

9 key steps to succeed as a designer

1. Vision

- What is your vision? Really sit down and think it out, then write it out. How do you see yourself as a designer? What's your day look like? Where do you work? Who do you work with?
- Create a vision board, paste photos of things/people/places that you want throughout your life, and keep where you'll see it often.

2. Get a Mentor

- Studying what other designers are doing. Having a mentor or at least following one that you hugely admire (write out why). What is it about them that you admire? Find a designer that is doing what you see your career as, study them and learn from them.
- Meet designers near you and ask them to mentor you.

3. Portfolio

- You will need to show what your design style is and be prepared when an opportunity happens. Get it as professional as you can. Get a website started. Its so easy to do your own site nowadays, it doesn't have to be grand just get one started. Make monthly goals to update with new designs.

4. Learn to Sew Study Fabrics

- Knowing how garments are put together is essential to being a successful designer. You will be working closely with pattern makers, sample makers, seamstresses and crafts people.
- Fabric – the designers medium. Fabric is everything in a garment. Visit fabric stores often. Look at the bolts, look at the fiber contents, wash instructions, study the drape. Buy ¼ yards of different types, sew on them and learn their characteristics.

5. Volunteer internships

- Keep an eye out for places to volunteer... Fashion shows, community events...Learn new things and meet new people.
- Visit job search sites, look for all the different types of temporary jobs out there. Short term jobs can open your eyes to opportunities and meeting new people.

6. Networking

- Pretty much one of the most important skills you will need. Meeting new people and being able to create relationships from there is how you open up possibilities, Steven Covey wrote a book “Dig your well before you are thirsty”. Meaning – make, cultivate and keep your connections. This is how you find great jobs and get a leg up in any industry. Find training in how to network and never stop even when you have your dream job.

7. Stylize

- Get good at stylizing outfits. Learning proportions on all types of figures. Develop your eye. Do lots of people watching and magazine flipping. Study why an outfit looks great and also why it does not. Learn fit and alteration techniques. Many times an outfit is better with the sleeves shorter, the jacket shortened just a tad or pants tapered in a bit. Study books on proportion, fit and design lines in garments. And how to balance the proportions to create a well balanced silhouette.

8. Create & Recreate

- This goes along with sewing and stylizing. Designers are looked to for their creativity and new ideas. Look for unique trims, fabrics and use them to make something unique for yourself.
- Or recreate a garment – upcycle. How can you make it more unique. Recreating garments is a fun way to test your creativity. And a great way to show off your talents.

9. 10 minutes a day

- Keep your sketch book next to your morning coffee spot. Make a goal to sketch just 10 minutes a day. Practice sketching hemlines, necklines, sleeves... this will make you better and better at sketching.
- Make a goal to sketch one new design everyday, have your inspiration sources nearby and sketch just 10 minutes a day. Even if its not a good design it keeps you creating.