Textile design

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Textile design is the creative and technical process by which thread or [yarn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yarn) fibers are woven together or interlaced to form a flexible, functional, and decorative [cloth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile) or [fabric](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile) which is subsequently printed upon or otherwise adorned.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-1) Textile design is further broken down into three major disciplines, printed textile design, woven textile design, and mixed media textile design, each of which utilize different methods to produce a surface ornamented fabric for variable uses and markets. Textile Design as a practice has evolved to become an industry integral to other disciplines such as [fashion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fashion), [interior design](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interior_design), and [fine arts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fine_art).[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-2)[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-3)



Point paper for *Dove and Rose* woven [double cloth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Double_cloth) by [William Morris](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Morris), 1879.



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Overview

Textile designing is a creative field that includes fashion design, carpet manufacturing and any other cloth-related field.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-Wiley-4) Clothing, carpets, drapes, towels, and rugs are all functional products resulting from textile design.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-Collier,_Bide_and_Tortora-5) Within the fashion industry, textile designers have the ability to inspire collections, trends, and styles.

Textile designers marry a creative vision of what a finished textile will look like with a deep understanding of the technical aspects of [production](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_manufacturing) and the properties of [fiber](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiber), [yarn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yarn), and [dyes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dye).[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-Gale-6)

Textile Design Disciplines

**Printed Textile Design**



Printed textile design: [William Morris](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Morris), [Strawberry Thief](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strawberry_Thief_%28William_Morris%29), 1883.[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-7)

Printed textile designs are produced by the application of various printing [processes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_printing) to fabric or cloth and other media, namely: [resist printing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resist_Printing), [relief printing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Relief_printing), [rotogravure](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rotogravure), [screen printing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Screen_printing), transfer printing, and [digital printing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_printing).[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-:22-8) These processes utilize various [inks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ink) and [dyes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dye) to imprint aesthetic, often repeating [patterns](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pattern), [motifs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motif_%28visual_arts%29), and styles onto the fabric or cloth.[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-:12-9) Printed textile designers are predominantly and inextricably involved with home interior design (designing patterns for [carpets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carpet), [wallpapers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wallpaper), or even [ceramics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ceramic)), the fashion and clothing industries, and the [paper industry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pulp_and_paper_industry) (designing stationary or [gift wrap](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gift_wrapping)).[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-10)

There are numerous established and enduring printed styles and designs that can be broken down into four major categories: floral, geometric, world cultures, and conversational.[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-:22-8) [Floral designs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Floral_design) include flowers, plants, or any botanical theme. Geometric designs feature themes both inorganic and abstract such as [tessellations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tessellation). Designs surrounding world cultures may be traced to a specific geographic, ethnic, or anthropological source. Finally, conversational designs are designs that fit less easily into the other categories: they may be described as presenting "imagery that references popular icons of a particular time period or season, or which is unique and challenges our perceptions in some way."[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-:22-8) Each category contains sundry, more specific individual styles and designs.[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-:22-8)

Different clothes, moreover, require different dyes: for example, [silk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silk), [wool](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wool), or other protein-based fabrics require acidic dyes based whereas [synthetic fabrics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Synthetic_fiber) require specialized [disperse dyes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disperse_dye).[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-:12-9)

The advent of [computer-aided design](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer-aided_design) [software](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Software), such as [Adobe Photoshop](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adobe_Photoshop) or [Illustrator](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adobe_Illustrator), has allowed each discipline of textile design to evolve and innovate new practices and processes, but has most influenced the production of printed textile designs.[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-11) Most prominently, digital tools have made the process of creating repeating patterns or motifs, or repeats, much more effective and simple. Repeats are used to create patterns both visible and invisible to the eye: geometric patterns are intended to depict clear, intentional patterns, whereas floral or organic designs, for instance, are intended to create unbroken repeats that are ideally undetectable. Poorly constructed repeats draw the eye to portions of the textile that expose the pattern and break the illusion of continuity, an issue called "tracking," which is easily remedied in a digital environment.[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-12) These tools, alongside the innovation of digital [inkjet printing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inkjet_printing), have allowed the textile printing process to become faster, more scalable, and sustainable.[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-13)

