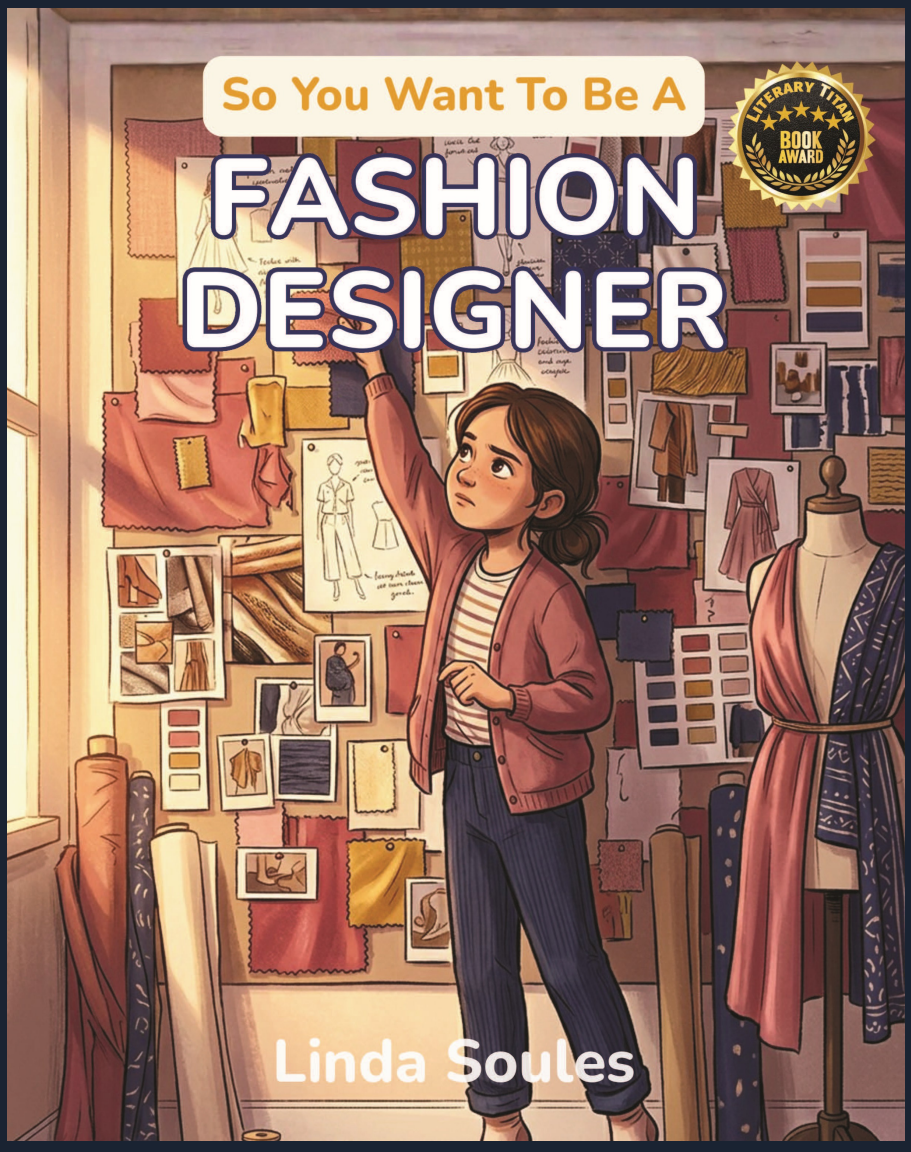
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So You Want To Be A Fashion Designer

Linda Soules

BookGist Summary

So You Want To Be A Fashion Designer

by Linda Soules

Genre: Children's Nonfiction

Key Takeaways

• Fashion design transforms flat fabric into clothing that fits, moves with, and expresses a real human body; fabric choice is fundamental because its weight, drape, stretch, and feel shape what a garment can become.

• A fashion designer combines artistic vision with engineering, material knowledge, problem-solving, storytelling, and empathy. A sketch is only a plan: patterns, fittings, and real-world wear determine whether the design works.

• Design is collaborative. Pattern makers, sample sewers, fit models, textile suppliers, production teams, buyers, stylists, and ultimately customers all help turn an idea into a garment people can wear.

