





THE DESIGNER DECADES

1980 ONWARD

THE DESIGNER DECADES

In the modern age, fashion designers have become celebrities and runway shows are major events. Late in the 20th century creativity reached new heights, and designers began to use the runway show as theater, as in Alexander McQueen's Spring/Summer 1999 collection, where machines spray painted the models' dresses in front of the audience. The London Designer Collections were established in the 1980s, and fashion journalists and buyers traveled to New York, London, Milan, and Paris every spring and fall to view the collection for the following season. The power of the brand, from Armani to Burberry, became international—designers' names sold products. Calvin Klein's fragrances, for example, sold an aspirational lifestyle, and his underwear line in the 1990s was so famous that the garment became known simply by the designer's name.

Street style

For the first time, fashions emerged from the street not the design studio. Toward the end of the 20th century the dress of subculture groups from goths to surfers became increasingly mainstream. The fresh and authentic feel to street style seized the imagination of designers, and the styles themselves became more complex as designers adapted and reworked them. Parisian designers were particularly engaged with street style: Jean-Paul Gaultier famously said he was inspired by London club wear in the 1980s, and Karl Lagerfeld showed stretch denim and baseball caps combined with classic Chanel jackets in the early 1990s. A particularly popular street style during the 1990s was the phenomenon that came to be known as "bling." Popularized by hip-hop culture, wearing expensive-looking clothing and in particular lots of light-reflecting jewelry became a dominant fashion trend through the 1990s and 2000s.

Globalization

Communication became truly global with the invention of the internet and social media, and a sense of worldwide consciousness developed as a result. Fashion, too, became more international, and production moved away from Europe and America to China and Asia. The cycle of increased production and consumption from the 1990s onward led to the success of mainstream, mass-market stores such as Zara and Victoria's Secret. Supermarkets and budget clothes retailers such as Walmart in the US and Primark in the UK also experienced booms in business following the economic crisis of the late 2000s. In the late 1990s international fashion weeks began to crop up all over the globe. Though traditional fashion hubs such as Paris remained key, Mexico, New Zealand, and Pakistan host their own style events.



1980–81

1981

Lady Diana Spencer marries Prince Charles. She wears an ivory silk wedding dress designed by David and Elizabeth Emanuel. It sets the fashion for wedding dresses for at least the next 10 years.

► Diana's wedding dress had puffed sleeves and 25-ft (7.5-m) train

1981

Music Television (MTV) is born and brings pop-star styles to a global audience.

▲ MTV brought star style to popular consciousness

1981

The first episode of the US TV series *Dynasty* airs and helps to popularize power dressing and shoulder pads.

▼ The cast of *Dynasty* set 1980s fashion trends

1982–84



1985–88

1985

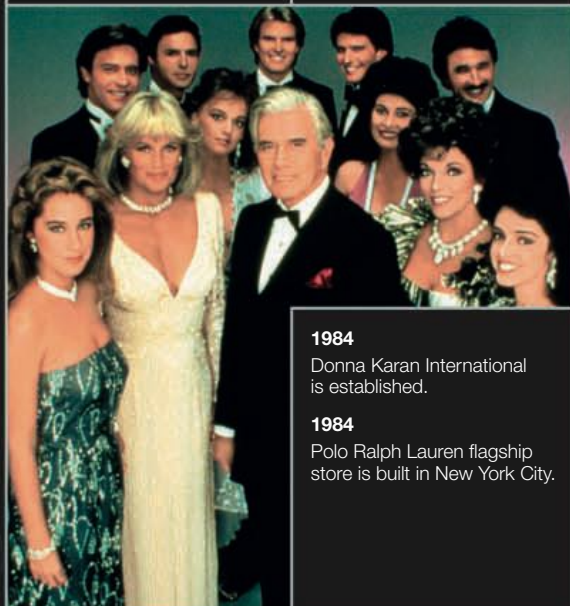
With her jangling jewelry, lace, black mesh vest, and hair bows, Madonna in *Desperately Seeking Susan* becomes a style icon for many women throughout the world.

1985

Dolce and Gabbana's first women's collection is presented in Milan.



► Anna Wintour



1984

Donna Karan International is established.

1984

Polo Ralph Lauren flagship store is built in New York City.

1988

Anna Wintour becomes editor-in-chief at *American Vogue*.

“

Power dressing now is designed to let the woman inside us come through.

DONNA KARAN, 2006

”

| 1989–90 | 1991–92 | 1993–96 | 1997–2000 | 2001–07 | 2008▷ |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|
| <p>1989 Prada launches its women's ready-to-wear collection, bringing its designs to a wider audience.</p> | <p>1991 Vivienne Westwood wins the British Fashion Award for Designer of the Year.</p> <p>► Vivienne Westwood with her muse, model Sara Stockbridge</p> |  |  | <p>2003 The first season of reality contest <i>America's Next Top Model</i> premieres on US television.</p> | <p>2008 First Lady Michelle Obama wears a dress by Jason Wu at the inaugural ball for President Barack Obama.</p> <p>► Jason Wu's white ball gown</p>  |
|  | <p>1991 Rifat Ozbek's all-white <i>New Age</i> collection is launched. It is viewed as a backlash against the 1980s and a spiritual new dawn for fashion at the beginning of a new decade.</p> | <p>1994 Tom Ford becomes creative director of Gucci.</p> | <p>1997 The Fendi Baguette Bag emerges. It is the first of the designer "it bags" and becomes an overnight sensation.</p> | <p>2004 The group Designers Against Aids is launched to promote awareness of the disease. Designer Marc Jacobs and clothes store H&M go on to collaborate with the charity.</p> <p>◀ The red ribbon symbolizes AIDS solidarity</p> | <p>2010 Kate Middleton and Prince William announce their engagement. She wears an Issa London sapphire dress, which sells out within minutes. The following year she marries Prince William in a bridal dress designed by Sarah Burton for Alexander McQueen.</p> |
| <p>▲ Madonna's conical "bullet bra" is an enduring fashion icon</p> <p>1990 Madonna creates a fashion sensation when she wears the notorious Jean Paul Gaultier corset during her <i>Blonde Ambition</i> World Tour.</p> | <p>1992 Marc Jacobs wins the Council of Fashion Designers of America's award for Women's Designer of the Year. He is later dismissed from Perry Ellis for designing a "grunge" collection.</p> | <p>1995 <i>Friends</i> actress Jennifer Aniston debuts "the Rachel haircut." It is copied around the globe.</p> <p>1996–2011 John Galliano is head designer at the House of Dior.</p> <p>▼ John Galliano celebrates 50 years of Dior fashion</p> | <p>1997 Italian fashion designer Gianni Versace is murdered outside his Miami Beach home; his sister Donatella Versace becomes head of design at Versace.</p> |  | <p>2011 A "Culture Chanel" exhibition showcasing the colorful life of Coco Chanel opens in Shanghai, China.</p> <p>◀ Visitors flock to the Chanel exhibition in China</p> |
| <p>1990 Vera Wang opens her own design salon in New York, featuring her trademark bridal gowns.</p> <p>1990 Fashion models become increasingly successful and recognizable; the age of the supermodel begins.</p> |  |  |  |  | |

1985–2010

FITNESS IN FASHION

The fitness boom of the 1980s was the catalyst for the crossover of sportswear into fashion. As increasing numbers of women donned gym shorts, leotards, and leggings to attend aerobics classes or workout, the gym became a social scene, and exercise garb became stylish. At the same time, designers were experimenting with fabrics normally used for activewear. In 1980 American designer Norma Kamali created a collection entirely in gray fleece jersey; in 1984 Donna Karan, also American, popularized the stretch bodysuit; and Tunisian-born Azzedine Alaïa designed Lycra dresses—a fashion revolution. Women's bodies were now shaping the clothes, rather than clothes shaping the body. Beyond the body-conscious trend, other sportswear styles have infiltrated fashion over the past few decades. The celebrity status of athletes, such as basketball players, coupled with a trend toward casual dress, has made athletic gear, especially footwear such as sneakers, desirable and prestigious.

Jane Fonda's workout Jane Fonda was one of the personalities credited with spreading the aerobics craze and changing the idea of exercise clothes. She released a bestselling book, video, and line of leotards and accessories (such as leg warmers) that became part of mainstream fashion.

Two-tone leg warmers

1985

Bright neon leotard

Decorative belt

Saddle bag worn at waist

No buttons on tailored jacket make it casual

Cutouts and trim for aerodynamic look

Worn hip-hop style with waist pulled down

2004

Pointed-toe stilettos add sharp, dressy edge

Coat in style of horse rug

Piping gives crisp edge

Riding boots and bare legs for modern twist

2001

Shoulder tattoo

Crop tops make look sexy

1995

Tracksuit bottoms popularized by hip-hop culture

Track stars Pop stars adapted designer sportswear and took it to a wider audience. British group All Saints wore tracksuit bottoms and sneakers as a kind of uniform in the mid-1990s, and girls around the nation copied their style.

