

Fashion Feasibility

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Selecting fashions that present you at your best is not difficult if you apply a few basic principles of design. But in order to apply design principles correctly, you must know your figure type. Which are you?



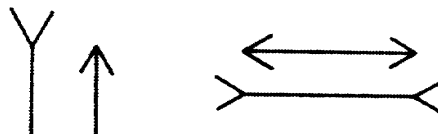
Or, perhaps you are average, average. Whatever your figure type, the fashions you wear will be flattering or unflattering depending upon their designs.

To help you select the designs best suited for your figure type, consider the following design principles.

Line

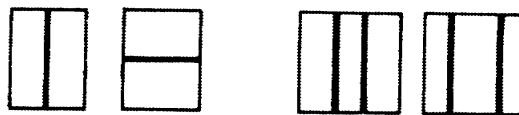
The wise selection of line in fashion design can create optical illusions to flatter your appearance.

Line in fashion is seen in garment details and in the garment silhouette. Details include seamlines and garment features such as pockets, collars, belts, and openings. Silhouette refers to the shape of the garment. A silhouette in fashion is dependant on the design of the garment and the fabric used. Both the detail lines and the silhouette influence the optical illusion created when a garment is worn.



Look at these example of optical illusion:

Would you believe the vertical lines are the same length? The horizontal lines are the same length also. The eye follows each line until it meets a line that turns downward or upward. The lines look shorter when lines turn downward and longer when lines continue upward.



Now, look at the rectangles. The four rectangles are the same size, but the use of a vertical or horizontal line within each rectangle creates an illusion of varied size. When two or more vertical or horizontal lines are used, the spacing between the lines will affect the illusion created.



Generally, vertical lines which carry the eye up the figure without interruption will give a taller, more slender illusion. Lines which stop the eye from traveling upward by moving the eye from side to side or back down will create a shorter and heavier illusion.

Consider these examples:



The single vertical line moves the eye upward with nothing to interrupt its movement.



The magic "Y" creates a feeling of height as the eye is guided upward with nothing to impede its vertical motion.



The longer your eye can travel upward without being interrupted by a horizontal line, the taller the figure will appear.



Two vertical lines spaced close together form a narrow panel which moves the eye up the figure.



A vertical illusion becomes a horizontal illusion when a vertical line is topped with a horizontal line causing the eye to move from side to side.



A vertical line suddenly appears shorter when the eye is forced downward.



The sooner the eye encounters a horizontal line, the shorter the figure will appear.



Two vertical lines spaced far apart form three wide panels that move the eye across the figure.

Color

Color is one of the first things people notice about clothing. The use of color can create illusions of the figure size in the same way line does. Color should be selected on the basis of complexion-hair, skin, eyes-as well as on figure size.

Colors should complement the complexion. A complexion that tends to be sallow (yellow tones) should wear colors that bring out the pink/red tones of the skin. A complexion that is florid (red/blue tones) should avoid colors that emphasize the redness of the skin.

Matching of color to the complexion is a very personal matter. Old adages like "redheads should never wear pink" are not always valid. Careful selection of the value and intensity of a color, its placement and the complements used with the color can allow its use by almost everyone.

Colors are classified as warm—reds, yellows, and oranges—or cool—blues, and greens. Warm colors tend to create an illusion of greater size. Cool colors tend to create an illusion of reduced size.

The brightness or dullness and the lightness and darkness of colors also affect the illusion created. Dull and dark colors seem to recede and make the figure appear smaller. Bright and light colors have the opposite effect.

In addition to these general characteristics of colors, how they are used will also influence the illusion created. Contrasting colors in tops and bottoms create a horizontal line where they meet and tend to shorten the figure. A single color outfit gives a vertical feeling and creates an illusion of height and slimness.

When several colors are used in a single outfit, the amount, placement, and contrast between the colors used will determine the effect. If the color is printed in the fabric design, the size of the design, as well as the colors used must be considered. Generally, the size of print should be selected in relation to the figure size. Small figures look best in fabrics with small designs. Large figures look best in fabrics with large designs. These guidelines are especially true if the colors used are bright and contrast strongly.

Texture

Because garments have combined design elements of texture, color and line, each must be selected in relation to your figure and how they affect each of the other elements. The effects of texture in fashion influence how colors appear and how design lines function.

Texture describes the body and surface of fabric. Textures may be rough or smooth, coarse or fine, crisp or clingy, soft or stiff, thin or bulky, opaque or sheer, shiny or dull, heavy or light or any combination of

these characteristics. Because textures have many characteristics, they can enhance or detract from a garments design. They also affect the illusions of size and shape of the figure.

Here are some general guidelines for selecting appropriate textures for garments:

- Soft or clingy textures reveal the figure and emphasize figure irregularities.
- Stiff or crisp textures stands away from the body and hide figure irregularities. Very stiff fabrics appear to add weight and dwarf small figures. Moderately stiff fabrics are good on most figures.
- Bulky texture seem to add volume to the figure. Small figures are overpowered by these textures, but they are good for tall slender figures. They can be used to balance an irregular figure. Example: Bulky sweater for figure with small bust and full hips.
- Dull finishes absorb light and generally make the figure look smaller. They are suitable for all figures.
- Shiny fabrics make the figure appear larger and reveal figure irregularities. Shiny fabrics are best for average to slim figures which have regular proportions.
- Coarse or rough fabrics are good choices for average to slim figures. They add volume to large figures and overpower small figures.
- Smooth (not shiny) fabrics hide figure irregularities and are attractive on most figure types.