• Clothing affects how people feel about themselves and how they communicate identity, belonging, culture, and history. Inclusive design starts from the belief that the body is the client—not a problem that needs fixing.

• The profession involves creative rewards and significant pressures: seeing a garment come alive on a person can be deeply moving, while recurring deadlines, trend cycles, and copying can make the work exhausting.

• Runway fashion often acts as experimental wearable art; more practical ready-to-wear collections adapt bold ideas for everyday use. The industry also plans far ahead, with trend forecasters drawing clues from culture and society.

- Fashion carries environmental and human responsibilities. Designing durable clothes people love and keep, reducing waste, and choosing fair treatment for garment workers are essential parts of responsible practice.
- Aspiring designers can begin now by studying the construction of everyday clothes, sketching regularly, experimenting with draping, learning basic sewing and repair, and exploring different fabrics firsthand.

Who Should Read This Book

This book is ideal for curious readers—especially children and middle-grade students—who love clothing, drawing, making things, or wondering how everyday objects are created. It will suit aspiring fashion designers, but also readers interested in art, textiles, sustainability, history, and how people express identity. Parents, teachers, and librarians can use it to start conversations about career exploration, inclusive design, fair labor, and the environmental consequences of what we buy and wear. Readers will gain a realistic introduction to the work behind fashion: choosing materials, sketching, drafting patterns, draping, fitting, collaborating, and balancing creativity with production. The book pairs inspiration with concrete activities, so readers can start by inspecting garments, sketching outfits, sewing a button, or repairing clothes. Unlike a purely glamorous account of fashion, it discusses deadlines, copying, waste, and the emotional importance of designing for varied bodies. Its warm, conversational approach makes it a useful early-career introduction alongside more specialized books on fashion illustration, industry practices, and sustainable clothing.

Chapter Summaries

What Fashion Design Is—and What Designers Do

The book begins by inviting readers to notice that every garment they wear embodies many design decisions: fabric, neckline, sleeve length, hem width, pattern, and construction. Fashion design is presented as the art of turning two-dimensional material into a three-dimensional object that fits a moving body. Designers must understand each fabric's character: cotton breathes but wrinkles, silk drapes but stains, wool insulates, linen cools, and denim changes with wear. A design that looks convincing on paper may behave differently in real cloth, so designers must think beyond illustration and learn how materials respond in practice. A fashion designer, the book argues, fills several roles at once: artist, engineer, materials scientist, problem-solver, storyteller, and advocate for the people who will wear the clothes. Pattern features such as darts shape fabric around the body, while gussets create room for movement. The designer's vision is realized through a team and through repeated

making and fitting. The chapter emphasizes that the craft's central puzzle is the transformation from a flat sketch or piece of cloth into clothing that works on a living person.

The Studio, the Tools, and the Making Process

A designer's studio is described as a combination of office, sewing room, and gallery of work in progress. Fabric rolls, dress forms, chalk-marked cutting tables, patterns, pins, and mood boards may look chaotic to a visitor, but each object helps answer a design question. In larger fashion houses, an atelier coordinates specialists—including pattern makers, sewers, cutters, and embellishers—whose work moves a garment from initial sketch to finished piece. A runway is the public culmination of that process, not where the work begins. The book introduces the tools that make experimentation possible. Designers sketch on elongated figures called croquis and compare fabric swatches to study color, texture, and weight. They drape material on a dress form and often first sew a toile, or practice garment, from inexpensive fabric to test its fit and shape. Pattern paper, chalk, pins, measuring tapes, and fabric scissors support the work, but the designer's trained eye is the most essential tool: it notices how a sleeve moves, how lighting changes a color, and how a small measurement can determine whether a garment fits or pulls. A dress form is only a starting point; real fittings reveal how clothing meets an individual body.