Equestrian chic Riding clothes are a recurring source of inspiration. American designer Michael Kors' Fall/Winter 2001 collection included jodhpur-style pants and quilted field skirts, creating a new way of dressing based on active sportswear.

Deluxe sportswear Paired with a tailored jacket and high heels, a swimsuit and gym shorts become idiosyncratically luxurious. This look, by New York-based Proenza Schouler, turns sportswear into high fashion.



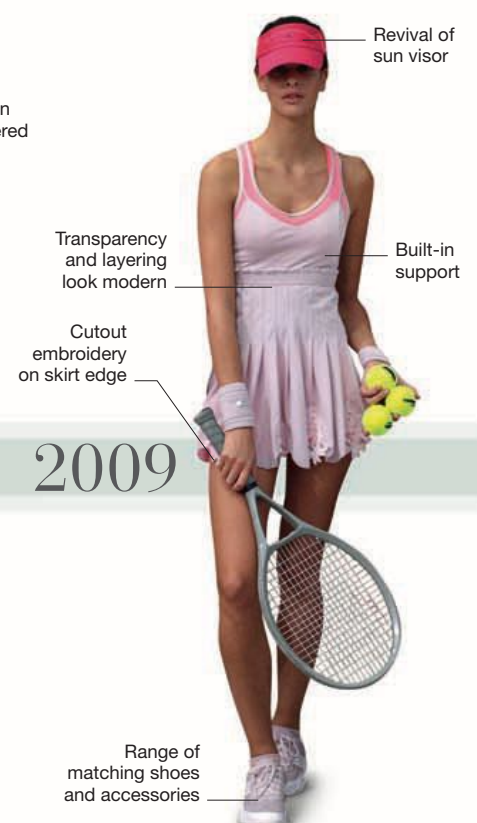
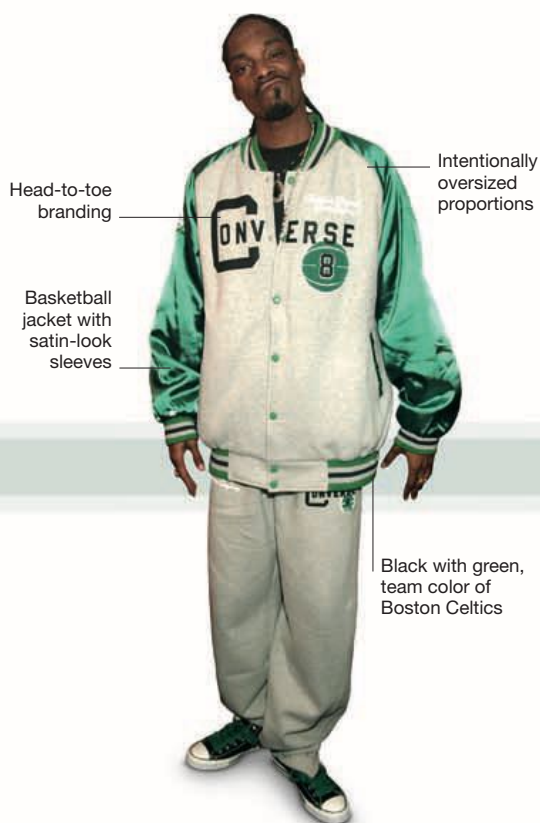
1994

Antifashion A rap star in the late 1980s and early 90s, Will Smith (right) reflected the antifashion mood of the times in his clothing. Oversized casual wear, stonewashed jeans, and pristine sneakers indicated street credibility, in contrast with the central figure above.

FLASHDANCE



When Jennifer Beals leapt across cinema screens in the 1983 movie *Flashdance* as steelworker-cum-dancer Alex Owens, she sparked a passion for dance-wear-inspired fashions. Slouchy, off-the-shoulder gym sweats, and ripped T-shirts are still referred to as “the *Flashdance* look.”



2009

Basketball stars Converse basketball sneakers were first manufactured around 1908, and helped popularize the sport. From the 1980s Converse sneakers became a fashion item, worn by hip-hop and rap stars, including Snoop Dogg who used them as his trademark style.

Juicy tracksuit Juicy Couture’s hooded tracksuit launched in 2001 made casual clothes sexy. By 2003 it had become ubiquitous. Sales soared when Madonna was photographed wearing a customized version.

Beauty and function Stella McCartney creates the ultimate sports-fashion fusion with her line for Adidas. She uses high-quality stretch materials for peak performance, but adds her own desirable details.

DESIGNER

VIVIENNE WESTWOOD



△ FASHION REVOLUTION

Rebel fashion visionary Vivienne Westwood wears a signature plaid bondage suit in 1977. Working alongside Malcolm McLaren, her look became the uniform of the punk movement.

GLAMOROUS ANARCHY ▷

Westwood's Spring/Summer 2012 collection, inspired by China, mixed in corsets, lace, brocade, and ticking-stripe bedspread fabrics, and dramatic make-up to glorious effect.

One of the most admired British fashion designers, Vivienne Westwood has played a key role on the British and international fashion stage for over three decades. Westwood began designing in 1971 when she opened her first store, Let It Rock, on the King's Road, London, with partner Malcolm McLaren (1946–2010). She looked to the past for inspiration and sold teddy boy clothes reflecting delinquent youth culture, moving on to biker-inspired gear with black leather and zippers. Rebranding their store Sex (1975), they advertised their ambition to bring sexual experimentation and fetish to London streets. The store soon became synonymous with punk, heavily promoted by McLaren's new band, the Sex Pistols. The look was aggressive and anarchistic. Sweaters had holes in them, and safety pins pierced cheeks and lips. T-shirts were slashed, and emblazoned with provocative images, studs, and slogans. The bondage look became integral to the punk genre, using leather and rubber. In particular, pants were adorned with bondage straps and chains.

The romantic look

As punk fashion became absorbed into the mainstream, Westwood explored the essence of Englishness and sexual politics. Drawing again on historical costumes, she devised a new range of clothes that formed the basis of her first runway collection (1981).

The *Pirate* range was adopted by musicians labeled the New Romantics, who embraced the baggy pants, frills, billowing shirts, and lavish colors that were inspired by 18th-century men's clothing. The *Savage* collection (1982) gravitated toward a tribal look, with rough, distressed fabrics and exposed seams, while *Buffalo Girls* (also known as *Nostalgia of Mud*) garments

of 1982–83 were made from combinations of twisted, oversized asymmetrical cuts of layered material, inspired by Third World cultures.

Body-shaping design

The corset emerged as a key element, along with other body-shaping pieces such as the crinoline, bustle, and towering shoe. While in Italy in the mid-80s Westwood developed the Mini-Crini, featuring shortened 19th-century-style crinolines teamed with tailored jackets—the antithesis of 1980s masculine power dressing. She later combined the style with traditional British fabrics such as Harris Tweed and Scottish tartans. Her *Anglomaniya* collection (1993–94) ran with the theme with mini kilts, gowns, newly created tartans, and tweeds. Westwood said, “I am never more happy than when I parody the British in the context of a classical perspective.” Designs constricted posture and movement and emphasized the hips. Underwear became outerwear, with bras worn over dresses.

Westwood's *Café Society* collection (1994) was a new take on the hourglass silhouette. Collaborating with her partner Andreas Kronthaler, bustles were made from cushions and cages, voluminous dresses had long trains, and busts were padded. Famously, platform shoes were extremely high. She later became inspired by the costumes in paintings by French artist Jean-Antoine Watteau (1684–1721), creating sumptuous, strapless gowns made of silk taffeta.

By the end of the 1990s Westwood was firmly established as one of the most important designers in the world. She launched a fragrance line and opened new labels. Despite being made a Dame of the British Empire in 2006, her clothes are still subversive. Rooted in the classics, Westwood remains unflinchingly cutting edge.