Tips on Selecting Fashions For You

Most women have special figure problems that they want to de-emphasize. The following suggestions are designed to help you select fashions that will generally camouflage problems and flatter your figure.

To look shorter or heavier select:

Details extending beyond the silhouette
Bulky, bunched silhouette lines
Curved rather than straight lines
Crosswise design lines
Horizontally striped fabrics
Short, broken vertical lines
Short, diagonal lines
Combinations of vertical and horizontal lines as in a plaid fabric
Full, horizontal drapery across the bustline or hipline
Soft fullness
Bloused waistline
Flaring or contrasting cuffs and collars
Wide, bulky collars
Capes
Separates, two piece effects, overblouses
Flounces
Yokes and insets
Patch pockets
Off-the shoulder-effects
Wide belts and cummerbunds

Dolman sleeves
Long, full sleeves
Wide, flowering sleeves
Three-quarter sleeves
Gathered, pleated and flared skirts
Short skirts
Short coats
Long jackets
Long torso styles
Double-breasted styles
Peplums and tunics

To look taller or thinner select:

Details within the silhouette
Straight, rather than curved lines
Long, vertical lines, especially near center of figure
Vertically striped fabrics
Simple, uncluttered lines
Long, diagonal lines
Slim, smooth silhouette lines
Narrow panels or gores
Narrow, standing collars
High necklines
Long, narrow pointed collars
Long, narrow V-or-U-necklines
Narrow vest openings
Narrow belts, preferably to match garment
Long, straight sleeves
Raglan sleeves
Sleeveless garments
Decoration high on the shoulder or near the neck
Slim skirts
Skirts as long as possible to be fashionable
Boleros or short jackets
Full length coats
Coat with button-down-the-front style
Princess lines and beltless onepiece dresses

To make your short waist look longer select:

V-necklines
Center front closing with collarless neckline
Narrow, center panel in bodice
Long torso lines
Overblouses
Short skirts (within fashion limits)
Narrow or no belt

To make your long waist seem shorter select:

Wide belts and cummerbunds
Vertical lines in skirt
Wide midriffs
Skirt as long as possible to be fashionable
Shoulder yokes
Boleros and short jackets
Raised waistlines

To conceal a flat chest select:

Soft front fullness (gathers, pleats, frills)
Large collars
Bows at the neck

Round, soft details, such as in collars
 Cowl necklines
 Bolero jackets
 Capes
 Pockets and pocket flaps at bustline
 Full sleeves
 Cuffs on sleeves adjacent to the bustline
 To conceal a large bust select:
 Soft front fullness, either above or below the bustline
 Jabot or soft full tie at the neck line
 Softly draped bodices
 Lines to broaden shoulders
 Boxy jackets
 Full skirts
 Soft flare in skirts
 Details in skirt

To make narrow hips seem wider select:

Wide center panel in skirt
 Hip yokes
 Pleated skirts, especially with wide pleats
 Skirts with side drape, especially at hips
 Wide or contrasting sleeve cuffs at hipline
 Side pleats skirt
 Gathered skirts
 Circular skirts
 Large patch pockets, especially toward side of skirt

To make wide hips or large thighs seem more narrow select:

Soft fullness or gores in skirt
 Narrow center panels (attracts eye away from silhouette)
 Widening effect at the waistline
 Shallow skirt yokes
 Loose, short jackets
 Bodice emphasis at the shoulders

To hide a sway-back select:

Straight-line jackets
 Short jackets ending below the waistline
 Gathered skirts
 Belts buckled at the back
 Bloused bodices
 Capes
 Peplums
 Crushed belts or cummerbunds
 Lengthened, loose bodices

To hide a prominent abdomen select:

Details away from the center front
 Styles without belts
 Bodices with easy gathers at the waistline
 Cord belts that tie to the side of the tummy
 Details above waistline
 Overblouses
 Dresses with a side-wrap
 Narrow, self-fabric belts

To conceal round shoulders select:

Slightly bloused backs
 Blouse gathered at waistline
 Small collars
 Semi-fitted jackets
 Bolero jackets
 Set-in sleeves

To make your broad shoulders seem more narrow select:

Oval or V-necklines
 Narrow collars and lapels
 Raglan Sleeves
 Kimono Sleeves
 Flared peplums
 Horizontal lines in the skirt
 Full skirt

To make your narrow shoulders seem wider select:

Horizontal lines at chest
 Shoulder yokes
 Wide, cape-like collars
 High pockets
 Wide lapels
 Diagonal lines to tip of shoulders
 Bateau necklines

To make a short, plump neck appear longer select:

Narrow, deep V-necklines
 Narrow, flat, and pointed collars
 Cardigan styles
 Low necklines

To make a long skinny neck appear shorter select:

Curved, high necklines
 Standup collars
 Square necklines
 Soft, full or deep collars
 Scarves and ascots
 Ruffles jabots

If you have a square face select:

V-necklines
 Deep, oval necklines
 Sweetheart necklines
 Soft, rounded collars

If you have a triangular face select:

High, square or round necklines
 High draped necklines

If you have a long face select:

High, round necklines
 Softly rounded collars
 High, rolled collars
 Bows, scarves and ascots

If your have a round face select:

Narrow, deep V-necklines
 Narrow lapels
 Small, Pointed collars
 Low necklines
 Long, narrow collars