

Elements of Design

Unit

5

Unit 5

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 these elements appropriately in order achieve a well designed garment
- Explore different types of designs
- Describe the importance of colour in a design scheme.

Introduction to Design

Garments should be designed considering the three major aspects-structure, function and decoration. It should be structurally effective and appropriate for the customer's need and as per the day's fashion.

Functionally it should permit the activity a person performs wearing it, and decoratively appropriate to the garment and the wearer. Garments, which are successful in appearance, function, structure and decoration stimulates the purchaser to buy them. The above three aspects are fulfilled in a garment when the elements and principles of designs are met with. These elements of visual design have been defined as the basic ingredients or components from which a visual design is made. One must know both the potentials and the limitations of each element. Although the elements are unique and fundamental, they are not always mutually exclusive. For example, shape cannot exist without line and space. Understanding how and why a person responds to the various elements & principles of design and knowing how to control and use them effectively for a good design is an important aspect in designing.

Elements of Design

In creating a design one of the components which interact is the Art Elements. The elements and principles of design are flexible and should be interpreted within the context of current fashion. A design can be defined as an arrangement of lines, shape, colours and texture that create a visual image. The principles of design are the rates that govern how elements are combined. Elements are therefore the raw materials that must be combined successfully.

The following are the different elements of Design:

- Line
- Form
- Shape
- Texture and

- Colour

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

Line

Line refers to the edge or the outline of a garment and the style lines that divide the space within a garment. It is an enormously useful and versatile realistic tool that is made to function in both visual and verbal ways. Line leads the eye in the direction the line is going, and divides the area through which it passes, thus providing a breaking point in space. It defines a shape or a silhouette and conveys a mood or a character. Line can create visual illusions, such as height and width and also makes a figure look thinner or thicker.

There are nine characteristics of line - path, thickness, evenness, continuity, sharpness of edge, contour of edge, consistency, length and direction. These aspects or characteristics of line give it a powerful role in dress. Line manipulates space: line divides it, encloses it, organizes it, pushes and pulls it, separates and contours 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.*

In garments lines can be categorized in three ways: first is by type, second by direction and the last by 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 body angularity and counteract the roundness of the body. Straight lines are created in dress by seams, darts, hems or garment edges, pleats, hems, trims, braids, tucks, and panels. They create a feeling of elegance, bold and powerful effects in a garment. When more straight lines are used in a dress than necessary they can give a stiff look.

Curved lines: These lines can be rounded and circular termed as 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. They add interest and smoothness. They give soft, gentle, youthful and flowing feeling. But too many curved lines in a dress at once can create a confusing look.

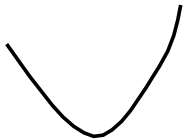
Full curve: Emphasizes body curves, counters thinness and angularity giving a young, youthful, feminine, dynamic character. In a dress full curves are introduced through seams, garment edges and scalloped edges.

Restrained curve: These curves slightly emphasize curves of the body. Yet they give soft, gentle, feminine and graceful effects. Soft, shallow curves suggest comfort, safety, familiarity, and relaxation. These are introduced in dress by 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 jerky, busy, excited effect. They also emphasize angularity. 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:

According to the direction, lines may be vertical, horizontal, or diagonal.

a) Vertical Line

In Fig 5.1 vertical lines produce an illusion of added height to the outfit. These lines make a short person look taller and thinner.



Fig 5.1

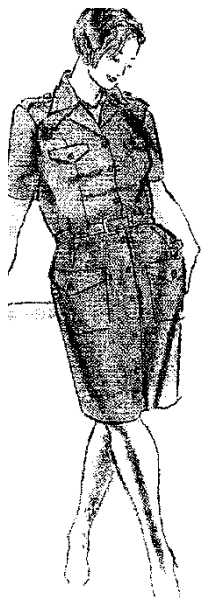
Vertical design lines draw the eye up and down and make you look taller and slimmer. They are provided here by seams, flaps, contrast bands or trim, pleats, and buttons.

