

READY RECKONER OF FASHION DESIGN TERMS



Fashion Design/ Fashion Styling and Communication

Fashion has always embodied the paradox of replication for the sake of appearing different. One follows certain forms and representations in order to fashion the self. Hence the appearance of a true, internal self is constituted from external signs. What determines these signs is similar to the evolution of language itself; an unaccountable tissue of physical inference and association (onomatopoeia), invention and appropriation. On the one hand, in its unambiguous suggestion of the body, closely fitting clothing is sexual, while, on the other, the necktie is a convention that grew from the neckerchief whose primary function was to keep the neck warm. Some signs retain their material, commonsensical reference, others gesture to a past when these references were there but are now lost. In the history of modern fashion, understood as a Western notion, the invention of increasingly sophisticated forms of representation has played an integral role in the way fashion has evolved, how it is consumed and in the regulation of society, the body and the self.

Since the mid XX century Fashion has been divided into two main categories:

Haute couture

The haute couture collection is dedicated to certain customers and is constructed custom sized to fit these customers exactly. It is high end fashion that is constructed from high quality, expensive, often unusual fabric and sewn with utmost attention.

Ready-to-wear (RTW)

Ready-to-wear collections are standard sized, not custom made, so they are more suitable for large production runs. Prêt-à-porter is the term for factory-made clothing, sold in finished condition in standardised sizes. These collections are also showcased on the international catwalks.

General terms related to Fashion Design and Business (in alphabetical order):

Aesthetic

Aesthetic derives from the Greek word 'aisthētikos' meaning 'through the senses'. It refers to the matrix of sense, feeling and sensibility, a form of intelligence. Through aesthetic intelligence we are able to apprehend a realm of meaning and value essential to any full concept of human existence.

In terms of fashion, aesthetic is sometimes misunderstood as a fast moving product off the rack. Though aesthetic is the 'attitude of practical perception,' it does not validate through

sales. Paying attention to details simply for the sake of the way it looks or sounds or feels, is the aesthetic attitude of perception.

Accent

Accent colours are colours that are used for emphasis in a colour scheme. These colours can often be bold or vivid and are used sparingly, to emphasise, contrast or create rhythm. However, they are less intimidating when used as accent colours.

Accessory

In fashion accessory refers to items with a useful or decorative purpose used in conjunction with one's outfit. They complement and enhance the clothes worn. Include belts and suspenders, bridal veils, eyewear, footwear, gloves and mittens, handbags, handkerchiefs, headwear, jewellery, leg-wear, neckwear, shawls and wraps, umbrellas and watches.

Achromatic colour

An achromatic colour is a one that lacks hues such as white, grey and black, and a chromatic colour is a colour which has even the slightest amount of hue. Achromatic colours (white, grey and black) have lightness but no hue or saturation. They can be created by mixing complementary colours together.

Androgynous

Androgyny is the combination of masculine and feminine characteristics into an ambiguous form. Androgyny may be expressed with regard to biological sex, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual identity. When androgyny refers to mixed biological sex characteristics in humans, it often refers to intersex people.

Anime style

The word anime is the Japanese term for animation, which means all forms of animated media. Outside Japan, anime refers specifically to animation from Japan or as a Japanese-disseminated animation style often characterised by colourful graphics, vibrant characters and fantastical themes.

Anti-fashion

Anti-fashion is an umbrella term for various styles of dress which are explicitly contrary to the fashion of the day. Anti-fashion styles may represent an attitude of indifference or may arise from political or practical goals which make fashion a secondary priority.

Accessorize

Decorate or augment (something, especially a garment) with a fashion accessory.

Activewear

Clothes that are worn for sports or other physical activities.

Apparel

RTW clothes when they are being sold in a shop.

Atelier

A workshop or studio, especially one used by an artist or designer.

Avant-garde

The avant-garde (from French, "advance guard" or "vanguard", literally "fore guard") are people or works that are experimental or innovative, particularly with respect to fashion, art, lifestyle or culture. The avant-garde pushes the boundaries of what is accepted as the norm or the status quo.

Black tie

A semi-formal Western dress codes for evening events, originating in British and American conventions for attire in the 19th century. In British English, the dress code is often referred to synecdochically by its principal element for men, the dinner suit or dinner jacket.

Bling

Denoting expensive, ostentatious clothing or jewellery, or the style or materialistic attitudes associated with them.

Boutique

A business or establishment that is small and sophisticated or fashionable.