The Rewards, Challenges, and Surprises of the Career

One of the job's greatest pleasures comes when a finished garment is tried on by a real person. Movement can reveal unexpected qualities in the fabric, and proportions that seemed uncertain on a table or dress form may suddenly feel right. Fittings can also carry emotional weight: a well-designed garment may help someone who has felt excluded or uncomfortable in clothing feel recognized and at ease in their body. Runway shows are thrilling too, but the book insists that the everyday wearer—not glamour—is the deeper reason the work matters. The work is demanding. Designers face tight, recurring deadlines and must develop fresh ideas while one collection is being completed and another is already underway. Original designs may be copied quickly by fast-fashion companies, and many garments are discarded after only a few wears. Another surprise is that runway clothes are often experimental wearable art rather than practical products; the more accessible versions usually appear later in ready-to-wear lines. Fashion also operates well ahead of the public: designers and trend forecasters study cultural signals years in advance. The sample day in the book—from sourcing fabric and fitting a toile to reviewing a collection, negotiating production, sketching, and marking alterations—shows that creative work is interwoven with practical decisions and constant revision.

The Team, the Wearer, and Fashion's Responsibilities

No designer makes a collection alone. Pattern makers translate drawings into flat pattern pieces; sample sewers assemble early versions; fit models show how garments behave on

bodies; suppliers locate materials; and production teams work out how to manufacture designs at scale. Buyers decide what reaches stores, while stylists help present the clothes. At the end of this chain is the customer, whose experience gives the entire process its purpose. Clothes can communicate belonging, identity, culture, and personal history. A school uniform may help a new student feel included; clothing designed to fit someone seated in a wheelchair can support independence and dignity; traditional patterns can connect a wearer to generations of heritage. The book also asks designers to consider the environmental toll of producing vast quantities of clothing and the people who sew it. Responsible practice means attending to fair wages and respectful working conditions, as well as making garments durable enough to be worn for years. The book's central sustainability idea is that a garment someone loves and keeps is more valuable than one made to be discarded quickly.

The Qualities and Knowledge Designers Need

The book identifies empathy as central to good design: every garment is worn by someone with real feelings about their body, and designers should consider how that person will feel in it. Functional imagination is equally important. A sleeve must allow an arm to reach, and a waist must allow the wearer to breathe, so beauty and physical practicality have to be considered together. Designers also need sensitivity to the moment—to understand what people may be ready to wear before that desire is obvious—and creative resilience to absorb criticism, changing trends, and the pressure to begin again. Precision turns intention into a well-made garment: details such as a seam or hem may depend on fractions of an inch. The work also draws on knowledge that may not seem directly related to fashion. Cultural anthropology helps designers understand how clothes express belief, status, belonging, and rebellion. Engineering intuition helps them anticipate how fabric will sag, stretch, or change when wet. Business understanding matters because a design must be producible and suited to its market if it is to reach wearers. Together, these qualities connect the designer's creative ambition to the physical, cultural, and commercial realities of clothing.

Designers, Fashion History, and Surprising Facts

Three designers illustrate how fashion can reshape cultural expectations and turn personal experience into creative work. Coco Chanel challenged restrictive clothing for women with simpler, more mobile styles, helped popularize trousers and the little black dress, and advanced the idea that women should move through the world on their own terms. Virgil Abloh, raised in Illinois by Ghanaian immigrant parents, brought streetwear and high fashion together, became the first Black artistic director of Louis Vuitton menswear, and used his success to support emerging Black designers. Issey Miyake, who survived the atomic bombing of Hiroshima as a child, devoted his career to innovative pleating and folding that made fabric seem alive. The book adds historical and material details that reveal how fashion changes over time. High heels began as footwear for Persian cavalrymen, who used them to stay secure in stirrups; a single haute couture gown can require more than a thousand hours

of handwork. Designer Charles Frederick Worth helped establish the practice of putting a designer's name on clothing. Other facts trace the histories of the zipper, rare vicuña wool, and the place-name origins of "denim" and "jeans." Together, these examples show fashion as a field shaped by technology, labor, geography, individual creativity, and social change.

Getting Started and Deciding Whether the Career Fits

Readers are encouraged to begin with accessible experiments rather than wait for formal training. Study clothes already in a closet: inspect seams, darts, hems, and the inside construction. Keep a sketchbook and draw frequently, concentrating on the movement and feeling of clothing rather than perfect illustration. Try draping scarves or other fabric over a body or stuffed animal, learn to sew a button and then a seam, repair damaged clothes, and visit a fabric store to compare how different materials feel and fall. The book offers three guiding questions for a designer: how a garment makes its wearer feel, what the world is experiencing and wanting to wear, and how beauty can be combined with movement and everyday use. It invites readers who are curious about both clothing's appearance and its effect on people to consider the career. Its message is encouraging but practical: interest in clothes can become a craft through observation, practice, and attention to the people for whom garments are made.