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

b) Horizontal lines

Horizontal lines are like lines at rest; they suggest repose, quiet, and calm. Horizontal design lines make your eye pause, so put them where you want emphasis to balance out another feature or to draw attention to one.

These lines (Fig5.2) add width to the garment and decrease the apparent height, hence make a tall person look smaller and broader.

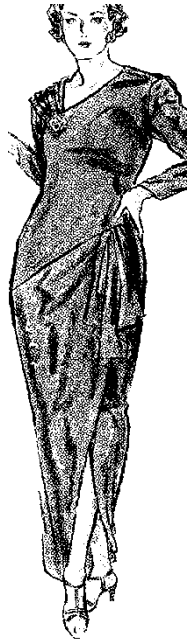


Flaps, pockets, and epaulettes are all horizontal details that can be used to your advantage.

Fig. 5.2

c) Diagonal lines

These lines can add or decrease the height of the wearer depending on their slope. Long uninterrupted diagonals tilting almost vertically are the most lengthening and most dramatic of all lines.



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

Fig 5.3

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 if the fabric of the garment is plain. They can be introduced through constructional lines like seams, darts, fitting tucks and shirring. Structural lines are also introduced by real or perceived edges of garment parts like outer edge of collars, sleeves, belts, hems, pockets etc. Creases and folds created by pleats, gathers etc also give structural line effect in a garment.

b. Decorative lines: Decorative lines are created by adding details to the surface of clothing. They are added simply to decorate the garment and make it more interesting. They add style and personality. They can be formed by adding rows of buttons, topstitching, braids, piping, bias binding lace edging, faggoting, ruffles, fringe etc. Fabric pattern lines such as stripes, plaids, herringbones, checks etc also add lines decoratively.

Optical Illusions

Optical illusions are lines that fool the eye, making things seem to be what they are not. Garment lines can create optical illusions such as slimness, an especially important advantage in designing for large sizes. Because the eye unconsciously follows line, it is possible by means of line to draw the eye to flattering areas, away from less attractive ones. Clothing can alter a person's appearance, helping to make up for discrepancies between the average body and the fashion ideal. 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. Design elements should be interpreted for each figure type.

Long, unbroken vertical lines are most effective in adding height; the longer and stronger the line, the more effective it is. An example is a centre front closing running from neckline to hemline.

Vertical lines can be further strengthened by accentuating them with contrasting trimmings or buttons (thus the popularity over the years 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 viewer is most aware of the area between the lines, while the side panels seem to recede. The eye judges any measurement of length or width in relation to other measurements in the same composition. Longer skirts make the wearer appear taller and slimmer simply because their length is greater than their width. Horizontal lines widen the figure, sometimes beneficially and sometimes not. A contrasting belt on a dress cuts the average figure in two, creating two chunky portions instead of one long, thin one. A self belt can partially avoid this problem. The use of illusion is also important in men's wear. Generally, men want to look taller and stronger. Therefore, throughout history producers of men's apparel have tended to increase men's stature with vertical lines in jacket closings and trousers and with built-up shoulders.

When lines cross each other, they draw the attention to that area. So illusion of width and height, thin and thick are all possible in a dress by tactful use of line in garments. It often helps one to conceal figure irregularities and move towards fashion form.

