

Professional Development

YOU MAY KNOW THAT you want a career in the textiles and design industry, but do you know all of your options? Once you narrow down a career choice, do you know about the requirements for college classes, training, and certifications? In this unit, you will learn more about the types of jobs in the textiles and design industry.



Objective:



Identify textiles and design careers.

Key Terms:



apparel worker
buyer
fashion designer
interior designer

pattern maker
personal shopper
tailor
textile chemist

textile designer
textiles
textile technologist
upholsterer

Textiles and Design Careers

The textiles and design industry includes a wide variety of careers. **Textiles** are natural or human-made fibers that are woven together. The fibers often are used to make fabric for clothing, upholstery, curtains, rugs, and more. However, textiles include materials used in roofing, tires, road surfaces, and other products.

CREATIVE JOBS

Several creative jobs probably come to mind when you think of careers in the textiles and design industry.

Fashion Designer

A **fashion designer** is a person who creates sketches and selects materials for clothing and other fashion items. There are different types of designers.

Apparel Designer

An apparel designer is a person who creates forms, structures, and patterns for clothing for men, women, and children.

Footwear Designer

A footwear designer is a person who creates forms, structures, and patterns for shoes and boots.

Accessory Designer

An accessory designer is a person who creates forms, structures, and patterns for purses, hats, belts, jewelry, and eyewear.

Costume Designer

A costume designer is a person who creates forms, structures, and patterns for apparel for theater, television shows, and movies.



FIGURE 1. Fashion designers create sketches and select materials for clothing.

Textile Designer

A **textile designer** is a person who creates prints and designs for fabrics and other textiles.

Interior Designer

An **interior designer** is a person who plans the design and decorates a room with a color scheme, texture, lighting, furniture, and other elements. A designer may focus on homes or on a specific part of the home (e.g., the kitchen). He or she will create a unique design to meet a client's needs. A designer may focus on commercial buildings, such as hotels or hospitals. He or she may create a design that is used for thousands of rooms in dozens of buildings.

PRODUCTION JOBS

Numerous jobs are involved in the production and manufacturing of textiles.

Pattern Maker

A **pattern maker** is a person who uses a designer's sketch to create a paper or computerized layout of the pieces needed to make the item.

Apparel Maker

An **apparel worker** is a person who cuts fabric and sews garments.

Tailor

A **tailor** is a person who sews custom-made clothing items or makes alterations to improve the fit of a clothing item.

Upholsterer

An **upholsterer** is a person who attaches fabric to furniture frames.

Manufacturing Worker

A manufacturing worker is a person who works in industrial settings, usually operating machinery that manufactures textiles, cuts fabric, assembles garments, or knits.

RESEARCH/DEVELOPMENT JOBS

Research and development jobs often focus on the science behind the textiles.

Textile Technologist

A **textile technologist** is a person who develops or improves the production of fibers and textiles.



FURTHER EXPLORATION...

ONLINE CONNECTION: Certifications

A variety of certifications are available for interior designers. They are not required, but they may make designers more appealing to potential clients or help the designers advance in their careers. In addition, some certifications allow designers to participate in professional organizations that offer training and networking opportunities.

Visit the following websites to learn more about the certifications available to interior designers. Choose one example, and create a poster to advertise it. Include information about who is eligible for the certifications, and list the potential benefits of certification.

<http://www.cidinternational.org/>

<http://www.allartschools.com/art-careers/interior-design/interior-design-ncidq-certification>

<http://www.aahid.org/page/certification/>

<http://www.nkba.org/learn/professionals/Certification/CertificationRequirements.aspx>

Textile Chemist

A **textile chemist** is a person who uses chemicals to alter or improve fabrics. He or she may look for ways to dye a product or make it colorfast; make a product antimicrobial; create a product that provides UV protection; or make a product recyclable or biodegradable.

SALES/CUSTOMER SERVICE JOBS

The textiles and design industry also includes sales and customer service jobs.

Buyer

A **buyer** is a person who makes decisions about what products a retail shop will sell.