TIME LINE

1971 Westwood and partner, Malcolm McLaren, open their London store Let It Rock

1976 The Sex Pistols play their first gig wearing Westwood designs

1981 Her first runway show, *Pirate*, borrows heavily from history and inspires the look of the New Romantics

1982–83 *Buffalo* and *Punkature* are shown in Paris to critical acclaim. Her innovative designs are widely copied

1989–91 Appointed Professor of Fashion at Vienna Academy of Applied Arts. Shows first menswear collection in Florence



1993 Designs her own tartan and tweed for *Anglomaniya* collection. Includes staggeringly high platform shoes

1994 The British Fashion Council names Westwood designer of the year as she launches her new Red Label

1996 Vivienne Westwood Man is launched, and she opens stores in London, New York, Tokyo, and Milan



2011 The Spring/Summer menswear collection sets the trend for a relaxed informal style with plaid trousers



1980–1989

MUST-HAVE LABELS

After the antifashion 1970s, when casual and street clothes gained prominence, it seemed inevitable that the role of the designer would stage a revival. During the 1980s not only was interest focused increasingly on high fashion, but also on the designer as a personality. The names of some designers became synonymous with their iconic pieces: Italian Gianni Versace for his perfectly fitting cocktail dresses in metallic colors; Frenchmen Christian Lacroix for his puffball skirt and rose prints, and Jean Paul Gaultier for his cone bra; and the German Karl Lagerfeld for the classic Chanel suit updated in jewel colors with a flamboyant dash. Some of the influential 1980s designers continue to the present day.



1982

1983

History After the furor of punk designs Vivienne Westwood produced a number of inventive collections in the early 1980s that established her as a mainstream force. This piece is part of her *Savage* collection.

New look French designer Thierry Mugler created a new way of dressing for women in the 1980s, using a strict cut and precision lines to enhance, and contrast with, natural body curves. This nautical look is from Spring/Summer 1983.



1985



1987



Evening fantasy In the “greedy” 1980s most women could not afford luxury brands, but there were many mid-priced designers creating stylish clothes. Vera Mont was one such British label, which focused on party dresses and bridal wear.

Body-conscious engineering Tunisian-born Azzedine Alaïa was one of the most influential designers of the 1980s. Women loved his formfitting clothes because they were a kind of internal corset to hold and flatter the wearer.

Extravagant couture Despite being the youngest couturier in 1986, Lacroix’s look drew on old-world luxury. His designs brimmed with historical references, and were executed with gorgeous fabrics and a sense of coquettish charm.



Scarlet cashmere cloak evokes the 1920s

Reminiscent of Paul Poiret's style

Wrapped torso

Skirt is draped with side pouch

1988

Seducing with luxury From his graduation show of 1984, British designer John Galiano impressed fashion editors and buyers with his romantic yet daring vision and refined tailoring skills.



Haute couture attention to detail

Padded shoulders

Aluminium mesh drapes like silk

Asymmetrical hemline and trailing silk bow

Black silk bindings

The glamour of Versace One of Versace's most talked about innovations was his dresses of aluminium mesh, which he fashioned into figure-hugging forms as if from silk.



Cultural mashup with various ethnic textures

T-shirt under corset dress breaks rules

Emphasis on breasts

Color mix challenges notion of good taste

Trademark silhouette with nipped-in waist

1989

Antibourgeois Inspired by his Parisian roots and his interest in crossing boundaries between the genders, Gaultier created clothes that challenged preconceptions about how people dress, and about their sex, age, and ethnicity.

PRINCESS DIANA

As a member of the royal family Diana, Princess of Wales, used the clothes that she wore to project an image and to promote British fashion. She turned to David and Elizabeth Emanuel for her wedding dress in 1981, followed by Belville Sassoon the same year for a romantic, off-the-shoulder gown, one of 70 outfits made for the princess by David Sassoon. As she became more confident, she went to Bruce Oldfield for a vivid blue, one-shouldered dress to wear to a fashion show in 1982. Perhaps her closest designer relationship was with Catherine Walker, who created more than 1,000 pieces for the princess.



Sash emphasizes slim waist and sets off full skirt

Belville Sassoon's 1981 fairytale gown



Bold Catherine Walker print dress, 1988



Bruce Oldfield gown, 1985

“

I think the way people dress today is a form of artistic expression...Take Jean Paul Gaultier. What he does is really art.

ANDY WARHOL, 1984

”



DESIGNER

JEAN PAUL GAULTIER

Dubbed the *enfant terrible* of fashion, French designer Jean Paul Gaultier catapulted onto the scene of the late 1970s, upending the status quo with his unconventional, and often humorous, avant-garde creations. Gaultier had no formal training as a designer. He started his career in 1970 as an assistant at Pierre Cardin, and then, in 1976, he scraped together funds to set up a new label for women.

His first collection included a studded leather jacket paired with a tutu. Gaultier derived inspiration from movies, music, and street culture, showing a deep appreciation of multiculturalism. He loved London, attracted by the look of punk, and iconic figures such as James Bond. His first thematic collection (1979), full of miniskirts and leather pants, brought him international attention. Gaultier went on to turn the classic idea of Parisian chic on its head. He introduced elements that became Gaultier staples: the navy-and-white striped Breton fisherman's sweater and the reconstructed trench coat.

Gender bender

In 1983 Gaultier launched the *Dadaïste* collection, establishing what would become a signature outfit: the corset. Reworking an object of female suppression, he turned it into a symbol of feminine power. (The pop star Madonna later wore Gaultier's most famous creation, a beige corset, for her 1990 *Blond Ambition* World Tour.) Gaultier jumped into menswear in 1984. Men had been reportedly buying Gaultier women's jackets because of the fabrics he used and the clever cut. Seizing the moment, Gaultier produced a sensational

runway show where men wore see-through skirts and women smoked pipes. Gaultier continued to play with the idea of men in skirts through the 1980s and 90s, offering a variety of styles, including kilts, sarongs, tunics, and maxi skirts. He became famous for using unconventional models such as older men, full-figured women, and heavily tattooed models, and played with gender stereotypes. A master tailor, he used details such as metal-tipped collars and extended shoulder lines to create a flattering shape, demonstrating a supreme appreciation of cut, form, and beautiful fabrics.

Further inspiration

Gaultier's interest in pulling together different cultures continued. His fall collection of 1993, inspired by the traditional apparel of male Hasidic Jews, was typically controversial. His profile was further raised, especially in America, when he turned his hand to costume design, creating clothes for such movies as Luc Besson's *The Fifth Element*, Peter Greenaway's *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover*, and Pedro Almodavar's *Kikaa*.

Brand name

In 1997, disappointed not to be chosen as the new head designer at the House of Dior, Gaultier launched his first couture collection to critical acclaim. From a strapless denim ball gown to a feather and seashell dress, he has created clothes that mix outrageous features with high-quality tailoring. The Jean Paul Gaultier brand now includes jeans, eyewear, accessories, jewelry, ties, perfume, and shoes. Gaultier may have been fashion's bad boy, but he has become one of the most respected designers in the world.

**△ SHARP TAILORING**

Gaultier has become world famous for his exemplary couture skills. Here, he wears two of his signature pieces: a beautifully tailored tuxedo jacket worn over a classic Breton striped top.

◁ GREEK CHIC

Inspired by other cultures, Gaultier based his 2006 Spring/Summer couture collection on ancient Greek mythology, dressing some of his models as goddesses, with wide puffed trousers, surprising cutouts, and soft pleats.



TIME LINE

1952 Born Arcueil, France

1980 The *James Bond* collection makes a strong aesthetic statement with leather, miniskirts, and beautifully tailored silhouettes

1976 Launches first women's label at the *Palais de la Decouverte* in Paris and earns the title *enfant terrible*

1985 Introduces skirts for men in his *And God Created Man* collection

◁ 1990 Madonna's *Blond Ambition* World Tour grabs international headlines with Gaultier's conical bra and corset

1993 Launches *Chic Rabbis*, inspired by Jewish Orthodox apparel

1994 ▷ Spring/Summer show features tribal-style models and clothing

1997 Launches women's haute couture, Gaultier Paris. Designs the costumes for Luc Besson's *The Fifth Element*

2000 Receives prestigious International Award from the Council of Fashion Designers of America

2003–10 Creative director for Hermès

2012 Member of the jury at the Film Festival in Cannes

○ 1950

○ 1970

○ 1980

○ 1990

○ 2000

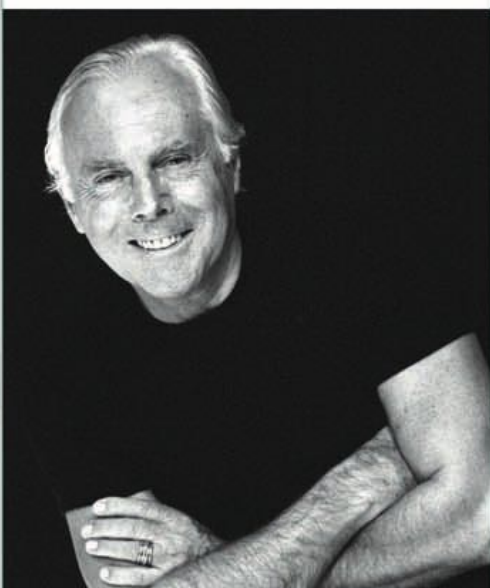


1980–2012

A POWERFUL MESSAGE

The idea of using clothes to convey status is as old as civilization, but fashion historians point to the 1980s as the pinnacle of power dressing. As more women entered traditionally male-oriented work environments, they found it advantageous to dress as though they were in command, and sure of their sexuality. This meant jackets with heavily padded shoulders, vibrant colors, big hairdos, bold accessories, and shoes with pointed toes and spiked heels. Throughout the decade TV series such as *Dallas* and *Dynasty* influenced women's wardrobes. These shows projected images of rich, confident women wearing jewel-toned suits with sharp shoulder lines, extravagant dresses, and larger-than-life jewelry. From the 1990s onward designers such as Calvin Klein and Giorgio Armani developed a low-key, less "costumey" style for working women. Neutral tones, expensive fabrics, and minimal lines sent a subtler message about competence and capability.

