Nowadays colours are combined in more unusual ways than ever before. Colours that used to be considered only appropriate in evening wear are now used in sportswear. Ethnic influences on fashion have also changed our view of colour combinations, making society more accepting and open to new ideas. Colours run in fashion cycles just as styles do.

Texture

Texture is the Element of Design that describes the appearance and feel of the surface of a fabric. Texture is a sensory feeling that is understood by both sight and touch. The texture describes the roughness or smoothness, dullness or glossiness, stiffness or softness of a fabric. Some of the words often used to describe the texture of fabrics are: rough, smooth, dull, shiny, firm, crisp, fuzzy, and bulky. Textures can also be described as lightweight, medium weight, or heavy weight.

There are two types of textures, structural texture which is created when fabrics or garments are manufactured and visual textures are added when a design is printed onto the fabric surface. There are also various components like fibers, yarns, fabrics and finishes that determine texture.

A. Determinants of Texture

a. Fibres: Fibres are hairline strands that are made into yarns. Fibres of wool produce soft textures while fibres of linen produce crisp textures. The short fuzzy fibres of cotton will produce a dull appearance due to the fuzz, but the smooth and long filaments of silk and synthetic fibres make fabrics that are shiny, smooth and cool (they don't hold heat and are lightweight).

b. Yarn: Yarns are created when fibres are twisted together. A yarn which isn't twisted a lot will produce a shiny texture because the natural gloss of fibre is not lost in the twist, where as a highly twisted yarn will give a rough texture since the fibre gloss gets lost in the twist. Yarns that are looped or coiled create stretch fabrics, such novelty yarns also create interesting surface contours.

c. Fabric: Fabric is constructed by either weaving, knitting, felting, bonding, crocheting or braiding techniques. Often the way it is constructed will determine the texture of the fabric. A satin weave of loosely twisted yarns produces shiny textures compared to knits which absorb light and are dull textured.

d. Finish: Finish is put on or applied to a fabric after it is constructed, and can change the texture of the fabric. Some finishes, like sizing, gives stiffness to the material where as moireing adds shine and a watermark design to the fabric, calendaring gives shine to the fabric, singeing makes the surface smooth and napping makes the fabric fuzzy.

B. Effect of Texture on Colour

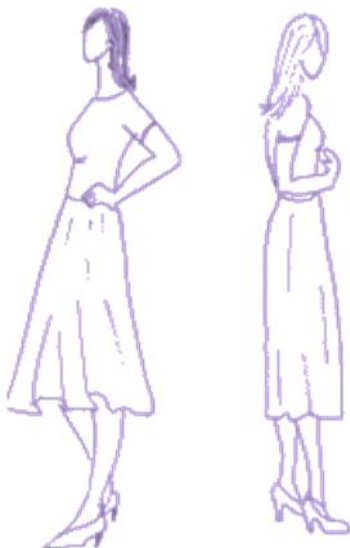
Colours appear differently depending on the surface they are applied to. They tend to appear lighter on a shiny surface and darker on a dull one. Colours from "textured" and wrinkled fabrics seem darker because there are more shadows. Colours on fuzzy surfaces mix with highlights and shadows created by the fibre, dulling them slightly. Colours on firm, smooth surfaces appear very flat.

C. Effect of texture on Physical Proportion

Textures have physical properties, they are weight, size, bulk, shape, light absorption and reflection. Texture can also produce illusions that change how a person's body appears to be, textures can make you look either heavier or thinner.

1. Smooth, flat textures make people look smaller. They are suitable for almost all figures and can hide some figure irregularities because they have the ability to hold their own shape.

2. Rough textures tend to dull the colours of fabrics. Similarly, sheer fabrics also dull the colour as the skin of the wearer (which can be seen through) effects the strength of the colour.
3. Soft and clingy fabrics: Fabrics that are soft and drapable cling to the body, show every contour and reveal body irregularities. This type of fabric should only be used by people who wish to reveal their body. Adding a lining to the garment can make the fabric less clingy and revealing. (Fig: 5).
4. Stiff fabrics/bulky fabrics: Fabrics that are stiff stay away from the body and hide body irregularities, however very stiff fabrics appear to add weight to the body. People who are average or tall in height and either have an average or thin body, benefit by wearing very stiff fabrics. People with a small physique however, should avoid these fabrics, as they look dwarfed or like they are drowning in the fabric. Overweight people look heavier because these fabrics stand away from the body, creating the illusion of additional thickness (Fig: 6), but a moderate amount of stiffness can be desirable for overweight people as the fabric doesn't cling and reveal the exact contours.
5. Shiny textures/dull textures: Shiny texture reflects light and makes the person wearing it appear larger. Fabrics that absorb light are dull and unlike shiny textures does not enlarge body. Both shiny and dull textures are suitable for all body types except for when they are combined with other qualities which might create unwanted effects. People who do not wish to call attention to their body irregularities should select textures that are not extreme (for example very thin or thick, very soft or stiff or very shiny). These fabrics are not structurally interesting so other features such as colour and line are often used to add interest to garments designed using them.



EFFECT OF SMOOTH & FLAT AND
SOFT & CLINGY FABRICS ON THIN



EFFECT OF STIFF & BULKY
FABRICS ON THIN & THICK PERSON

Proportion of Textures in Dress

When deciding which textures and how they should be used in a garment you should always consider the size of the person wearing the garment. Contrasting texture will emphasize form, but a small proportioned body wearing over dramatic textures can get lost in the extravagant fabric. However their small dimensions will be lost in the large-scale texture. Very heavy people who wear large-scale texture will also appear heavier because the large body proportions are emphasized by the large texture.

Added visual texture can also affects how small or large the wearer appears to be, just as structural texture does. Sometimes print designs can distract or focus the viewer, if a print is large and bold, the structural designs will be pushed to the background. Large, bold patterns emphasize the area where they are used and increase the size that the wearer appears to be. Texture can be applied so that the effects it creates are pleasing and flatters the wearers body. Good structural and visual textures must be planned and organized in interesting ways.

Pattern Scale in Relation to the Whole Garment

The scale of a pattern must complement the design. A large print will dominate a design, so to show a large print at its best advantage, it should not be cut up with seams and details, but rather allowed to be the most important element of the garment, meaning the construction should be kept simple. On the other hand, if a design idea begins with dominating lines and details, then the fabric must be plain and allow the lines and details to be the star of the show.

Pattern can be a large part of how a design looks, and the scale of the pattern should match the scale of the person wearing it in order to flatter the persons body.



This coat has a windowpane check that is too large for thin



The same coat in the same windowpane check is perfectly in scale for a plus-sized to average figures.

Suggested Further Reading:

- ✓ *Fashion Design Course: Principles, practice and Techniques (By Caroline Tatham, Julian Seaman, Thames and Hudson)*
- ✓ *Fashion: A Very Short Introduction (By Rebecca Arnold)*