Boho style

Boho is short for bohemian, and typifies a style of dress inspired by the lifestyle of free spirits and hippies of the 1960s and 1970s, and even the pre-Raphaelite women of the late 19th century.

Care label

A label giving instructions for the washing and care of a fabric or garment.

Casual wear

Articles of clothing suitable for informal occasions or situations.

Catwalk

A platform extending into an auditorium, along which models walk to display clothes in fashion shows.

Cocktail dress

A cocktail dress is a dress suitable at semi-formal occasions, sometimes called cocktail parties, usually in the late afternoon, and usually with accessories.

Classic style

A classic fashion is a style that lasts for several seasons, sometimes even years, and is accepted by a wide range of people. A simple black dress, a worsted wool suit, a leather bomber jacket - these are all classic fashions that repeat themselves year after year.

Collection (fashion)

A fashion collection is a selection of outfits and individual garments that fashion designers put together every season. The collections reflect predictions of upcoming trends, including colour, fabrics, cut, line and proportion.

Colour blocking

In fashion and design colour blocking use of contrasting blocks or panels of solid, typically bright colour.

Concept Design

Concept design ties various ideas together to form an entire and unique concept for the collection. It puts forward that fashion product design is a creative and comprehensive process which ends up in sketches, product details, material exploration, flat drawing and three-dimensional form by using various techniques.

Contemporary style

Contemporary style encompasses a range of styles developed in the latter half of the 20th century. Pieces feature softened and rounded lines as opposed to the stark lines seen in modern design. Interiors contain neutral elements and bold colour, and they focus on the basics of line, shape and form.

Costume

Costume is the distinctive style of dress of an individual or group that reflects class, gender, profession, ethnicity, nationality, activity or epoch.

The term also was traditionally used to describe typical appropriate clothing for certain activities, such as riding costume, dance costume, and theatre costume . Appropriate and acceptable costume is subject to changes in fashion and local cultural norms.

Couturier

A fashion designer who manufactures and sells clothes that have been tailored to a client's specific requirements and measurements.

Costume jewellery

Costume jewellery includes a range of decorative items worn for personal adornment that are manufactured as less expensive ornamentation to complement a particular fashionable outfit or garment as opposed to "real" (fine) jewellery, which is more costly and which may be regarded primarily as collectibles, keepsakes, or investments.

Creativity

The lexeme in the English word creativity comes from the Latin term creō "to create, make": its derivational suffixes also come from Latin. To produce new and useful insight through imaginative skills. Creativity in fashion and design is triggered by the need to create new but meaningful clothes that help express oneself and address their individuality. Creativity in the art of fashion and design helps conceive new product ideas or make old the products in completely new and fashionable way.

Diffusion Line

A range of relatively inexpensive ready-to-wear garments produced for the mass market by a fashion designer.

Draping

Arrange (cloth or clothing) loosely or casually on or round something.

Dandy

A man, especially in the past, who dressed in expensive, fashionable clothes and was very interested in his own appearance.

Design elements

In fashion it refers to colour, shape, volume, texture, proportion, details etc. Design elements determine the look and a value of design.

Designer

A person who plans the look or workings of something prior to it being made, by preparing drawings or plans.

Eclectic style

This is a fashion style composed of elements drawn from various sources; A mix of various styles.

Eco-fashion

Clothing and other goods produced by methods that are not harmful to the environment, e.g. using materials that have been recycled or that have been grown without the use of pesticides.

Elegant style

Sophisticated and tasteful combination of clothing and accessories.

Ensemble

An outfit (totally) that is coordinated and harmonious.

Ethnic style

Clothing or ensemble inspired or relating to a population subgroup (within a larger or dominant national or cultural group) with a common national or cultural tradition.

Exotic style

Clothing or ensemble with characteristic of a distant foreign country.

Fabric swatches

Small piece of fabric used as a sample.

Fad

A very short fashion trend; the popularity fades fast (in 6 months) after a burst.

Fashion capitals

Megacities that hold seasonal fashion week events like Paris, New York, Milan, London, and Tokyo.

Fashion cycle

A period of time or life span during which the fashion exists, moving through the five stages from introduction through obsolescence. When a customer purchases and wears a certain style, that style is considered accepted. The acceptance leads to the style becoming a fashion!

Faux pas

An embarrassing or tactless act or remark in a social situation. A bad choice of clothing.

Fashion forecast

Fashion forecasting is a global career that focuses on upcoming trends. A fashion forecaster predicts the colours, fabrics, textures, materials, prints, graphics, beauty/grooming, accessories, footwear, street style, and other styles that will be presented on the runway and in the stores for the upcoming seasons.

