

# RESEARCH AND DESIGN

n. the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources

 n. a drawing produced to show the look and function or workings of a garment before it is made



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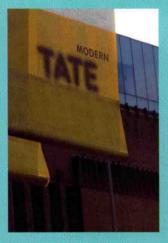
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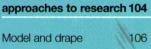


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# RESEARCH AND DESIGN

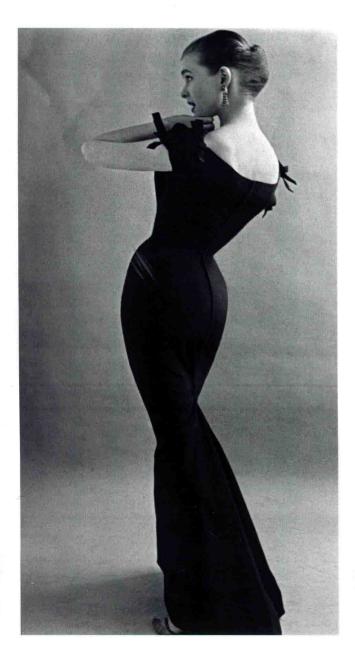
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'Fashion is very important. It is life-enhancing and, like everything that gives pleasure, it is worth doing well.'

Vivienne Westwood

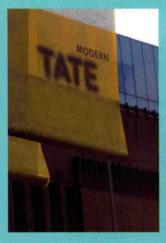


1 Silk evening top and skirt; Christian Dior; 1953. V&A Images/Victoria and Albert Museum.

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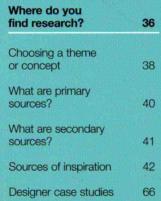
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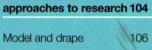


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# Introduction



'Creative research is the secret or trick which underlines all original design.'

Christian Dior haute couture S/S07. Designer John Galliano.

1 fell sum

John Galliano, creative director, Dior

Research is vital to any design process; it is the initial trawl and collection of ideas prior to design. It should be an experimental process, an investigation to support or find out about a particular subject. Research is an essential tool in the creative process and will provide inspiration, information and creative direction, as well as a narrative to a collection. Research is about a journey that can often take weeks or even months to collate and process. It is also a very personal activity, which through its manifestation, provides the viewer with an insight into the thinking, aspirations, interests and creative vision of the designer.

From in-depth and broad-ranging research, the designer can begin to interpret a series of garments or a collection.

Silhouettes, textures, colours, details, print and embellishment will all have their place in the process of design and will all be found in the research created.

BASICS Fashion Design: Research and Design will lead you through the essential stages of research and translation into design ideas. It will discuss elements such as the brief and the constraints it can place on the research and design process. It will explain the importance of identifying your target market and understanding the different levels and genres of fashion before setting out on the creative research. It will then discuss the many avenues for researching and the need to set a theme, concept or narrative to your collection. The book then explains how you translate your research into early design ideas and techniques used in bridging the gap between research and design. Design development is also explained and communicated through a series of structured stages. Finally the book shows and explores a variety of approaches to communicating and rendering your design work.

Research and Design will provide you with the fundamental skills and knowledge to start you on the journey of designing an in-depth, innovative and creative collection. Good luck and enjoy the creative process.

## How to get the most out of this book

This book introduces different aspects of fashion research and design via dedicated chapters for each topic. Each chapter provides numerous examples of work by leading fashion designers, annotated to explain the reasons behind choices made.

Key fashion research and design principles are isolated so that the reader can see how they are applied in practice.

#### Clear navigation

Each chapter has a clear strapline to allow readers to quickly locate areas of interest.

# Quotes

Key points are elaborated on and placed in context through the use of quotes.



# Introductions

Special section introductions outline basic concepts that will be discussed.

#### **Examples**

Projects from contemporary designers bring the principles under discussion alive.

Enabling the reader to break down text and refer quickly to topics of interest.

### Additional information

Box-outs elaborate on subjects discussed in the main text.

### Captions

Provide image details and commentary to guide the reader in the exploration of the visuals displayed.

#### Where do you find research?

Knowing your subject and having an awareness of fashion is an essential part of the research process and magazines are a good place to develop this knowledge.

develop the Involvedge. Magazines are a great source of information and potential inspiration for the disagreer, they can finish, providely our with manages of the latest trends, types and garments from other disagreers in the including, and seporate you should be made and seporate you should consider as a designer, for example, titlestyle and qualitar interests for may affect the market you wish to design for.

Looking at other designent collections in not so that you can copy what they are donly, that of bey you can understanding of what has arready been consisted and the populations will be provided to the provided and open to you. There are so invery in reversitant the reckled that they contained and simply granted to breach of simply granted to because may be obtained and timely granted to be the obtained may be and the obtained may be only the obtained may be on

aware of. These magazines are the with new up-and-coming salent and leature not just on the clothes' designers, but also on the art direction, hair and make-up artists, photographers and stylists.

Building your knowledge of designant, trends and lifestyle habita is not something that will happen overnight and should be something that is done mgularly over time so that it will help you establish yourself within the industry.



