OPTICAL ILLUSION THROUGH LINES

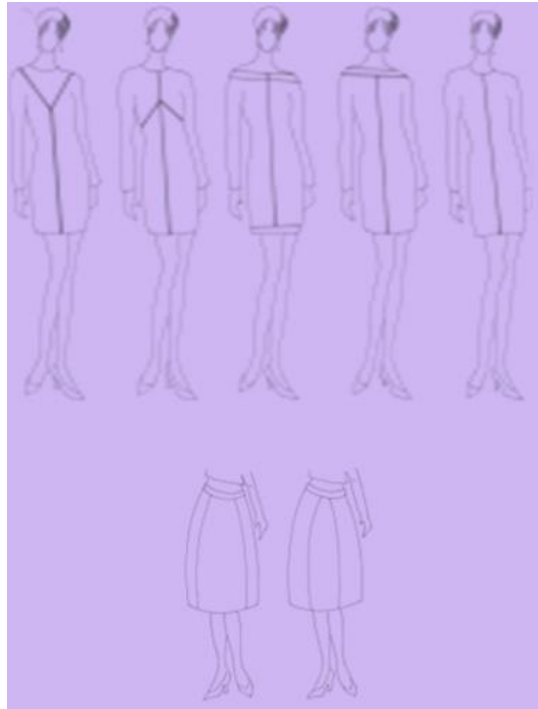


Fig. 5.4

Shapes

It describes the outer dimensions or contour of an object. Shape also encloses space and imparts a certain character to the object viewed. Through clothing design, the shape of the human body is often revealed in a natural way, but sometimes even distorted. The shape of clothing in a human body, communicates silently, the messages about the wearer.

A good silhouette is composed of parts that in themselves have interesting shapes. There are square shapes and round, oval, rectangular, triangular, and more. The minute a waistline is added, a garment is divided into two new shapes: a bodice and a skirt. The sleeve becomes another shape. These parts create new spaces for smaller details, such as collars and pockets. The pattern of the fabric can create even smaller shapes.

Every fashion period, a shape emerges slowly or evolved suddenly, whatever it is, every period has a specific shape of garment which once determined can be modified and re-styled in various designs without changing the basic shape of the garment. It is either flare or tight, circular or straight, a line or raglan. It has been observed that an easy fitting shape of the garment is easily accepted and largely varies as well as has longevity of stay; where as a tight fitting garment is generally short lived since it is suitable to only perfect figure types. It is therefore advisable that the designer chooses an easy silhouette to keep on creating for a longer duration.

Basic Shapes

In dress designing there are seven basic shapes — each season adaptations of one or more of these predominates the fashion picture. They are as follows:

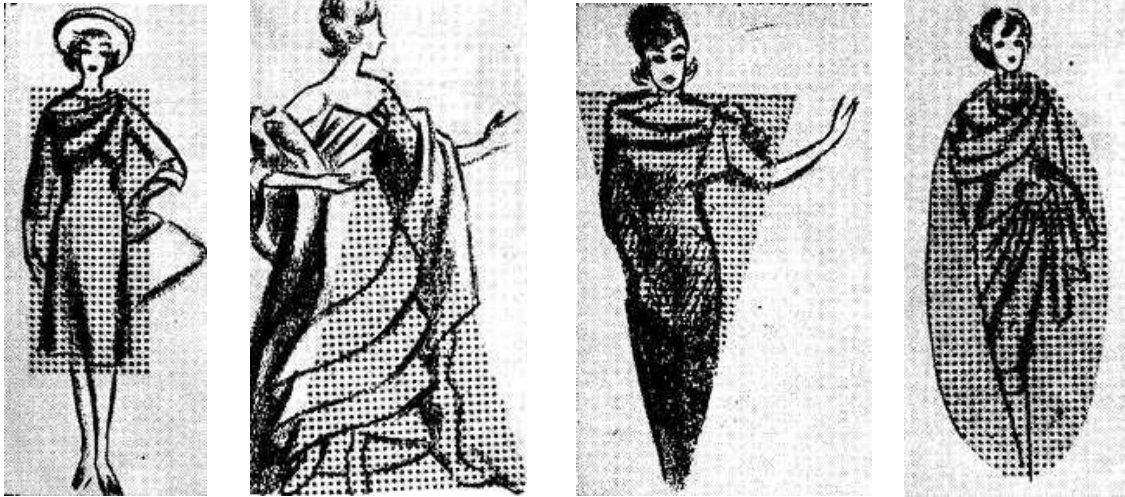


Fig 2.1 Fig 2.2 Fig 2.3 Fig 2.4

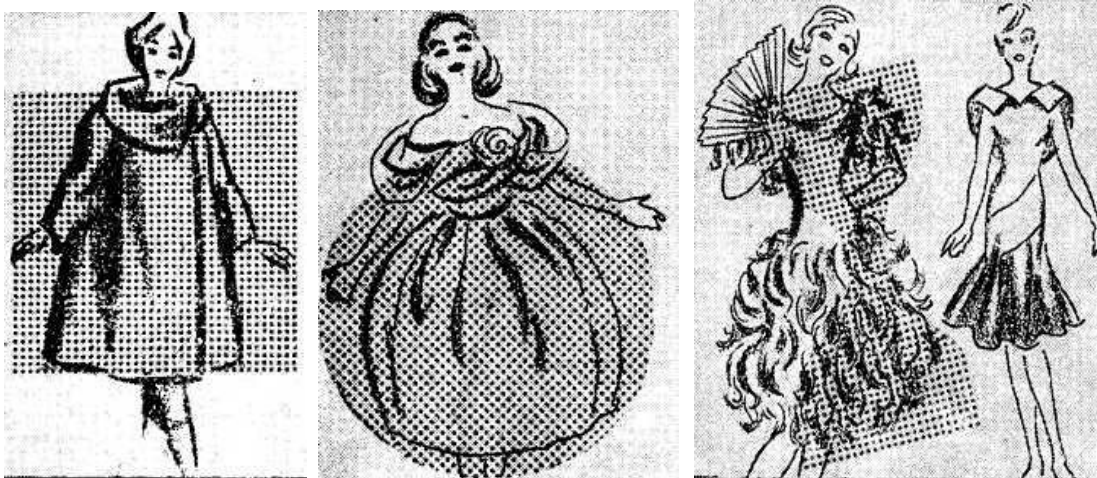


Fig 2.5 Fig 2.6 Fig 2.7

_(Fig 2.1)

Examples: Long, straight, hanging in loose, graceful folds, such as in Greek and Roman styles; straight line sheaths; tailored suits. Styles with these lines are slenderising and suitable for the well proportioned, heavier woman.

b) Triangle (Fig 2.2)

Examples: Spanish styles. Fitted bodice, bell shaped gently widening skirt.

c) Inverted Triangle (Fig 2.3)

Examples: Wide shoulders, narrow skirt, dolman or raglan sleeves. Good fashion design style for large bust.

d) Oval (Fig 2.4)

Examples: Draped and softly molded, very feminine and decorative. Good for well proportioned, ideal figure. Especially suitable for afternoon and evening wear.

e) Square (Fig 2.5)

Examples: Straight or boat shaped neckline, boxy jackets, capes. Generally this style is very good for the very thin figure, however, with proportions well planned and good design, can camouflage various figure irregularities.

f) Round (Fig 2.6)

Examples: Wide, crinoline lined skirts, petal shapes, puffed sleeves, 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 2.7)

Examples: Wide shoulders, Natural or wasp waist. Smooth fit over hips and full skirt at bottom. Good fashion design for the tall, thin figure.

h) Combinations

Examples: Outline of any current fashion silhouette can be altered and combined with another, and adapted for the specific figure type. Thus irregularities or lack of ideal figure proportions can be minimized while the general effect of current fashion design style is preserved.

Space

It is generally considered to be the area seen between the shapes. Busy space in clothing becomes distractive and fatiguing to view.

Lines in a costume provide a path of vision along which the eye travels. Curving lines relates more naturally to human bodies. Vertical lines tend to slenderise the body. Horizontal lines suggest width. Both repetition and extreme contrast of a line, shape, space or form produce emphasis.

Colour and Texture

When we talk of principles of designing, or when we start off with a given design theme the first thing which comes to our mind is the colour and texture of the fabric. Every season or now and then a colour emerges in the fashion scene which is decided by the leading manufacturers, exporters and textile experts of the fashion world. Also while choosing a colour one must be utmost careful as colour creates the first impression and hence can glorify or destroy one's appearance. Even simple silhouette may be enhanced by using effective colour schemes. As texture is the feel, drape and degree of stiffness and softness of the fabric, it also creates a visual effect upon the wearer, given a small swatch of fabric, the designer can visualise the texture and the fall of fabric which helps him to design further.