GIORGIO ARMANI



Italian designer Giorgio Armani's luxurious, softly tailored clothes in neutral tones have been in vogue for more than 30 years. Since establishing his own label in 1976, he has become renowned for making business attire for both sexes more youthful and relaxed, yet still giving the wearer a look of authority and glamour. His preference for simplicity has significantly influenced contemporary fashion.

Long-line jacket

1990

Wide-legged, tailored pants



Soft felt beret

Crossover style One of the most significant trends for working women was Giorgio Armani's soft, elegant tailoring. As in this 1990 outfit, he feminized men's styles, made them in luxurious fabrics in neutral colors, and fashioned a long, lean silhouette.

Natural shoulder line does not distract eye

Neckline emphasizes décolletage

1980

Unusual cut and color elevate basic black dress

Bolero-style jacket



Color and contour An original outfit from the 1980s shows how contrasting color and form can shape the body to eye-catching effect. This black, body-conscious dress with the meticulously shaped, mustard-yellow jacket creates an hourglass silhouette.

No shirt underneath jacket

Lightweight silk adds luster

Shaped double-breasted jacket

2004

See-through kick panels in skirt reveal most of legs

Strappy high heels



Sexy suiting American designer Donna Karan built her brand with clothes intended to make a woman feel strong, sensual, and comfortable. Here she puts a sexy spin on the traditional, gray flannel suit, with revealing, transparent panels in the skirt.



Corporate charm Dominican-born Oscar de la Renta brought romantic outfits to the office in the 1980s. The model wears a gray flannel skirt, black velvet jacket, and white silk and lace blouse.



1983

Bold scale Oversized garments were the first part of the 1980s look. Subverting the dress of Puritans—known for their work ethic—French designer Claude Montana created impact in 1983 with massive swagger, rather than showing off the body.



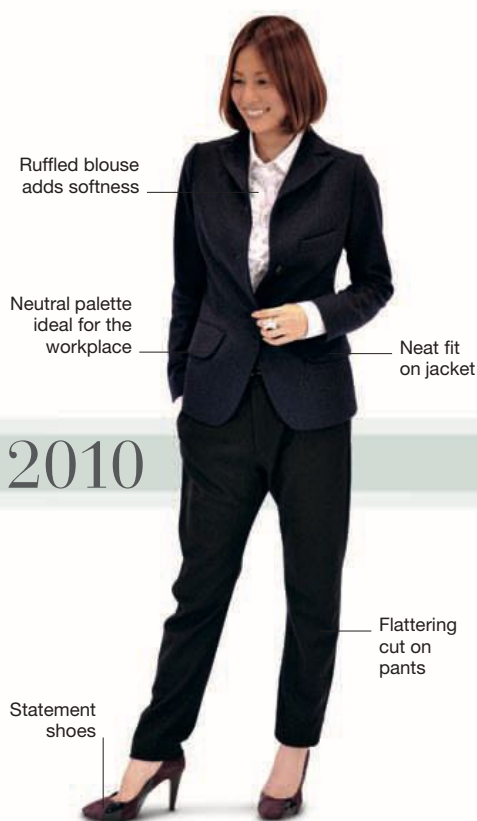
2012

Commanding attention The Duchess of Cambridge's outfit is a perfect example of modern tailoring, designed to draw attention to her slim figure and height and to emphasize both her authority and glamour.



2008

Pantsuit power In the world of male-dominated politics, Hillary Clinton has opted to wear a pantsuit with masculine tailoring but one important difference: color. Her outfits come in bold, bright, head-to-toe colors that stand out on TV.



2010

Career mode In the 1990s German designer Jil Sander used expensive fabrics and flattering tailoring for women who wanted to look professional and feel confident. Here Japanese actress Tyoko Yonekura promotes the sellout Jil Sander-Uniqlo collaboration.

WOOL MIX TWO-PIECE

POWER
SUIT

The “executive look,” which first found expression in the 1970s as part of the working woman’s wardrobe, matured by the mid-1980s into “power dressing.” This outfit, by French designer Thierry Mugler, combines a sharply accentuated, shoulder-padded jacket with a feminizing short skirt. The single-breasted jacket, in orange worsted wool and polyester mix, is fitted at the waist and rounded on the hips. The pencil skirt is knee length, straight, and made of black wool. The increasingly high profile of women in the workplace was reflected in their wardrobes. Suits were tailored, but used softer dressmaking padding to structure the shoulders than in traditional men’s suits. Accessorized with bold costume jewelry and stiletto heels, the look spoke of confidence and power.



SIDE VIEW

Straight line
across the
shouldersClose-fitting
skirt ends above
the knee**BOLD AND BRIGHT**

Thierry Mugler tailors his suit to create a stylized feminine archetype: square shoulders, cinched waist, and full hips. Typically crafted in strong colors, this ensemble appeared thoroughly modern in its day. The short, buttock-hugging skirt invited attention but defied anyone to touch.

High, stand-up collar

Shoulder pad
holds shape

Sleeves
taper to a
point with
a vent

IN DETAIL



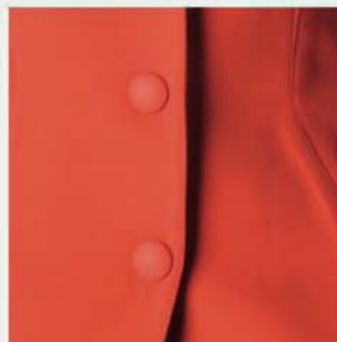
◁ HIGH COLLAR

A stand-up collar runs seamlessly into a neckline that closes high above the breast before continuing down in a long, crisp sweep to the top press-stud. This suggestion of femininity is partly offset by the masculine look of the padded shoulders.



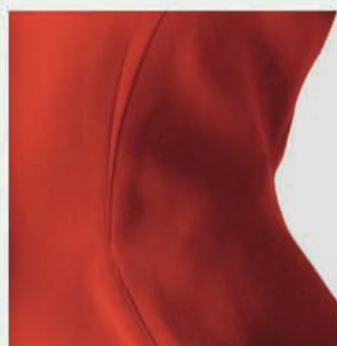
◁ RAGLAN SLEEVES

The jacket has strong lines that are softened with raglan sleeves. To achieve the right shape, an oval shoulder pad runs along the shoulder and into each sleeve.



◁ FASTENINGS

The jacket closes via three fabric-covered snaps that run down the center front; below the closures the jacket flares into a soft V-shape.



◁ SIDE PANELS

Beautifully curved side panels accentuate the cinched-in waist at front and back. The shape is overtly female, implying that the wearer is conscious of her body.



◁ POCKETS

Taking his inspiration from the hourglass silhouettes and corsets of the 19th century, Mugler added two welt pockets just below the waist, styling them to curve with the natural shape of the hips. Topstitching lends sophisticated decorative detail.

1973 ONWARD

JAPANESE STYLE

Although Japanese designers Hanae Mori and Kenzo Takada were showing in Paris in the 1970s, it was Issey Miyake who brought the avant-garde movement to the fashion capital in 1973 with his radical approach to dress, a melding of art and science. Kansai Yamamoto made his Paris debut in 1975 with designs inspired by kimonos and kabuki costumes. In 1981 Rei Kawakubo and Yohji Yamamoto shocked fashion editors and buyers with oversized proportions, disregard for gender, and predominant use of black. Yamamoto was interested in purity of form and the interaction between body and fabric, while Kawakubo's focus for her Comme des Garçons label was on deconstruction, breaking down clothes and putting them together in unexpected ways. Kawakubo's protégé Junya Watanabe has forged his own look using techno materials and inventive construction.

ISSEY MIYAKE



One of the foremost textile innovators in fashion history, Issey Miyake established the Miyake Design Studio in Tokyo in 1970 to produce experimental garments. "I try not to fear radical things," he has said, and this is evident in the way he has pushed the boundaries of what clothes can be. Although his designs have sometimes appeared as sculptural objects, most of his retail range is practical. His *Pleats Please* line, for example, is a series of pleated tubes and flat shapes that come to life on the wearer and can be worn in numerous ways.