Fashion Vocabulary, Further Exploration, and the Book's Message

A glossary gives readers a foundation in terms used throughout fashion design, including atelier, bias cut, collection, croquis, dart, draping, gusset, haute couture, ready-to-wear, silhouette, sustainable fashion, and toile. These definitions connect vocabulary to practical design decisions: a dart shapes flat fabric to a curve, bias cutting changes how material drapes, and a toile lets a designer find problems before cutting expensive cloth. The recommended books, museum collections, websites, organizations, and hands-on activities point readers toward deeper learning, from visiting a costume gallery to interviewing a tailor or entering a local design contest. In the author's note, clothing is framed as a language people use every day to communicate who they are. Fashion designers therefore carry responsibility for whose bodies and identities are recognized in clothing. The book's final message extends beyond pursuing a career: noticing a carefully sewn hem, choosing clothes that encourage someone, or helping another person feel comfortable can also be acts of care. The author presents design as a way to make more people feel that something was made for them as they are, and positions the series as a thoughtful invitation for young readers to imagine possible futures.

Notable Quotes

> *"Clothing is the only art form you wear."*

"Get the fabric right and the garment nearly designs itself. Get it wrong, and no amount of clever sketching can save it."

"The body is not the problem. The body is the client."

"The most sustainable garment isn't made from any special fabric. It's simply the one a person loves enough to keep."

"Pins are promises. Each pin marks a decision about where a seam will go or where a dart will fold. The pin holds the intention, and the stitch makes it permanent."

"Clothing is the first thing the world sees about a person, often before a single word is spoken."

"You do not have to design clothes to create moments like that. You only have to pay attention, and to remember that how you make other people feel is the most beautiful thing you will ever make."

Full Summary

A fashion designer turns flat, lifeless fabric into something that wraps around a breathing body and moves as that person bends, reaches, and walks. Every garment begins with decisions: the fabric, the neckline, the sleeve length, the width of the hem, and the amount of cloth required. Clothing is the art form people wear, and making it means transforming something still and flat into something three-dimensional, useful, and expressive.

Fabric is not a blank surface. Cotton breathes but wrinkles; silk falls like water but stains; wool holds warmth but may itch; linen cools in heat and softens with age. Denim fades, recording its wearer’s life. A designer chooses materials with their weight, drape, stretch, texture, and feel in mind, because these qualities shape what a garment can become. Even a beautiful sketch cannot rescue a design from the wrong fabric. Paper offers a plan; the real cloth has the final say.

That is why a designer is several kinds of thinker at once. An artist uses quick lines to capture the feeling of a dress before it exists. An engineer turns a flat pattern into a puzzle of shapes, geometry, and physics. Darts—small folds sewn into fabric—draw it toward the body’s curves, while gussets add room where movement requires it. A materials scientist anticipates how cloth will hang, stretch, feel against skin, and change with washing and wear. A problem-solver handles the many invisible decisions behind a finished piece. A storyteller makes a collection speak through fabric, and an advocate asks who will feel beautiful in what is made.

The first garment a designer creates may be small and crooked: a doll's dress or a cape made from scraps with a borrowed needle. Its seams wander and its hem dips, but when the cloth lifts from the table and takes shape, the central challenge becomes clear. A sketch is not the garment. The work is figuring out how flat pieces can wrap around a real person.

A designer's studio is part office, part sewing room, and part gallery of unfinished ideas. Fabric bolts lean in corners; a half-pinned garment waits on a dress form; patterns, scissors, pins, and chalk cover a cutting table. Walls fill with mood boards, fabric samples, and pictures. The apparent mess is full of questions and decisions: each swatch or drawing is there because it may help reveal what a garment should become. In a larger fashion house, the work takes place in an atelier, the French word for workshop, where cutters, pattern makers, sewers, and embellishers contribute in sequence. When the collection is ready, an empty hall can become a runway, complete with lights and a stage.

