

## Quadrant II – Notes

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### Notes :

#### How To Source Fabric For Your Clothing Line

Starting a clothing line involves countless moving parts. Beginning with a great foundation and high-quality materials can set you apart from other fashion brands. There are various types of fabric qualities—knit, woven, yarn dyed, and printed. As well as many techniques for knitting, weaving, and printing.

For many fashion designers, the first step of the design process is choosing the fabric. The next step is designing garments around that fabric. Choosing the right material for your products can be overwhelming, here we'll look at the different types of fabrics and suppliers as well as the right questions to ask when you are sourcing fabric for your clothing line.

#### The basics of fabric construction

Understanding how fabric is constructed and what fabric type is best for the product you're designing is a crucial factor of the design process.

While there are many different ways fabric can be constructed—two of the most commonly used fabric construction types are knits and wovens.

#### Knitted fabric

Knitted fabrics are usually lightweight, comfortable, and don't require much care to keep up their appearance. Knits tend to resist wrinkling making them a more popular fabric choice. Knitted fabric gets used when designing soft, comfortable tops, bottoms, and undergarments. Their elastic nature also works well for active clothing.

Today, knits are available in various fibers such as linen, silk, wool, Tencel, polyester, cotton, and cotton blends.

### **There are two fundamental ways that knits get made:**

1. A weft knit or hand knitted fabric is constructed with a single yarn that's looped to create horizontal rows. Each row gets built on the previous row.
2. A warp knit is made with multiple parallel yarns that are simultaneously looped vertically to form the fabric.

This article in Threads Magazine gives you an in-depth look at knit fabric construction. Real Simple's glossary of t-shirt fabrics is a helpful resource to learn more about knit fabric types that brands use for t-shirts.

### **Woven fabric**

Woven fabrics get made with two or more sets of yarns interlaced at right angles to each other and are constructed on a machine called handloom or power loom. Frequent characteristics of woven fabrics are opacity, abrasion resistance, and pill resistance. The higher the thread count, the higher the quality and strength. Uses for wovens include denim and formal pants, button-down shirts, and jackets.

### **Two classifications of woven fabrics are:**

1. Basic or simple weaves include plain weave, twill weave, and satin weaves.
2. Complex or novelty weaves include, dobby weave, jacquard weave, pique (like a men's polo tee shirt), and more.

### **Types of fabric suppliers**

Finding reliable fabric suppliers is a critical step in starting a clothing line. It's best to find partners that can guarantee the stock you need and on-time delivery.

There are three different types of fabric suppliers that are defined based on how they operate and what kind of fabric they stock.

1. **Fabric Mills:** provide made-to-order fabrics and often have substantial minimum order requirements (MOQ's).
2. **Converter:** is a company that purchases unfinished or greige goods from the fabric mill. Then they proceed to finish the fabric by dyeing, printing, or washing the goods before they sell it to you.
3. **Jobbers:** typically carry a limited stock of fabric that was left over from converters and mills. They may sell it at reduced prices and don't usually restock a fabric, color, or

print once they sell out. Take caution with this type of fabric supplier as you may not be able to order the same fabric twice.

### **Where to source fabric for your clothing line**

Sourcing fabric in person at fabric trade shows allows you to see and touch the materials. However, you can also find fabric suppliers online and order fabric hangers (aka swatches or samples) that you can review at your studio or office. Depending on the fabric mill, they may charge you a fee, usually around \$5 to \$10 for each fabric hanger.

### **Source your fabric at trade shows**

Fabric trade shows can be overwhelming. Rows and rows of supplier booths, sometimes hundreds, is a lot to look at in a few hours. You can research the exhibiting fabric mills before the trade show and make a list of your top ten. Leave yourself a few extra minutes, just in case you discover fabric suppliers that you didn't find during your online search.