1973

Concentric circles
mimic samurai
archer's target

Cut as a full
circle of fabric

Wide-legged pants
balance oversized
proportions above

Hat is
also scarf

Knit dress
falls over
body loosely

Shoes based
on lacquered
Japanese geta
(sandals)

Sculptural spectacle Kansai Yamamoto is considered the father of contemporary Japanese fashion. He interpreted traditional arts and dress in striking ways to create modern clothes, as seen in this outfit inspired by a samurai fire warden cape.

1985

Cape cardigan
cut on circle
can be layered

Tonal hose and
unisex boots

Wearable art Although his clothes use fabrics and cuts that have resulted from sophisticated processes and experimental techniques, Miyake seeks to make his designs easy to wear. This 1985 ensemble based on simple, loose shapes is an example.

1989

Pockets at
side

Dress flares
out from
yoke

Angular
asymmetric band

Alternative vision Dubbed the poet of black, Yohji Yamamoto uses the occasional bright detail or piece for impact. The uneven band of orange in this dress creates visual dynamism.





1979

Seamless style Gnyuki Torimaru established himself in London under the name Yuki during the 1970s, and became known for his draped jersey dresses. His designs were cut on a full circle with no seams, and made in one size to fit all body shapes.



1982

Flawed beauty For her Fall/Winter 1982 collection for Comme des Garçons, Kawakubo presented this black knitwear that looked moth-eaten—her idea of modern lace. All black was typical of Kawakubo's 1980s designs.



1984

Deconstructed work wear By restricting the color palette in her early collections to black and neutrals, Kawakubo focused the eye on construction and shape. This 1984 design has an oversized, unstructured jacket with distorted lapels.



2001

Pleated polyester Inspired by the pleated silks of Mario Fortuny from the 1920s, Miyake experimented with synthetic fabrics to create a new pleated polyester fabric in 1988. It was not meant to be cut into Western-style patterns but into free-form shapes.



2006

Dramatic asymmetry Kawakubo here draws on Victorian and modern street-urchin style but deconstructs and reinvents it. Like other Japanese avant-garde designers, her work is beyond fashion, in that it does not follow current trends or themes.



2008

Culture clash Kawakubo's freewheeling creative approach is clear in this 2008 outfit, which is a mash up of clown costume, circus girl frills, tribal prints, and men's tailoring.

“

I just decided to make
a company built around
creation, and with creation
as my sword, I could fight
the battles I wanted to fight.

REI KAWAKUBO, 2009

”



DESIGNER COMME DES GARÇONS

Spanning four decades, the label Comme des Garçons is unique, set apart from any other within the fashion industry. Created by Japanese designer Rei Kawakubo, the company was established in 1973 and has been attracting interest and controversy ever since.

Kawakubo began her career in advertising in the 1960s, and was a self-taught designer. After launching Comme des Garçons, she opened her first boutique, solely for women, in 1975. The late 1970s and early 1980s saw an expansion into menswear; in 1978 a men's line, Comme des Garçons Homme, was added to the label.

The "poverty" look

After moving to Paris in 1980, Kawakubo showed her designs there the following year, to howls of outrage. All the ideals of Western womanhood in the 1970s and 80s—beauty, charm, sex appeal—were missing. Instead, the press reported loudly on the "post-Hiroshima" look of poverty and destruction. The clothes were deliberately tattered and torn, and the collection featured a great deal of black—shape and construction being more important than color. Comme des Garçons (meaning "like the boys") was the opposite of what women were meant to look like.

Kawakubo criticized the very concept of fashion. Her clothes were more like sculpture than couture. She challenged the prevailing silhouette, cleverly using fabric to create a different aesthetic of revealing and concealing. Her second collection, shown in Paris for Spring/Summer 1983, featured drab colors in rough fabrics and garments full of holes. It promoted a new "beggar" look of beauty in destitution, again challenging Western concepts of glamour.

Awards and criticism

Despite initial criticism, by the mid-1980s Comme des Garçons was well on the way to international fame. In 1985 Kawakubo held her first show in the US, and the following year she won a Fashion Group International Award. Comme des Garçons' branding became synonymous with art-house magazines and cutting-edge photography that almost pushed the clothes into the background, adding to their air of mystery.

For Spring 1992, Kawakubo showed garments that looked like the paper patterns of clothes rather than the clothes themselves. In 1995 she roused fierce criticism from Jewish groups for showing male models with close-cropped hair wearing striped pajamas; and for Spring 1997, she sent outfits with bulbous padding down the Paris runway, genuinely shocking an audience that thought it had seen it all before.

More surprises

Kawakubo favored surprising venues and unexpected collaborations. In 2004, for example, she began to roll out a series of "guerrilla" pop-up stores in locations away from traditional fashion capitals. These outlets, which included one in an old bookstore in Berlin, were run on small budgets and were intended to be short-lived. Comme des Garçons also collaborated with the huge mainstream retailer H&M on a ready-to-wear collection, which was released in the fall of 2008 to great critical and consumer acclaim.

Kawakubo continues to confound her critics (and also her admirers), for instance, designing a dress for the fashion doll Barbie, which formed part of Comme des Garçons' *Jingle Flowers* collection.



△ PRIVATE ICON

Although often at the center of controversy, Rei Kawakubo has always preferred to stay out of the limelight and is rarely photographed or interviewed. Her trademark look, seen here, comprises a basic black uniform and hair styled in a severe, blunt bob.

◁ ALL-WHITE

Kawakubo's Spring/Summer 2012 collection featured full-skirted white dresses worn with short boots.



TIME LINE

1967 After early career in advertising, Kawakubo starts work as a freelance designer

1942 Rei Kawakubo born in Tokyo

1973 Comme des Garçons established as a company

1981 First collection shown in Paris

◁ 1984 Spring/Summer collection features Comme des Garçons' signature deconstructed look

1986 Kawakubo wins Fashion Group International Award

▷ 1997 Spring/Summer collection continues to challenge conventional fashionability with padded clothing

2004 First of "guerrilla" pop-up stores opens in Berlin

2008 Launch of collection in collaboration with mainstream retailer H&M



1977 ONWARD

STREET STYLE

Street tribes—groups with a distinctive visual identity—have been emerging since the late 1940s. With each decade new groups appear, influencing mainstream fashion with their fresh, authentic appeal. The last 40 years have seen revivals of trends from the 1950s and 60s, in particular reinvention of motorcycle-riding greasers and rockers, and their opposing faction the mods, with international appeal and sharply tailored suits. Associated street subcultures were the West Indian–British rude boys and the skinheads. Punks grew out of a mix of boredom with hippy culture and aging rock stars, and new musical influences, including the New York Dolls and Iggy Pop in the US and the Sex Pistols in the UK. Like punks, the darkly romantic goths have had a pervading influence on fashion, from mass-market clothing to haute couture. Today, rather than a recital of tribal dressing, street style is now mainstream, acceptable, and integrated.

Long, tailored Edwardian-style drape jacket

1977

Mohawks sported by both sexes

Suede brothel creepers (thick, crepe soled shoes) adopted by other subcultures too

Exaggerated forelock and sideburns

Rolled jeans already mainstream

Studded wrist is fetish reference

1982

14-hole Dr. Martens

Ripped jeans

Wide, studded belt

Rockin' teddy boys The uniquely British teddy boy style of the 1950s was revived in the 1970s, in conjunction with the popularity of rockabilly music, although this time there were glam rock influences and a more exaggerated look.

Punk provocation Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren virtually invented punk style with their bondage pants and T-shirts with offensive slogans. Mohican haircuts, often brightly dyed, were a signature look of early 1980s punks, who often posed for photographs on the Kings Road in London. Tartan pants and ripped and torn clothes were also punk looks.

DR. MARTENS

The prototype for Dr. (Doc) Martens was developed by a German soldier in 1945. After the patent was bought by British firm R. Griggs, the boots were produced in the UK. Popular with blue-collar workers, the eight-hole Dr. Marten in black or oxblood was adopted by skinheads in the 1960s. Dr. Martens have been worn widely by psychobillies, skinheads, goths, and indie kids.