**Woven Textile Design**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Textile_design&action=edit&section=4" \o "Edit section: Woven Textile Design)]

Woven textile design emanates from the practice of [weaving](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weaving) which produces fabric by interlacing a vertical yarn ([warp](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warp_and_weft)) and a horizontal yarn ([weft](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warp_and_weft)), most often at right angles.[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-14) Woven textile designs are created by various types of [looms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loom) and are now predominantly produced using a mechanized or computerized [jacquard loom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacquard_machine).[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-:0-15)



Woven textile design: A woven [Navajo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Navajo) [saddle blanket](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saddle_blanket) from the [Philbrook Museum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philbrook_Museum_of_Art%22%20%5Co%20%22Philbrook%20Museum%20of%20Art) in [Tulsa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tulsa%2C_Oklahoma), [Oklahoma](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oklahoma).

Designs within the context of weaving are created using various types of yarns, utilizing variance in texture, size, and color to construct a stylized patterned or [monochromatic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monochrome) fabric. There are a large range of yarn types available to the designer, including but not limited to cotton, twill, linen, and synthetic fibers. In order to produce the woven fabric, the designer first delineates and visualizes the sequence of threading which is traditionally drawn out on graph paper known as a point paper.[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-16)[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-17)

The designer also will choose a weave structure which governs the aesthetic design that will be produced. The most common process is a [plain weave](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plain_weave), in which the yarns interlace in an alternating, tight formation producing a strong and flexible multi-use fabric. [Twill](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twill) weaves, which are also common, alternatively utilize diagonal lines created by floating the warp or the weft to the left or the right.[[18]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-18) This process creates a softer fabric favored by designers in the fashion and clothing design industries. Common and recognizable twill styles include patterns like [houndstooth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Houndstooth%22%20%5Co%20%22Houndstooth) or [herringbone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herringbone_%28cloth%29).[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-:0-15)

Beyond weave structure, color is another dominant aspect governing woven textile design. Typically, designers choose two or more contrasting colors that will be woven into patterns based on the designer's chosen threading sequence. Color is also dependent on the size of the yarn: fine yarns will produce a fabric that may change colors when it receives light from different angles whereas larger yarns will generally produce a more monochromatic surface.[[19]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-19)

**Mixed Media Textile Design**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Textile_design&action=edit&section=5)]



Mixed media textile design: An embroidered [Kazakh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kazakhs), chain stitched rug.

Mixed media textiles designs are produced utilizing [embroidery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Embroidery) or other various fabric manipulation processes such as [pleating](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pleat), [appliqué](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appliqu%C3%A9), [quilting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quilting), and [laser cutting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laser_cutting).[[20]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-20)

Embroidery is traditionally performed by hand, applying myriad stitches of thread to construct designs and patterns on the textile surface. Similar to printed textile design, embroidery affords the designer a vast amount of artistic and aesthetic control. Typical stitches include but are not limited to the [cross stitch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cross-stitch), the [chain stitch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chain_stitch), and [couching](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Couching). Although industrial and mechanized embroidery has become the standard, hand stitching still remains a fixture for fine arts textiles.[[21]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-21)

Quilting, traditionally used to enhance the insulation and warmth of a textile, also provides the designer the opportunity to apply aesthetic properties. Most commonly [quilts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quilt) feature geometric and [collage](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collage) designs formed from a various textiles of different textures and colors. Quilting also frequently employs the use of recycled scrap or heirloom fabrics.[[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-22) Quilts are also often used as medium for an artist to depict a personal or communal narrative: for example, the [Hmong people](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hmong_people) have a tradition of creating [story quilts](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Story_quilts&action=edit&redlink=1) or cloths illustrating their experiences with immigration to the United States from Eastern and Southeastern Asia.[[23]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile_design#cite_note-23)