# Chapter titles

Run up the side of every page to provide clear navigation and allow the reader to understand the context of the information on the page.

### **Running footers**

Clear navigation allows the reader to know where they are, where they have come from and where they are going.



'Research is what I'm doing when I don't know what I'm doing.'

Wernher von Braun

Research is about creative investigation, it is about recording information for use now or in the future. But what exactly is it? Designers are constantly looking for new ideas, fashion by its very nature is always changing and reinventing itself, but where does it all start?

In this first chapter we aim to demystify what research is, as well as explore the creative investigation process. It also looks at why you should research in the first place. The chapter discusses what a brief is, the different types of brief and what it is the designer is being asked to do. What do you need to consider as a designer before you start any project or collection? This is a question every designer should ask himself or herself. The chapter then goes on to explain what the purpose of research is and what it should contain in terms of information.

Above all, the process of research should be fun, exciting, informative and most importantly useful.

Example of a research-inspired collaged figure.

1

Julien Macdonald's design illustration for the new British Airways' uniform.
Courtesy of NewsCast.

The brief is usually the start to any creative project and the project is a sustained body of work that is normally time bound. The purpose of a brief is essentially to inspire you and outline the aims and objectives that are required. It will identify any constraints, conditions or problems that need to be solved, as well as providing you with information on what final outcomes or tasks are to be achieved. The brief is there to help you and more importantly to guide the whole research and design process.

British Airways brief, as discussed with Julien Macdonald:

What was the brief British Airways set you as a designer?

I was asked along with many other designers to come up with a set of sketches for uniforms that could be worn by all the different British Airways staff from all over the world. The uniforms had to be functional pieces that could be worn by the cabin crew to the ground staff to the baggage handlers, over 80,000 employees worldwide.

The designs were submitted anonymously to the British Airways board of directors and design team so that the ideas would not be judged on the name of the designer. They were really surprised when they found out that the clean, simple stylish ideas were mine, as they associated my name with glitz and glamour!

What were the constraints you had?

There were many complex constraints as the investment by the company was worth millions of pounds and the last time it was changed was over ten years ago, when Paul Costelloe did the designs.

The clothes had to fit from a size 6 to 22, both men and women, and there was to be no discrimination between race, colour or creed. The garments had to be in the same fabric. whether you were working in a Russian winter or the summer in the Sevchelles. I spent time working alongside the staff to find out about their working lives from leaving their homes to go to work to then arriving in a hotel after a ten-hour flight and having to wash the blouse in the sink to have it fresh for the return flight the next morning!

The garments where given a pilot period where we looked at how they performed under the normal working conditions.

For example, did the fabric wear well? Did the buttons fall off etc.? The final garments were then successfully put into production and can be seen on any current flight with British Airways.



## Types of brief

There are several types of brief. The most common one is found within the academic forum where it is usually set by the tutor and asks you as an individual to respond to it. The aims are what you are expected to learn and the objectives will be the work demonstrated. As the student you will be expected to answer not only the brief's creative requirements, but also the assessment criteria that will be clearly identified. The brief is used as an important tool by the tutor to help teach specific skills and develop and improve your knowledge and understanding.

Another type of brief also found within the academic forum is one for a competition often set by a company or external organisation as a way of promoting products or a brand and in turn, encouraging new talent within the industry. This association with industry will often provide sponsorship, placement awards and travel bursaries for the students taking part.

Commercial and client based are the other types of briefs you will come across as a designer. These will have very specific aims and objectives that will consider some or all of the following: market, season, genres, cost and occasion. The true measure of your creativity as a designer will be to achieve something exciting and innovative while considering very closely what you are being asked to produce and adhering to the constraints of the brief in order to achieve the client's approval.

A good example of a designer working to a specific commercial brief would be Julien Macdonald, who redesigned British Airways' employees' uniform. Here the brief would have had very specific criteria and restrictions on design, use of fabric, cost, function and performance.

Another common type of brief is one that asks you to work within a team, for example, a large high street brand. Here you will be expected to work with others on a project and you will have specific tasks assigned to you that will ultimately work towards presenting a coherent and cohesive collection.

#### Occasion and season:

As a designer it is important to be aware of when you are designing for, as it will have an impact on many of the design factors, such as fabric and colour.

#### Muse or customer:

A brief will sometimes ask you to design for a very specific consumer of a certain age, size and gender. It may also ask you to build a customer profile and consider elements such as background, work, lifestyle and income.

Target market: A brief will often ask you to focus on a specific market sector in the industry, such as high street or middle-market price points. This again requires you to consider market analysis and customer profiling.

#### Material and fabric:

Sometimes in the academic field you will be asked to problem solve a brief that focuses your creativity on the use of a particular type or quality of fabric; for example, jersey.

Costing: Most project briefs, whether they are academic or industry set, will require you to consider the price that something will cost.

#### Practical outcomes:

This is simply what you are expected to produce. The brief may have a specific garment type as its final outcome, for example, a dress, a jacket, or a piece of knitwear.