Types of Design

There are two kinds of design.

1. Structural design
2. Decorative design

1. Structural design

When an object's structure is an integral part of the design, it is structural design. Examples of structural design in a dress include; collar, sleeves, yokes, pockets, skirts, position of seam lines etc.

Requirements of Good Structural Design:

- It should be suited to the purpose
- It should be simple.
- It should be well proportioned
- It should be suited to the material with which it is made.

It is far more important than decorative design because it is essential to every object or garment whereas decorative is the luxury of design.

Structural design depends on the form and fabric. It is also created by the construction details as a design. Any detail that is an integral part of the garment is a structural design i.e. seams, collars, pockets.

The basic requirements of a good structural design for clothing are as follows:

- Silhouette pleasingly related to the body structure and expressive of that time
- Design appropriate to its use and to the needs of the wearer
- Well proportion individual parts that offer unity with variation.
- Character and individuality in line, form or texture.

2. Decorative Design

It is the surface enrichment of structural design, any line, colour or material that has been applied on structural design for the purpose of adding a richer quality is a decorative design. Decorative design is only the luxury. e.g. Appliqué, embroidery, painting or any trimmings.

Requirements of Good Decorative Design:

- It should be used in moderation
- It should be placed at a structural points and should strengthen the shape of the object
- The decorative design should be suitable for the material and for the type of service it gives
- 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 are reproduced exactly with photographic correction it is known as naturalistic design. eg: Flowers, leaves, animals and landscape.

b. Conventional Design: When an object from nature is adopted to suit the purpose of the object and becomes decorative, the motif ceases to be naturalistic.

c. Abstract Design: Motif which does not have the nature as the source but the combination of lines producing irregular form i.e. not easily recognised. The modern art is an abstract design.

d. Historic Design: It refers to the famous monuments or building of historic importance. eg: Temple

e. Geometric Design: It is not derived from nature. It is derived from circles, rectangle, triangle, parallel lines and so on.

The basic requirements of a good decorative design for clothing are as follows:

- Decorative design is very attractive when it is created in size and structure to the textile of the garment.

Suitable combination of textures includes:

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

Colour

Colour can be the basis for a whole group or line. It is the first element to which consumers respond. People relate personally to colour, usually either selecting or rejecting a garment because of its colour appeal. Therefore, designers must consider their customers and provide colours that are both appealing and flattering. People in many 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 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.

Colour Dimensions

Colour has three different dimensions:

Hue, value, and intensity

a) Hue

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

b) Value

Value refers to the use of darks and lights; it is the variation of light strength in a colour. The value scale runs from white to black. White is pure light, black the total absence of light; adding white lightens a colour and adding black darkens it. The lighter values are called *tints* and the darker ones are called *shades*.

Every garment has value contrasts, even if only those created by normal gathers and folds. Strong value contrasts (pure black against pure white is the strongest). Close value contrasts lend a more conservative, refined impression that is easier for the average person to accept.

c) Intensity

Intensity is the relative brightness (strength) or paleness (weakness) of a colour. Bright colours are considered high-intensity, pale ones low-intensity. For instance, when paint is paled by adding water, the intensity of its colour is lowered. Within the blue hue, marine blue is high intensity and soft pastel blue is low. Generally, vivid colours should be combined with others of the same intensity for balance. However, balance is also 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.

Warm Colours

We classify red, yellow, and orange as warm colours because of their association with fire and the sun. Warm colours are stimulating, aggressive, and lively.

Red has come to denote valentines, love, and romance; it is also exciting, fiery, and dangerous. A popular colour for sportswear and evening wear, it is one of the few colours used in high intensities for clothing in every season. *Yellow* is bright, sunny, cheerful, friendly, and Optimistic. 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. It can also be a difficult colour to wear: intense orange can be irritating and overpowering and it best toned to a softer peach or apricot or limited to use in active wear.