Dr. Marten boot



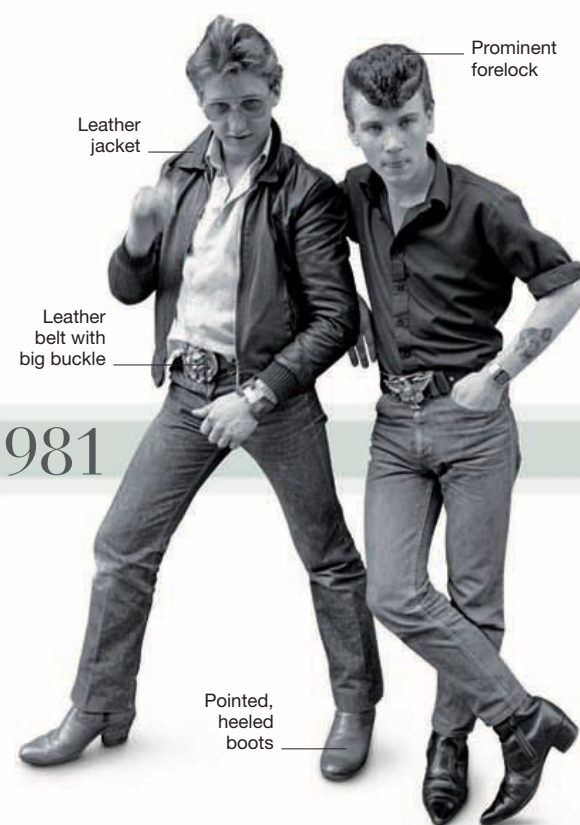


1980

Mod attitude British band The Jam's frontman, Paul Weller (left), and bass player Bruce Foxton were in the front of the mod revival in the late 1970s. The band's look was stark—here contrasting a sharp black suit with white shirt.



Skinhead bravado Aligned to the mods of the 1960s and influenced by the rude boys, skinheads adopted a tough, working-class demeanor in reaction to what they saw as middle-class kids taking over youth fashion.



1981

Rockabilly revival The renewed popularity of 1950s rockabilly music went hand in hand with a return to their look. These two wear denim jeans and leather jackets reminiscent of mid-century youth culture.



1984

Goth glamour The goth aesthetic came together in a London club called The Batcave. Both men and women wore clothes inspired by Victorian mourning garb and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, and it was not long before this movement took to the streets.



2008

Gothic Lolita A Japanese brand of gothic, combining Victorian, rococo, and fairy-tale dress, emerged in the mid-1990s, inspired by the costumes of gothic rock bands. It later became an influential part of Japanese popular culture.



2011

Heritage revival Traditional English country garb has been appropriated by music festival goers in the UK and incorporated into their fashionable urban wardrobes. Soccer player's wife Coleen Rooney sports a waxed jacket and Hunter wellington boots.

1979–1990

DANCE CULTURE AND CLUB

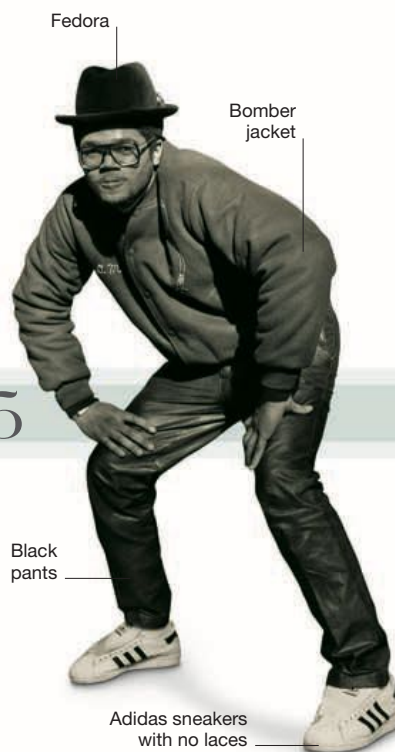
The influence of clubs spawned new modes of dress in the 1980s, and certain clubs attracted certain groups of people. New Wave clubs such as The Blitz in London, where host Steve Strange would only admit the “weird and wonderful” ushered in the dance culture. The flamboyant New Romantics, showcased at the Fridge club in south London, took as their role model the swashbuckling pirate, as embodied by Adam Ant and channeled by designer Vivienne Westwood. In 1987 rave culture took hold in London when Acid House music and the drug MDMA (ecstasy) were transplanted from Ibiza. Young people, disenchanted with Thatcher’s Britain, turned from nine-to-fivers during the week to ravers on weekends. They adopted the smiley face as their emblem. Clubs such as Heaven in London brought gay culture into the mainstream, which had a huge effect on fashion. Across the Atlantic, hip-hop and rap were the dominant urban club styles, associated with pristine sportswear, leather bomber jackets, and heavy gold jewelry.

HIP-HOP



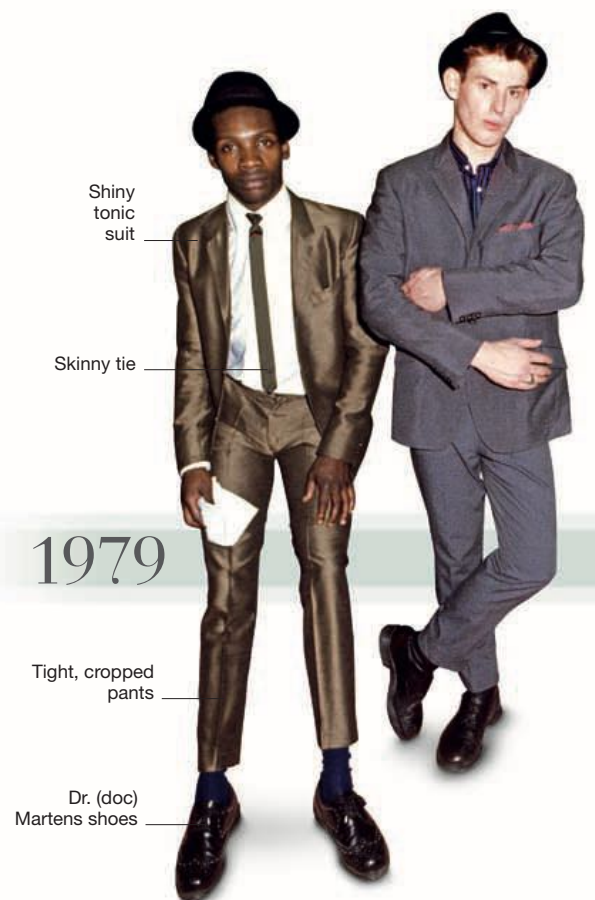
Hip-hop group the Beastie Boys are credited with influencing the dress of young men not only during the 1980s when they came to fame, but also in the present day. Michael Diamond, Adam Yauch, and Adam Horovitz wore a mashup of styles, blending various New York street looks with classics, and expressing their love of punk rock. These elements included old-school, white sneakers by Adidas and Puma, distressed, tapered jeans, preppy button-down and polo shirts, nylon jackets, hooded sweatshirts, gold chains, and baseball caps worn at an angle. Their counterparts in musical and sartorial tastes were hip-hop artists Run DMC with whom they collaborated many times. Both groups continue to have an impact on the world of street fashion and music.

1985



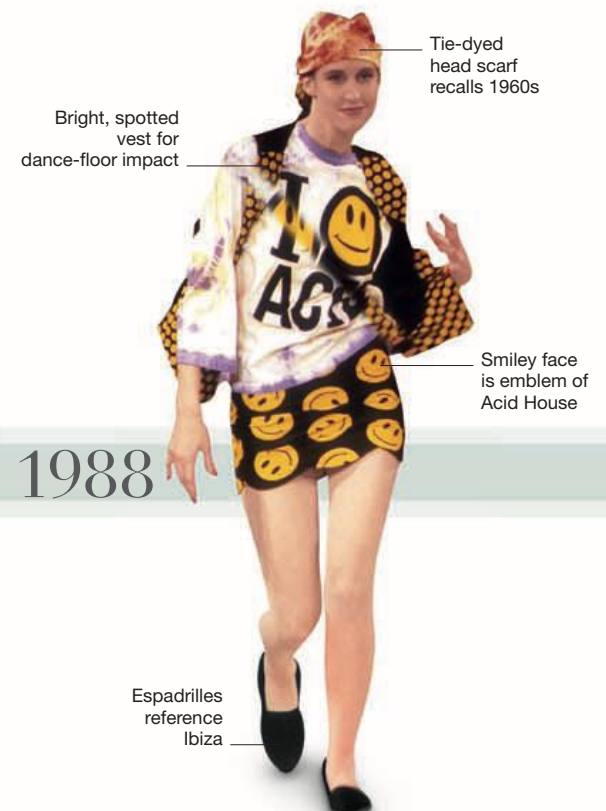
New hip-hop Run DMC’s Darryl “D.M.C.” McDaniels adopted a look that came from their native Queens neighborhood, and rejected the glitzier appearance of other hip-hop acts. They wore fedoras, leather or basketball jackets, gold chains, and laceless Adidas sneakers.