Fashion forward

A person interested in fashion and wearing things that will soon become very fashionable.

Fashion icon

A person or thing that is very well known as being highly fashionable.

Fashion press

A fashion industry press release is basically a press release that is relevant to fashion, designers, textiles, garment manufacturing or any other fashion relevant issue.

Fashion show

An event at which collections of newly designed clothing are modelled for an audience.

Fashion house

a company specialising in the design and sale of high-fashion clothing and accessories.

Fashionista

A high fashion designer, or a devoted follower of fashion.

Fashion victim

A person who follows popular fashions slavishly.

Face of the fabric

The face of fabric, also known as the right side, is the side of a fabric that is meant to be seen. The face is what you see on the outside of the garment when it is finished; the other side, the wrong side, is hidden.

Fashion label

Fashion brand is a retail or wholesale setup which sells pret-a-porter (ready-to-wear) clothing or accessories, whereas Fashion Label is basically a setup run or founded by a Fashion Designer and mostly caters clients with customisable garments, i.e. made-to-measure, this feature is not available with a fashion brand.

Fit sample

The Fit Sample, also known as the First Sample, Development Sample or Design Sample, is made from the pattern that was used to create the toile. It's essential that it's made in your final fabric, otherwise, the hang of the garment will be wrong.

Flat sketches

A flat sketch, also called flat drawing and technical flat in the fashion industry, is a technical drawing of a garment as if it were laid flat to show the design details like seams and stitching. ... This helps both the designer and the pattern-maker throughout the entire garment-making process.

Gradation

A scale or series of successive changes, stages, or degrees.

High Fashion

Expensive, fashionable clothes produced by leading fashion houses. Also may refer to the designing, making, and marketing of expensive, fashionable clothes.

Hourglass figure

The hourglass shape is defined by a woman's body measurements- the circumference of the bust, waist and hips. Hourglass body shapes have a wide bust, a narrow waist, and wide hips with a similar measurement to that of the bust.

Ideation

Ideation is easy to define. It's the process by which you generate, develop and then communicate new ideas. In fashion, this stage needs the designer to be equipped with current market knowledge, forecast trend directions and technical product knowledge to be able to ideate new collection or products within a range.

Imitation

The action of using someone or something as a model. A fake or a copy; also used for describing fake fur and jewellery.

Innovation

Innovation is at once the creator and destroyer of industries. Innovation (etymology) – Latin 'nova' – meaning new – introduction of a new thing or method – it is the embodiment, combination and/or synthesis of knowledge in original, relevant, valued new products, processes or services. Innovation in fashion encourages fresh thinking that creates new products that have an increased quality, or increased value for money or better design usability than before. It overall has a positive impact on the industry. Innovation encompasses the entire process of problem identification, idea selection, development, and take-to-market. Innovation in any industry is the generation of new ideas that are implemented to create business value. An even simpler definition is, "doing things differently to achieve superior outcomes." In other words, our working definition is pretty broad on purpose. You can and should be more specific for your purposes.

Kawaii

Loosely translated as cute - has become a cultural phenomenon. The cuteness culture, or kawaii aesthetic, has become a prominent aspect of Japanese popular culture, entertainment, clothing, food, toys, personal appearance, and mannerisms.

Line sheet

A line sheet is a sheet used by a manufacturer in the garment/fashion industry providing information on a product for wholesale sales. It allows a garment to be listed with the sizes in its size range, great for inventory tracking.

Lookbook

A lookbook is a collection of photographs compiled to show off a model, photographer, style, stylist, or clothing line. Usually, bloggers or vloggers will "model" fashionable looks for that month or season. This gives viewers ideas on how to style outfits, or to show what the latest fashions are.

Made-to-measure

(MTM) typically refers to custom clothing that is cut and sewn using a standard-sized base pattern. ... All else being equal, a MTM garment will be more expensive than a ready-to-wear garment but cheaper than a bespoke one.

Mass production

Mass production, also known as flow production or continuous production, is the production of large amounts of standardised products, including and especially on assembly lines. Together with job production and batch production, it is one of the three main production methods.

Mood-board

A mood-board is a type of visual presentation or a collage consisting of images, text, and samples of objects in a composition. It can be based upon a set topic or can be any material chosen at random.

Muslin

Sometimes called a toile, a muslin is a test garment made from inexpensive fabric. It lets you adjust the fit for your "real" item of clothing, but there's a whole lot more to it than that.

Oversize

Bigger than the usual size. Too big.

Passé

No longer fashionable; out of date.