Cool Colours

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

Blue

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

Green

Green is the most refreshing colour, suggesting peace, rest, "calm, and quiet. Although popular for interior design, it is inexplicably the least popular colour for dresses. It is used primarily in a dark value in fall sportswear lines or mixed with neutrals to create earthy olive or loden.

Purple

Purple, historically associated with royalty, has come to represent wealth, dignity, and drama. Because it can be melancholy when dark and intense, it is more often used in a paler violet.

Neutrals

In clothing, neutrals such as beige, tan, brown, white, grey, and black are even more popular than the colours just mentioned. The reason is probably that they present a pleasing background for the wearer without competing for attention. Neutrals are part of every season's fashion picture, as either a strong fashion statement or a way to round out a colour story. White is associated with purity and cleanliness, which is why doctors and nurses have traditionally worn it. Because it reflects light, it is cool in the summer.

Colour Naming

An exciting colour name can be important in promoting a fashion look. Fashion colours sometimes reappear with new names that make them seem fresh. Plum of one year might return as aubergine in another. 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 set moods with names such as *China blue*.

Colour Selection

Every line should include a range of colours that appeals to a variety of customers. Within the line, each group is usually formulated around a colour plan consisting of as few as two colours or many colours. Colour choices must reflect season, climate, and type of garment. Active sportswear, for example, employs much more vivid colours than spectator sportswear. The line's colour story should include some fashion colours selected from research provided by trade associations, fibre companies, or design report predictions. By basing a colour story on these predictions, the designer is assured that the group will be in the mainstream of fashion. Sometimes the designer selects one or two colours from the predictions and then adds his or her own colour choices to balance them. The group is then rounded out with staple colours such as neutrals, darks, white, or black. In any case, the colour story must be meaningful, not just a group of unrelated colours. It might be all bright, or all muted, or a balance of darks and lights.

Colour Relationships within a Garment

There are several systems, all using measured scales, to guide in the selection of colour combinations. Primary and secondary colours differ from one system to another, but looking at a rainbow will show you the basic order of 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 **secondary colours**. Mixtures of primary and secondary colours create every colour in between. The entire spectrum is often arranged into a colour wheel to demonstrate the concept more clearly. However, the working fashion industry pays little attention to colour relationships, basing selections instead on intuition and researched colour forecasts.

There are no hard and fast rules for the use of colours. Rather, *two colours are harmonious if they are used so that one colour enhances the beauty of the other*. Colours are now combined in many more unusual ways than ever before. Colours that used to be appropriate only for evening are now used also in sportswear. Ethnic influences on fashion have changed our view of colour combinations, making us more receptive to new ideas. In addition, colours run in fashion cycles just as styles do.

Texture

Texture is the element of design that describes surface appearance and feel. It also means the appearance of the fabric. Texture is a sensory feeling understood by sight as well as by touch. It is quality of roughness or smoothness, dullness or glossiness, stiffness or softness. Some words to describe the texture of fabrics are: rough, smooth, dull, shiny, firm, crisp, fuzzy, bulky etc. 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 added visual textures, which come when a design is printed onto the fabric surface. There are 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 that of linen produce a crisp textures. The short fuzzy fibres of cotton will produce a dull appearance due the fuzz. The smooth and long filaments like silk fibres and synthetic fibres make fabrics that are shinny, smooth and cool touch fabrics.

b. Yarn: Yarns are made from fibres when they are twisted together. A yarn which has a low twist will produce a shinny texture because the natural gloss of fibre is not lost in the twist, where as a highly twisted yarn on the other hand will give a rough texture since the fibre gloss gets lost in the twist. Yarns that are looped or coiled in manufacture of yarn produce stretch fabrics. Such novelty yarns create interesting surface contours too.

c. Fabric: Fabric is constructed either by weaving, knitting, felting, bonding, crocheting or braiding techniques. Often this construction of the fabric determines the texture. A satin weave of loosely twisted yarns produces shinny textures whereas knits absorb light and are dull textured.

d. Finish: Finish is given to fabric after it is constructed. It can impart or change the texture. Some finishes like sizing gives stiffness, moireing adds shine and 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 generally seem lighter on a shiny surface than a dull one. Colours from “textured” and wrinkled fabrics seem darker because of more shadows and colours on fuzzy surfaces

mix with fibre highlights and shadows, dulling them slightly. Colours on firm, smooth surfaces seem flat.