1979

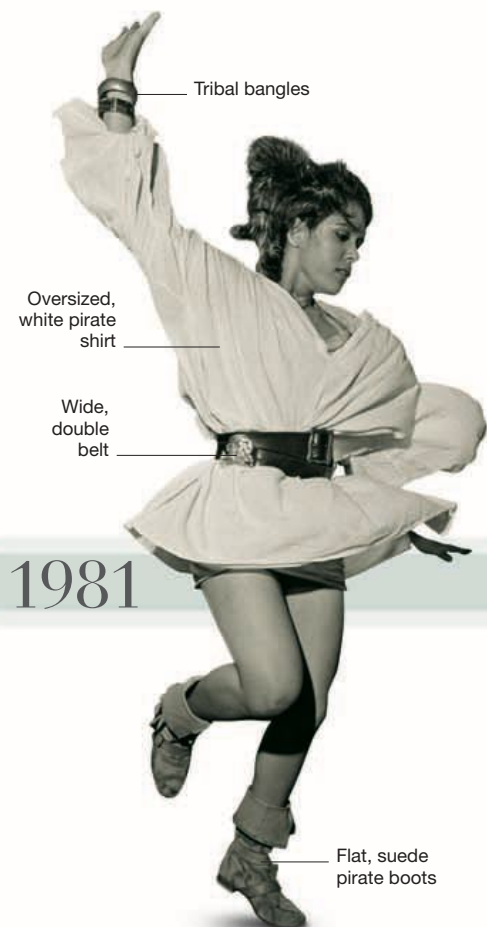


Mod style The Specials were one of the leading British ska bands of the late 1970s and early 1980s, fusing punk energy with Jamaican ska that was sped up to a danceable beat. They wore 1960s rude boy clothes, including slim-cut suits, porkpie hats, and Fred Perry shirts.

1988



Ubiquitous smiley face Acid House rave culture hit the runway in 1988 at a show for the fashion market Hyper Hyper, on London’s High Street Kensington. Suddenly the smiley face was no longer restricted to nightclubs and weekend parties; it had gone mainstream.

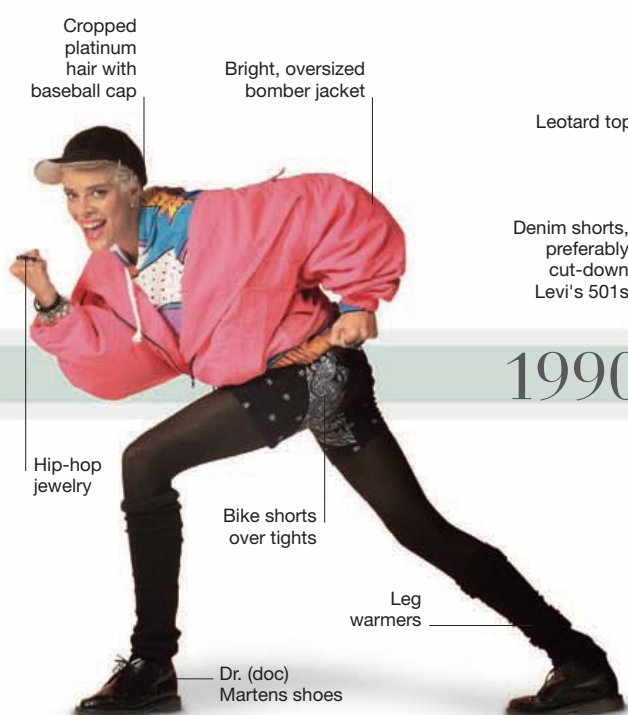


1981

New Romantic With their drum-based, primal pop sound, Bow Wow Wow matched UK dance culture. Set up by Malcolm McLaren, the band wore clothes designed by his partner Vivienne Westwood. Likewise, Duran Duran, with their billowing white shirts, started out with a New Romantic look.

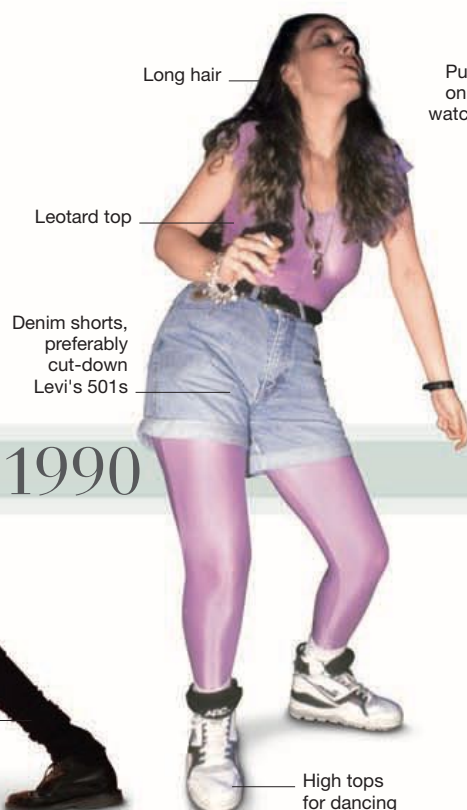


Flamboyant soul Boy George straddled varied urban styles. His music with the band Culture Club drew on rhythm and blues and reggae. Although he was labeled a New Romantic, his look incorporated elements of punk and Jamaican street wear.



Tough and sporty In 1988 Yaz & the Plastic Population hit the top of the UK charts with "The Only Way Is Up". Front woman Yaz inspired club goers with her cheerful, sporty style, which had a tough, androgynous edge.

1990



Rave scene As police cracked down on illegal rave parties, Acid House returned to nightclubs, in particular the Hacienda Club in Manchester, UK. Fluorescent leggings, high-top sneakers, and bicycling jerseys were the best clothes for dancing all night long.



New Romantic Welsh pop singer and nightclub host Steve Strange loved fashion, and was dubbed the "Peacock Prince" of the New Romantic movement. He developed a dandyish personal style based around 1940s zoot suits, Edwardian-inspired teddy boys, and punk, fashioning himself as an early 1980s hipster.





RUNWAY SUPERSTARS

The phenomenon of the “supermodel” reached its height in the 1990s and among the most celebrated were Linda Evangelista, Cindy Crawford, Naomi Campbell, and Christy Turlington (pictured here). When these four strutted down the runway arm in arm during Versace’s 1991 Fall/Winter fashion show in Milan they were more famous than the clothes. Not since Twiggy and Jean Shrimpton in the 1960s and Marie Helvin and Jerry Hall in the 1970s had models become such celebrities.

Supermodels were healthy-looking Amazonian beauties, athletic and curvy and, most importantly, they had personality. First-name recognition set them apart from other models. The supermodel reigned supreme, dominating the covers of all the top fashion magazines. They were offered multimillion dollar contracts with cosmetic companies, and starred in commercials endorsing shampoos and soft drinks. Some appeared in movies, on talk shows, and even launched their own clothing lines.

Supermodels demanded huge fees. “We don’t wake up for less than \$10,000 a day,” Evangelista famously told *Vogue* in 1990. The backlash to this attitude came when fashion changed later in the 1990s. It was out with the glossy and wholesome supermodels and in with a new breed of fragile, individual-looking, and often younger, models. A new phrase “heroin chic” described the down-at-heel settings for fashion shoots presented in magazines. Such a dressed-down style didn’t suit the personalities of the supermodels, and designers opted to make the clothes the star of the show once more.

“

There was a reason they were supermodels...When they put on an outfit everyone was floored.

ANNA SUI, DESIGNER, 2010

”

◀ FASHION AMAZONS

From left to right, Linda Evangelista, Cindy Crawford, Naomi Campbell, and Christy Turlington model Versace, Milan 1991.

1990 ONWARD

MINIMAL AND CONCEPTUAL

In the wake of 1980s power dressing—which emphasized clingy styles, bold color, exaggerated silhouettes, and embellishment—consumers in the early 1990s seemed to tire of fashion, and the industry struggled to lure them. New notions of antifashion emerged with designers paring down the look and using a plainer color palette—the Japanese avant-garde designers had already made all black acceptable during the 1980s. It was a different way of dressing and it appealed to women with professional jobs and busy working lives. It was a time too for deconstructivist designers like Martin Margiela and Ann Demeulemeester in Belgium, and Hussein Chalayan in England—all of whom took an intellectual approach to fashion, stripping clothes back to first principles as part of their design aesthetic.

1995



Ultimate neutral US designer Calvin Klein's 1995 Fall/Winter collection made gray fashionable with his luxurious cashmere knits, shiftlike dresses, and felted wool coats, accessorized with bare legs.



Futuristic jumpsuit The millennium was on Austrian Helmut Lang's mind when he created this take on a spacesuit for his 1999 Fall/Winter collection. The silk organza is layered over easy-give cotton and silk jersey to beautiful effect.