### **Two fabric trade shows that you can start with are:**

1. DG Expo is better for small quantity fabric orders, and many of the fabric suppliers that exhibit are based in the US or have showrooms in the US.
2. Texworld is a more significant trade show with more exhibitors. Many of the fabric suppliers that exhibit at Texworld have mills overseas in China, India, and elsewhere.

### **Source your fabric online**

If you can't make it to a fabric trade show, searching trade show websites for fabric suppliers that meet your criteria is the next best option. These days, many fabric suppliers, if not all, have a fabric catalog on their website. You can peruse at your leisure and then request fabric headers (sometimes called hangers) that you can review in the comfort of your office.

### **Commonly asked fabric sourcing questions**

Knowing the right questions to ask and what to look for when sourcing fabric for your clothing line is crucial. Many brands create a spec sheet template, a form that lists specific information about each fabric quality. In some cases, the fabric supplier may already have a spec sheet that they can share with you.

Here are 10 questions to ask fabric suppliers while you're sourcing fabric for your clothing line.

#### **1. Fabric article or item number**

Just like finished products that you sell through your ecommerce store, fabric suppliers create article or item numbers for each fabric quality that they sell. The fabric article number is usually found on the fabric hangers. Take note of this number as you'll need it when you order the sample and bulk fabric yardage.

#### **2. Fabric weight**

It's important to think about the fabric weight of each garment you are designing. You most likely will not use the same fabric weight for every product in your collection. Often, bottoms use a heavier weight fabric than tops. However, it depends on each specific garment and how you want the fabric to drape or lay over the wearer's body.

Fabric weight gets listed in grams per square meter (GSM or GR/M2). Below are a few examples of fabric weights used for different types of knit garments.

- Activewear leggings and sports bras are about 200 GSM - 300 GSM
- Lounge pants are about 180 GSM - 250 GSM
- Standard t-shirts are about 130 GSM - 180 GSM
- Lightweight t-shirts are about 130 GSM and less

### **3. Fabric content**

Fabric content refers to the makeup of the fibers that are used to knit or weave the fabric. Commonly used fibers are rayon, cotton, polyester, and silk.

### **4. Fabric construction**

Fabric construction involves the conversion of yarns, and sometimes fibers into a piece of fabric that is then used to make an end product. Fabric characteristics are determined by the materials and methods used to construct the fabric. Presently, most fabric production uses interlacing methods, such as weaving or knitting.

### **5. Fabric width (total and cuttable)**

Fabric width is the measurement across the width of the fabric roll from edge to edge. Fabric suppliers will provide you with two points of measurement (if they don't, ask for it).

The two measurements to consider are the total width and the cuttable width. The edges of the fabric can be skewed or damaged during production and transportation, so it's best to refer to the cuttable width for a more precise measurement of fabric that is usable.

### **6. Fabric price per yard/meter (sample yardage and bulk yardage)**

Depending on your target retail price for the garments that you will sell to consumers and the fabric yield for each garment, you can determine your target fabric price per yard or meter for each fabric. Keep this target price in mind when you are sourcing new materials to ensure that you are within your budget.

Typically, fabric pricing per yard or meter can change from year to year depending on the market and the cost of resources to make the fabric. Also, buying fabric in bulk usually costs less than purchasing sample yardage. You can ask the fabric supplier for their sample and bulk price per yard. The cost per yard for sample fabric can be \$3-\$5 more and in some cases double the bulk yardage price.

## **7. Minimum Order Quantity (MOQ)**

MOQ refers to the minimum amount of fabric yardage that you must buy per order from a supplier. In most cases, fabric mills have an MOQ for sample yardage, usually at least five yards, and a different MOQ for bulk yardage. Depending on the supplier you are working with, bulk fabric yardage MOQs vary.

For example, if a supplier requires an MOQ of 500 yards, you must purchase at least 500 yards to be able to deal with that supplier. In some cases, the fabric supplier will allow you to order less than the MOQ by applying a surcharge to the price per yard.