Ideas often begin in a sketchbook, drawn on elongated figures called croquis. Their exaggerated proportions help designers imagine how fabric might move and drape. Small fabric swatches then make color, texture, and weight tangible. Sketches are only the beginning: designers pin and shape material on a padded dress form, then sew a toile, or practice garment, from inexpensive cloth. The toile lets them test the fit and silhouette before risking costly fabric. But a dress form represents one set of average measurements, and no person is exactly average. The decisive test comes when the garment leaves the stand and meets a living body.

Pattern paper, chalk markers, measuring tapes, pins, and fabric scissors help turn an idea into a workable object. A good pair of shears can become as personal as a chef's knife, shaped over time by one person's grip and habits. The designer's most essential tool, though, is a trained eye: one that notices how a sleeve behaves when an arm reaches, how color changes under different light, or how a hem alters a silhouette. A quarter-inch can separate a garment that fits from one that pulls. Pins hold decisions in place; stitches make them last.

The fitting is where a garment stops being a guess. On a real body, fabric may move unexpectedly, a color may come alive, or the proportions may prove exactly right. This conversation between cloth and person is one of the job's deepest pleasures. It can also be profoundly moving. Designers have seen people cry because a garment fits—not because anything is wrong, but because, perhaps for the first time, the clothes affirm that their body is right. When someone looks in the mirror and recognizes themselves with ease, design has done more than make an attractive outfit.

A runway show has its own exhilaration: in twelve minutes, months of work appear on models before buyers, the press, and the public. Yet the deeper reward is seeing people wear the clothes in daily life, finding a dress that makes them feel like themselves or a coat that gives them courage on a difficult day. Machines may handle heavy tasks, but hands bring the art.

The work matters because garments touch lives, often quietly.

The pace can be punishing. Designers usually present at least two new collections a year, finishing one while beginning the next. Finding fresh ideas season after season drains energy, and designers who leave the field often point to that relentless cycle. Those who stay learn to protect their creativity by resting and refilling it. Copying brings another frustration: fast-fashion brands may reproduce a design within weeks and sell it for far less. Original work must be beautiful, timely, sellable, and true, even as trends shift and clothes can quickly fall out of fashion. The scale of waste is stark: around the world, the equivalent of a full garbage truck of clothing is thrown away or burned every second.

One surprise is that runway clothes are often not intended for ordinary wear. They are wearable art—experiments in shape and material that may not survive real life. A show can be more like a gallery opening than a shop. Later, designers adapt its bold ideas into ready-to-wear, the clothes people can buy and live in. Another surprise is how far ahead the industry plans. A coat bought this year may have been imagined two years earlier. Trend forecasters search art, music, politics, film, and social media for clues to what people will want. One team selected a pale purple called Digital Lavender two years before its predicted moment; in time, it appeared on runways, phones, and a hit pop album.

Fashion has also long been designed around a narrow ideal: thin, tall, young, and able-bodied. The message to anyone outside that ideal was often that their body was the problem. Inclusive design reverses that assumption. The body is the client, not an obstacle to correct. Every body presents design questions, and the designer’s task is to care enough to solve them.

That care is carried through a chain of people, because no designer turns a sketch into a finished garment alone. Pattern makers translate the drawing into flat shapes that can be cut from cloth. Sample sewers stitch those pieces into a first version, and a fit model wears it so the team can see what happens on a living body. Textile suppliers search for the right material; production teams work out how to make the design in hundreds or thousands of copies. Buyers decide which pieces will reach stores, and stylists present them to best effect. Each person contributes a different kind of knowledge, and each decision helps shape what the wearer will eventually experience.

At the end of that chain is the customer, the person who pulls on the garment, looks in the mirror, and decides how it feels. The work of the whole team is, in a sense, one long conversation with that person. Clothes can speak before their wearer has said a word. A school uniform may help a newcomer feel part of a community. A jacket designed for someone who uses a wheelchair, shaped to sit comfortably when its wearer is seated, can make dressing easier and restore an everyday sense of dignity. A traditional garment bearing patterns passed down through generations can let someone carry a family’s history with them.

The right clothes can tell people, quietly but unmistakably, that they are welcome as they are.