Pantone colours

Pantone colours are colour codes that stand for a specific shade. The formula developed by Pantone is a spot colour. This means that the colour is created from a palette of 18 basic colours, not with screens or dots. Process colours are CMYK colours, the colour is determined by cyan, magenta, yellow and black.

Pattern (sewing)

In sewing and fashion design, a pattern is the template from which the parts of a garment are traced onto fabric before being cut out and assembled. Patterns are usually made of paper, and are sometimes made of sturdier materials like paperboard or cardboard if they need to be more robust to withstand repeated use.

Prêt-à-porter

The term for factory-made clothing, sold in finished condition in standardized sizes, as distinct from MTM or bespoke clothing tailored to a particular person's frame. Off-the-peg is sometimes used for items other than clothing such as handbags. Designer clothes sold ready to wear rather than made to measure.

Power dress

Born in the second half of the 1970s and developed in the 1980s, power dressing is a fashion style that enables women to establish their authority in a professional and political environment traditionally dominated by men.

Pre-season collection

A cruise collection or resort collection, sometimes also referred to as holiday or travel collection, is an inter-season or pre-season line of ready-to-wear clothing produced by fashion house or fashion brand in addition to the recurrent twice-yearly seasonal collections - spring/summer and autumn/winter.

Product Development

Product development within the fashion industry requires one to become involved and equip themselves with the knowledge of developing fashionable goods for manufacturers and retailers from the stage of planning, ideation, stitching, finishing and presenting fashion-focused products for specific market.

Retro style

Retro style is a style that is imitative or consciously derivative of lifestyles, trends, or art forms from the historical past, including in music, modes, fashions, or attitudes. It may also be known as "vintage inspired".

Reversible garments

A reversible garment is a garment that can be worn two ways. There is no true "inside out" to a reversible garment, since either way, it gives a fashionable appearance. Garments that are commonly made reversible include hats, jackets, vests, sweaters, shirts, trousers, and skirts.

Sartorial

Sartorial comes from the Modern Latin word *sartor* which means "tailor," literally "one who patches and mends." In English the adjectives *sartorial* and *sartorially* are used to refer to any matter pertaining to the consideration of clothing or fashion.

Silhouette

In fashion, the term silhouette refers to the line of a dress, or the garment's overall shape. Silhouettes can be used to emphasise and alter a woman's shape to create a flattering illusion.

Slim fit

Slim-fit pants or skinny jeans (when made of denim) have a snug fit through the legs and end in a small leg opening that can be anywhere from 9" to 20" in circumference, depending on size.

Sportswear

Sportswear is an American fashion term originally used to describe separates, but which since the 1930s has come to be applied to day and evening fashions of varying degrees of formality that demonstrate a specific relaxed approach to their design, while remaining appropriate for a wide range of social occasions. The term is not necessarily synonymous with activewear, clothing designed specifically for participants in sporting pursuits.

Street style

Street style is defined as fashion that originates from alternative areas rather than the mainstream fashion world, often developing from urban areas and youth culture.

Style

A distinctive appearance, typically determined by the principles according to which something is designed. Style is defined as a particular of doing or saying something, or refers to a unique form of clothing or way of arranging your appearance.

Stylist

A person whose job is to arrange and coordinate food, clothes, etc. in a stylish and attractive way in photographs or films.

Sustainable fashion

Sustainable fashion is a movement and process of fostering change to fashion products and the fashion system towards greater ecological integrity and social justice. Sustainable fashion concerns more than addressing fashion textiles or products. It comprises addressing the whole system of fashion.

Tailoring

Traditional tailoring is called "bespoke tailoring" in the United Kingdom, where the heart of the trade is London's Savile Row tailoring and "custom tailoring" in the United States and Hong Kong. This is unlike MTM which uses pre-existing patterns. A bespoke garment or suit is completely original and unique to each customer.

Toile

An early version of a finished garment made up in cheap material so that the design can be tested and perfected.

Unisex style

It can be seen as meaning shared by sexes. Hair stylists and beauty salons that serve both men and women are often referred to as unisex. In fashion is best described as clothing designed to be suitable for both sexes in order to make men and women look similar.

Vintage clothing

Vintage clothing is a generic term for garments originating from a previous era. The phrase is also used in connection with a retail outlet, e.g. in vintage clothing store. Today vintage dressing encompasses choosing accessories, mixing vintage garments with new, as well as creating an ensemble of various styles and periods.

White tie

White tie, also called full evening dress or a dress suit, is the most formal in traditional evening Western dress codes.