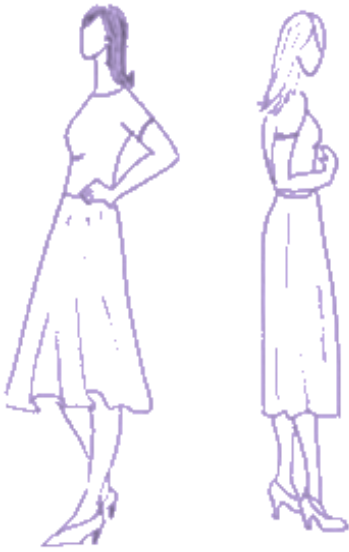
C. Effect of texture on Physical Proportion

Textures have the physical properties of weight size, bulk, shape light absorption and reflection. Texture can produce illusions that change apparent body size. Textures can make one look heavier or thinner.

1. Smooth, flat textures make people look smaller. They are suitable for almost all figures and physiques. They can hide some figure irregularities because they can hold their own shape.
2. Rough textures tend to subdue the colours of fabrics. Sheer fabrics also tend to do the same as the skin of the wearer is seen through them.
3. Soft and clingy fabrics: Fabrics that are soft and drapable, cling to the body and show every contour and reveal body irregularities. Their use should be limited to those people who wish to reveal their body. This fabric clinginess to the body can be changed by the addition of lining to a garment(Fig: 5).
4. Stiff fabrics -bulky fabrics: Textures that are stiff stand away from the body hide body irregularities. Exclusively stiff fabrics appear to add and weight to the body. Persons who are average to tall in height, having either average or thin body, are benefited by wearing very stiff fabrics. Small physique persons should avoid these fabrics, as they look dwarfed.

Overweight people look heavier because these fabrics stand away from the body, creating the illusion of additional thickness (Fig: 6). A moderate amount of stiffness is desirable for overweight people as it does not cling and reveal the exact contours.

5. Shiny textures—dull textures: Shiny texture reflects light and make the person wearing them appear larger. Fabrics that absorb light are dull and do not enlarge body. These textures are suitable for all body types, provided they do not possess other qualities such as bulk, softness and crispness that would contribute undesirable characteristics. People who do not wish to call attention to their body irregularities should select textures that are not extreme - 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 of such fabrics.



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



EFFECT OF STIFF & BULKY
FABRICS ON THIN & THICK PERSON

Proportion of Textures in Dress

The selection of scale of textures should be analyzed in relationship to the size of the person wearing them. A contrast in texture will emphasize form. A small sized body wearing large scale textures can get lost in the textures because of the extreme contrast between fabric surface and figure dimensions. On the other hand pettiness is emphasized by the large-scale texture. Very heavy people who wear large-scale texture will appear heavier because there is repetition of size.

Added visual texture can affect the apparent size of the wearer just as structural texture does. If the print designs are large and bold, the structural designs will become secondary to the print. Large, bold patterns emphasize the area where they are used and increase the apparent size of the wearer.

Texture should be used for its advantage considering the effects to be created for a pleasing personality. Good structural and added visual textures must be planned and organised in interesting ways.

Pattern Scale in Relation to the Whole Garment

The scale of a pattern must complement the design. A large print would dominate a design. To show a large print to 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; 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 of secondary importance.

Pattern can be a large part of how a design looks, and the scale of the pattern should match your scale.



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 Readings:

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