That influence brings responsibilities beyond appearance and fit. The clothing industry produces around 100 billion garments each year—more than a dozen for every person on Earth—and accounts for a large share of global carbon emissions, estimated by some at as much as a tenth. The result is also visible in the mountains of discarded clothing. A designer's choices can contribute to this cycle, or help push against it.

There are people behind every piece as well as environmental costs. Almost everything in a closet was sewn by an actual worker, often a woman far from the shop where the garment is sold. A thoughtful designer remembers those hands and considers where and how the clothes are made, choosing production that pays workers fairly and treats them with respect. Caring for the person who wears a garment cannot be separated from caring for the person who made it.

The most sustainable garment does not depend on a special fabric or a clever label. It is one someone loves enough to keep. Clothes designed to last for years, rather than weeks, offer a direct answer to waste: make things people want to wear again and again. Buying clothing is also a small vote for the way it was produced and for the people who produced it. The designer's decisions help determine what choices are available.

The work calls for qualities that join concern for people with exacting attention to form. Empathy is essential, because every garment meets a person with feelings about their body. A designer who begins with that understanding can make clothes in which someone looks in the mirror and sees a person they are glad to be. Functional imagination is another core skill: the designer must picture beauty and physical reality at once. A sleeve has to let an arm reach; a waist has to allow its wearer to breathe. A garment succeeds when its visual idea and its practical use support each other.

Designers also need sensitivity to the moment. They try to sense what people are yearning for and what the world is moving toward before those desires are fully expressed. That instinct can make a collection feel not only new, but necessary. Yet ideas meet criticism, changing trends, and the abrupt judgment of a season's work. Creative resilience means absorbing those setbacks and still approaching the next collection with energy. Precision matters just as much: the difference between a garment that is right and one that is truly finished may come down to fractions of an inch. A carefully perfected seam or a hem with exactly the right weight reflects a quiet commitment to doing the work properly.

Some useful forms of knowledge may not seem like fashion subjects at first. Cultural anthropology—the study of how societies express themselves—helps designers understand that clothing has long communicated status, belief, belonging, and even rebellion. Knowing that history allows them to make garments that say something, not merely garments that look

appealing. Engineering intuition is equally valuable. Fabric obeys physical rules: it sags under its own weight, stretches when pulled diagonally, and behaves differently when wet. A designer who can anticipate those changes can solve problems on paper before they demand hours of sewing.

Business understanding completes the picture. A beautiful idea still has to be made, priced, and offered in the marketplace. Designers must understand costs and production, and recognize what can realistically be manufactured and sold. That knowledge does not replace creativity; it helps carry an idea out of the sketchbook and into people's lives. A designer's vision has to answer to materials, makers, customers, and the practical conditions that allow a garment to exist.

Fashion's history is also a history of people changing what clothing allows them to do and say. Coco Chanel grew up in an orphanage in France, then challenged the elaborate, restrictive clothes expected of women with designs that were simple, elegant, and free. She put women in trousers and made the little black dress famous, helping women move through the world on their own terms. Virgil Abloh, the son of Ghanaian immigrants who grew up in Illinois, taught himself design and became the first Black artistic director of Louis Vuitton menswear. Through his label Off-White, he brought streetwear and high fashion together. Having had to find his own way into an industry that rarely made room for someone like him, he used his success to support others, including by creating a fund to help young Black designers pay for school and find mentors.

Issey Miyake was seven when the atomic bomb fell on Hiroshima in 1945. He survived and, for much of his life, chose not to speak about the experience. Instead, he devoted himself to making things that were new and full of life. His inventive pleating and folding transformed single pieces of cloth into garments that seemed to move like living things. His work showed how clothing could be art, and how beauty could be made even by someone who had witnessed the world's worst destruction.

Fashion history holds surprises, too. High heels began as practical footwear for men: Persian cavalry soldiers wore them more than a thousand years ago to lock their feet into stirrups while shooting arrows from horseback. A handmade haute couture gown may require well over a thousand hours of work, with Parisian specialist sewers known as petites mains, or "little hands," spending months on its stitching and embellishment. Before the 1850s, clothing makers were largely anonymous; Charles Frederick Worth began sewing his name into his dresses, an idea that helped give rise to designer labels. The zipper, meanwhile, did not become widely used in clothing until the 1930s.