You can ask if you can apply the bulk MOQ across multiple colors of the same fabric quality or if it's per fabric, per color? Applying the MOQ across more than one color is a way to maximize your buying options if you are unable to buy 500 yards of one color.

## **8. Fabric delivery lead time**

The time between the initiation of a fabric order and the completion of a production and delivery process is the fabric delivery lead time. Some fabric suppliers keep stock of the fabric that they sell, resulting in quick turnaround time from the moment you place your order to the delivery at your factory. Other suppliers have delivery lead times ranging from four weeks to eight weeks. You can ask for fabric delivery lead times for sample yardage and bulk yardage. Sample yardage usually has a shorter delivery lead time.

## **9. Country of origin**

Country of origin or COO is the country where production of the fabric and shipping takes place. It's important to ask for this information as it must go on the inside label of your garments and it will also affect the cost of your fabric.

## **10. Fabric care instructions**

The recommended method for washing fabric varies for each fabric type and depends on the fabric content and construction. Fabric care instructions are provided to uphold fabric integrity over time. Some fibers get damaged in high heat, or they have higher shrinkage rates than others when placed in the dryer. Other fabrics, like silk, are often dry clean only.

### **Additional fabric sourcing terms defined**

Like most industries, the fashion industry has its own language for sourcing and manufacturing. These nine terms can help you navigate fabric sourcing like a pro.

**Fabric hand** Fabric hand refers to the way the fabric feels when you touch it with your hand. There are no definitive fashion industry terms for fabric hand, but commonly used words to describe fabric hand are soft, cool, dry, and silky.

**Selvage** The finished edge of the fabric, keeping it from unraveling and fraying. The selvage runs the entire length of the material.

**Fabric grain** The grainline of the fabric is broken up into three options:

1. Lengthwise grain (warp) refers to the threads that run parallel to the selvage.
2. Crosswise grain (weft) refers to the threads that run perpendicular to the selvage or along the cut edge of the fabric.
3. Bias grain is technically not a "grain." It's the 45-degree angle between warp and weft grains. Cutting your fabric on the bias results in more stretch and can be used anywhere that you need the material to drape more smoothly over a curve.

**Fabric drape** Fabric drape is one of the most important factors to consider when constructing a garment. Drape refers to how the fabric hangs or falls on the body. You can decide whether you want a dress to hug the body or hang away from the body.

**Fabric hanger** A fabric hanger, also referred to as a fabric header, serves as a fabric sample. It's a small cutting of the fabric so buyers can see and feel the material first hand. You can also use the swatch as a reference during the design process.

**Sample yardage** Sample yardage is the fabric that you order when designing and developing samples. Typically it costs more than bulk fabric yardage that you buy for production. Most fabric suppliers require a five-yard minimum order for sample yardage.

**Bulk yardage** Bulk yardage is the fabric that you order after you have designed, developed, and approved your garments. Bulk yardage refers to the more significant quantity of fabric yardage that you buy to manufacture your products. Depending on the supplier, there may be sizeable minimum order requirements, or you can order a small quantity at a higher price per yard.

**Greige goods** Greige is an unfinished woven or knitted fabric in its raw state, before being bleached, dyed, or printed.

**Shrinkage** Shrinkage is the process in which a piece of fabric becomes smaller than its original size, usually through the process of laundry. Typically represented as a percentage, it's up to you to decide what your tolerance level is for fabric shrinkage. Confirming the shrinkage rate before you go to production can help you determine if you need to adjust the fit-specifications of a garment to account for shrinkage.

## **WHAT IS FASHION TREND ANALYSIS?**

Fashion trend analysis is the prediction of what will be the present of the future in the fashion context. Fashion trend analysis focus on knowing what will come next in fashion which will be accepted by the mass population. Fashion trend analysis and forecasting describes the

mechanism of a fashion trend and the changes related to that. The changes in a fashion trend is not only limited with clothes but also changes with the change in social, cultural, economical and technological changes.