Personal Shopper

A **personal shopper** or stylist is a person who helps a client select clothing and accessories.



FIGURE 2. A personal shopper or stylist helps people choose clothing and accessories.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Education and training requirements vary greatly for different careers in textiles and design. Most design jobs require a bachelor's degree, but some only require a two-year degree. Students and graduates may receive training and experience through internships and apprenticeships.

In Illinois, an interior designer must pass an exam to become licensed by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation. However, there are a few conditions that you must meet before taking the exam. You must have a combined six years of college education and experience. For example, you may have graduated from an accredited two-year design program and have four years of experience or a four-year degree and two years of experience.

Production Job Requirements

Production jobs generally require only a high school diploma. However, higher education may offer workers opportunities for more skilled jobs. Most production jobs offer on-the-job training. Coursework in sewing, design, and computer-aided drafting may be beneficial.

Research and Development Job Requirements

Research and development jobs often require a bachelor's degree in a scientific field, such as chemistry, along with textiles and design coursework.

Sales and Customer Service Job Requirements

Requirements for sales and customer service-related jobs vary. Buyers for large companies likely have stricter requirements than others. They may be required to have a bachelor's degree in fashion, business, or marketing. Personal shoppers and stylists may not be required to have a degree, but coursework in fashion is beneficial. Buyers and personal shoppers likely will receive on-the-job training for the store's computer system.

LIFELONG LEARNING

- ◆ Textile and design workers should continue to learn and seek out training opportunities to further their careers.
- ◆ Designers continually must learn about the latest trends and technologies in the business. Designers may go to fashion shows or trade shows and read fashion or trade magazines to keep up on the latest trends. They should learn the latest computer programs, especially computer-aided design programs, by taking classes or receiving training at work.
- ◆ Costume designers may need to perform additional research about certain time periods or cultures to make sure costumes appear authentic. For example, a movie set in the early 1900s would need costumes appropriate for that time period, made with fabrics and styles that were common at the time.
- ◆ Workers in production jobs generally receive any training they need for new tasks or equipment on the job. However, workers who desire to move into more skilled jobs should seek out additional learning opportunities at local colleges or adult education centers.
- ◆ Research and development workers must be up-to-date on the latest innovations that affect the textile industry. They may read trade magazines or join professional organizations that provide information and training opportunities for members.
- ◆ Like design workers, buyers and personal shoppers need to know the latest fashion trends. Additional classes or training in communication, computers, and marketing may be beneficial.

Summary:



The textiles and design industry includes a wide variety of careers. Textiles are natural or human-made fibers that are woven together. They include fabrics and materials used in roofing, road surfaces, and many other products. A fashion designer creates sketches and selects materials for clothing and other fashion items, and a textile designer creates prints and designs for fabrics and other textiles. An interior

designer plans the design and decorates a room through the use of a color scheme, texture, lighting, furniture, and other elements.

Pattern makers, apparel works, tailors, and upholsterers are all workers involved in the production and manufacturing of textiles. Manufacturing workers are people who work in industrial settings, usually operating machinery. Research and development jobs often focus on the science behind the textiles. Buyers, personal shoppers, and stylists have jobs related to sales and customer service.

Checking Your Knowledge:



1. List four types of fashion designers.
2. What are three examples of production jobs in the textiles and design industry?
3. What are some ways in which a textile chemist alters or improves a fabric?
4. What is the difference between a buyer and a personal shopper?
5. What are the requirements to become a licensed interior designer in Illinois?

Expanding Your Knowledge:



Research specific ways in which chemists have changed the textiles and design industry. What have they used to change fabrics to make them safer for children? Has the use of chemicals given one company an edge in the competitive textiles field?

Web Links:



Interior Designer Jobs

<http://www.allartschools.com/art-careers/interior-design/interior-design-job>

Textile Design Jobs

http://jobs.lovetoknow.com/Textile_Design_Jobs

Fashion Designers

<http://www.i-train.org/lmi/ventura/g340380.htm>

Interior Design

<http://www.interiordesign.net/>