Even familiar words carry stories. Vicuña wool, from a wild animal high in the Andes, can be shorn only once every few years. The Inca called it "the gold of the Andes," and reserved it for royalty; it remains exceptionally rare and costly. "Denim" comes from serge de Nîmes, a cloth

associated with the French city of Nîmes, while “jeans” traces to Gênes, the French name for Genoa, where sailors wore sturdy cotton trousers. A pair of blue jeans carries the names of two cities within its name.

A young designer can begin long before entering a school or studio. Take a garment from your closet and examine its seams, darts, hem, and hidden construction inside out; every piece of clothing can teach you how it was made. Keep a sketchbook and draw outfits, whether on fashion figures or simple stick figures. The goal is to capture shape, movement, and feeling, not to produce perfect illustrations. Drawing regularly helps you notice more. You can also drape a scarf or towel around yourself or a stuffed animal, folding and pinning it to discover how fabric falls and where it bunches.

Simple hands-on skills matter, too. Learn to sew a button, then try a seam. Repair a torn garment or replace a missing button rather than throwing the item away; each repair reveals something about construction. Visit a fabric store and feel materials for yourself, noticing which are stiff or soft, rough or smooth, and which fall easily. The questions a designer asks can guide this exploration: How will this garment make its wearer feel? What is happening in the world, and what might people want to wear? How can something beautiful also let a real body move and live?

Fashion may suit someone who loves clothes not only for their appearance but for how they affect people. A crowded sketchbook, a mind full of ideas about color and shape, and a desire to help people feel seen and at home in their own skin are promising signs. No one needs to know at once whether this is a future career. Paying attention, making things, and learning from each attempt can reveal whether the work continues to call.

The language of design helps make that work easier to understand. An atelier is a garment-making workshop; a collection is a group of designs connected by a theme. A croquis is an elongated figure used for fashion sketches, while a silhouette is the overall shape a garment creates when worn. A dart is a sewn fold that shapes flat fabric around the body, and a gusset is an extra piece that provides room where the body bends. Draping means shaping fabric directly on a form or body. A toile, also called a muslin, is a rough practice version made before the final fabric is cut. Cutting on the bias means cutting diagonally to the fabric’s grain, allowing it to drape and stretch differently; Madeleine Vionnet, the “Queen of the Bias Cut,” used the technique for whole dresses in the 1920s.

Haute couture is highly exclusive, handmade fashion fitted to one person. Ready-to-wear, or prêt-à-porter, is made in standard sizes for people to buy off the rack. Fast fashion refers to inexpensive clothing produced quickly in response to trends, often for short-term use; sustainable fashion aims to reduce environmental harm, treat workers fairly, and make clothing worth keeping. These words describe not just techniques and products but choices about what fashion should be.

For anyone eager to explore further, Dana Thomas’s *Fashionopolis: The Secrets Behind the Clothes We Wear* investigates where garments come from and what happens to them afterward. Stephanie Corfee’s *Fashion Design Workshop: Remix* offers illustration exercises and design thinking that includes different body types and adaptive clothing. Online, the Met’s Costume Institute, Google Arts & Culture’s We Wear Culture, and London’s V&A Fashion Collection open up centuries of clothing and design. A museum gallery, vintage shop, tailor’s window, or a conversation with a seamstress can make that history tangible. School art shows and local contests offer a reason to finish a first garment, while the Council of Fashion Designers of America, the Museum at FIT, Runway of Dreams, and 4-H sewing programs provide further ways to learn about the field.

Clothing is sometimes dismissed as shallow, but it is an old and powerful language: people use it to express identity, belonging, belief, and feeling, often before they speak. Designers therefore carry an important responsibility, because their work can help decide who gets to feel beautiful and included. The body was never the thing that needed fixing; it was the point of the design all along. And the care expressed through clothing is not limited to professional designers. It can be found in a grandmother’s hand-sewn hem, a bold color worn on a difficult day, or an outfit chosen to help a nervous friend feel less alone. Whether or not a person ever picks up a needle, paying attention to how clothing makes people feel can itself become a quiet act of kindness.

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