#### WHAT DOES AN ANALYST DO?

Fashion trend analysts are responsible for spotting upcoming trends and products. They attempt to project today's trends, into the future, to discover what will be hot next season. Their predictions can guide manufactures and designers to use certain materials or focus on certain styles.

#### TOOLS USED BY A TREND ANALYST

- Collezioni magazines
- Trend forecasting websites
- Instagram
- Google's annual trends report
- Pantone's fashion colour report

#### Seasonal Trend Analysis

##### 1. COLOUR TREND

- A colour trend can change the way we think about a colour and how we purchase consumer goods. Colour palettes can make or break your designs therefore, designers keep track of and follow these colour trends in hope to stay relevant in their business
- One of the most influential committees is a group of 10 people who meet in Europe twice a year — May and November — at the invitation of Pantone, a well-known company who deals with colours and sets the colour trends Although Pantone has competition in the colour-forecasting world, in terms of colour standards Pantone has no rivals

##### 2. MATERIAL AND TEXTURE TREND

- Everything has a texture or a surface. It is the feel of a surface/object. It can increase or decrease the appearance of body size. It can draw added attention to a design. Textures can be created by the fiber type, weaving or knitting process, or by the fabric finishes
- Types of textures:
  - Tactile (Rough, prickly, smooth, soft, bumpy)
  - Visual (shiny, dull, matte)

##### 3. SILHOUETTE TREND

- In fashion, the term silhouette refers to the line of a dress, or the garment's overall shape. Different dress silhouettes are designed to flatter different body types as well as meet the dress codes for different events
- The Empire: This dress has a waist line which is raised to directly beneath the bust, with a skirt that flares slightly from the raised-waist down
- Sheath: form-fitting from the bust through the length of the thighs.
- 'A-Line' and 'Mermaid' are a few examples of such silhouettes in women's fashion

#### 4 - PRINT AND GRAPHICS TREND

**CLASSICAL** as mango, elephant with the chariots, old musical instruments etc. print of varieties of flower either in bunch or single spotted, huge or small, combination of leaves and other addings

<b>LINES</b>	Pin Stripes, Zigzag Stripes, Spiral Stripes, Zebra Stripes, Diagonal Stripes, Horizontal Stripes, Vertical Stripes, Curved Stripes, Toothpaste Stripes, Lamp Post Stripes.
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**CHECKS** intersecting horizontal & vertical lines at 90 deg angles. Four types : Plaids, Madras Check, Bombay Check, Oxford Check.

<b>DOTS</b>	Big Dots (3-10cm), Small Dots (1.5cm), Polka Dots (Mixture).
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<b>NUMERICAL</b>	Here the number 0-9 are used.
<b>ALPHABETICAL</b>	This print is made using alphabets, wordings etc. eg : Newspaper Print
<b>PHOTO PRINT</b>	The photos of the famous stars, pop singers, old cars etc are printed.
<b>DIRECTIONAL PRINT</b>	Print which is designed directionally either horizontally, vertically or diagonally.
<b>COMPUTER PRINT</b>	The deign is taken from computer graphic design & video games.

#### 5-ACCESSORIES TREND

A fashion accessory is an item used in a secondary manner to the wearer's outfit. Often used to complete an outfit

#### TYPES OF ACCESSORIES

- Those that are carried - purses & handbags, glasses, parasols and umbrellas, wallets, canes, and ceremonial swords
- Those that are worn - jackets, boots and shoes, cravats, ties, hats, bonnets, belts and suspenders, gloves, muffs, necklaces, bracelets, watches, sashes, shawls, scarves, lanyards, socks, pins, piercings, rings, and stockings

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- <http://lcwu.edu.pk/ocd/cfiles/Textile%20Design/C/BFA-TD-202/fashiontrendanalysis-190306100630.pdf>