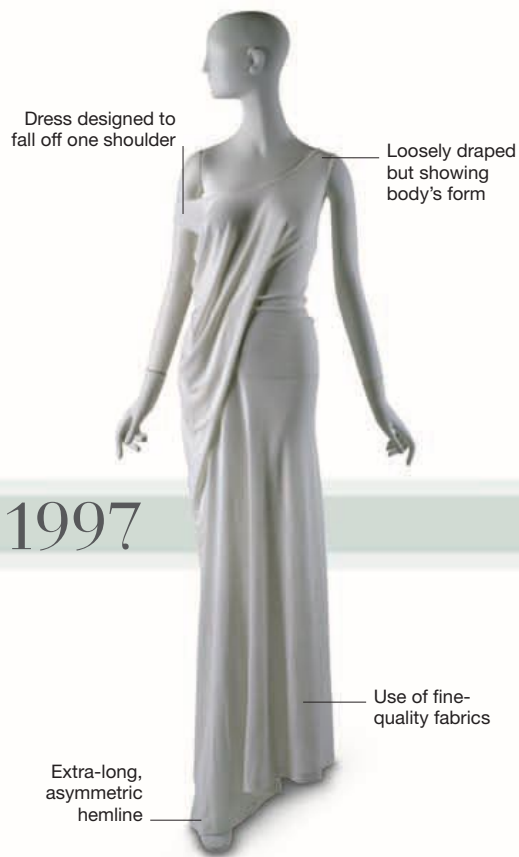


Studied simplicity This red strapless silk sheath from Calvin Klein's Spring/Summer show has sophisticated construction. It is held up by a bandagelike bodice, then loosens around the torso, and drapes around the waist and hips.

2000



Experimental reduction In Hussein Chalayan's 2000 Fall/Winter collection the designer pushed the boundaries of everyday dress. In this example he merged fashion and furniture by morphing a coffee table into a skirt.



1997

All white Known for her androgynous, sensual clothing cut in innovative ways to drape and elongate the body, Flemish designer Ann Demeulemeester uses black and white every season. This is a Spring/Summer dress for 1997.



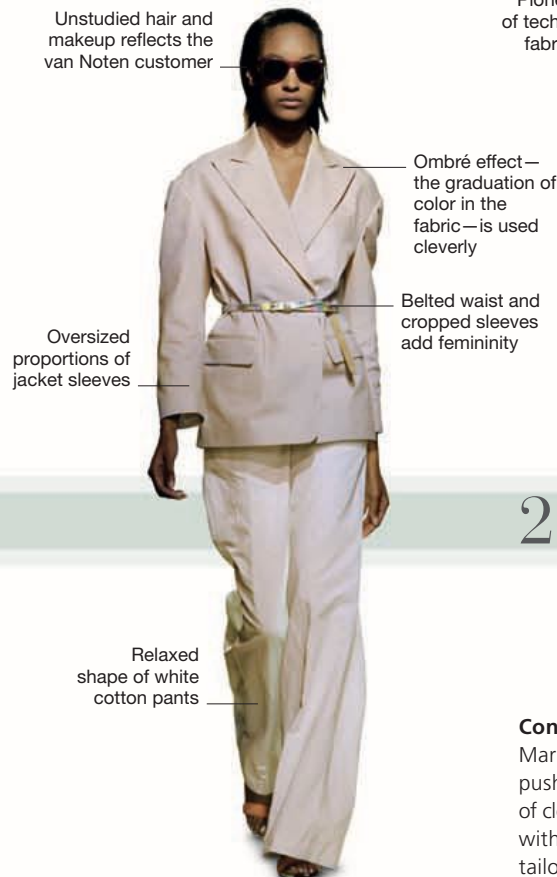
1999

Sheer color For his 1999 Spring/Summer show Helmut Lang layered sheer, colored fabrics over white to create dressy sportswear that was hailed by fashion editors as sleek, desirable, and above all wearable.



2011

Subversive style Belgian designer Martin Margiela reinvented the classic trench coat in his Spring/Summer 2011 collection. The fabric is stretched over a two-dimensional rectangular frame to completely obscure the body beneath.



2012

Quiet elegance Flemish designer Dries van Noten's pragmatic but romantic approach is seen in this look from Spring/Summer 2011. His clothes are often exquisitely decorated, but the shapes are essentially easy, and softly tailored.



Conceptual tailoring Martin Margiela naturally pushes the boundaries of clothing design, starting with recognizable, tailored shapes and distorting them or adding unexpected twists. Although often accused of creating unwearable garments, the label retains a loyal following for masterfully cut core pieces.

1990–2011

BOHO CHIC AND VINTAGE

Bohemian chic (boho) was identified by the UK fashion media in 2004–05 to describe a stylized look put together using aspects of bohemian, essentially hippie, dress. It was a younger—and richer—cousin of grunge, the ultimate dressing down that went mainstream in the 1990s. Instead of scouring secondhand stores for well-worn oversized sweaters and army surplus gear, bohos went to expensive vintage clothing boutiques. In Paris it was called *bobo*, which stood for *bourgeois-bohème*, implying that it was an affectation of middle-class champagne socialists. Now major mainstream retailers display rails of high-end secondhand clothes, and designers work with antique-clothing dealers to source pieces that they can incorporate into their own work or simply copy. Secondhand stores are no longer the down-at-the-heel places they once were; vintage is in vogue.

1992



High-fashion grunge American sportswear designer Perry Ellis picked up on the mainstream grunge trend that was sweeping through the US in the early 1990s. Christy Turlington models his look from Fall/Winter 1992.

1993



Stylish grunge A model on the streets of Seattle demonstrates fashionable grunge, a mix of items from a secondhand store, new clothes that are distressed or made to look worn in, and expensive designer pieces.

GRUNGE AND PEARL JAM



Pearl Jam are one of the original bands of the Seattle grunge movement that kicked off in 1990. Like their music, their style of dress fuses many influences. Their melange of skater, heavy metal, ethnic, world traveler, and hippie-dandy struck a chord with angst-filled American youth. Grunge made it acceptable to pull the sleeves of your secondhand cardigan down over your hands in a scruffy gesture of social alienation.

2005



Boho designers Matthew Williamson and Alice Temperley are cited as boho-chic designers. Williamson's floaty dresses feature butterflies and embroidery, while Temperley, whose dress is shown here, is cast as the English eccentric.

2008



Folkloric charm Mirroring the boho trend, there was a general interest in all things folksy and handcrafted. As trendsetting girls professed their love of knitting, chunky homemade sweaters became highly fashionable. Margaret Howell captured the mood in 2008.

1994

Smocking detail
on dressPlain,
workmanlike
ginghamBare legs
and black
hobnail-style
bootsGirlish scale of
dress projects
innocence

Back to the farm Winona Ryder channels a plain, American farm-girl. It was typical of the dressed-down style of the mid-1990s, part of a wider movement by celebrities to distance themselves from Hollywood glitz in favor of authenticity.

1998

Activist designer
Katherine Hamnett's
"Choose Life" sloganAntinuclear
"Clean up or
die" sloganDress composed
of 20 organic
cotton T-shirtsBall-gown
skirt

2004

Sun-kissed
hair and skinWhite
tank topExpensive red
designer bagCutoff,
distressed
denim skirtVintage
cowboy
boots

Sienna style As early as 2003 the fashion press had begun commenting on Sienna Miller's signature style in which she seemed to mix designer, mainstream, vintage, and secondhand store finds. The result looked effortlessly natural.

2011

Sunglasses
endow coolHippie-style
hairWristbands
and amulets
signal interest
in quasi-
spiritualNaïve cotton
hippie dressSuede boots,
part of pirate
boot revivalSimple
flowing veilSmall bouquet
adds colorShimmering
sequins provide
a little dazzle

Festival mania Jumping on the festival bandwagon, music and literary festivals in the 21st century attract a wealthy, fashion-conscious following, such as model Alessandra Ambrosio who apes the hippie generation with nonchalant ease.

Style icon At her wedding to rock guitarist Jamie Hince in 2011, model Kate Moss embodied the spirit of bohemian chic. She wore the most stunningly beautiful couture, designed by John Galiano, as casually as if she had donned a pair of jeans.





GLOBAL IMPACT

In the 21st century fashion is a pan-global industry. Couture houses, which often take huge losses on their special collections, stage glamorous events worldwide to promote their labels and licensed goods. Their diffusion lines, ready-to-wear clothes, shoes, perfumes, and jewelry have internationally recognized brand names, from the Gucci "G" to the word "Dior" dangling from a handbag. Trends are relayed in mass TV and magazine campaigns, and further promoted by the celebrity culture, with actors and media personalities selling an image that the ordinary public can copy with little effort, although at some cost.

The worldwide fashion industry generates over a trillion US dollars a year, but there are concerns about clothing companies taking responsibility for their impact on the environment, workforce, and suppliers. Once dominated by Europe and North America, there are huge fashion markets still to be tapped, particularly in China. With stylists and fashion devisers seeking ways to exploit aspiring consumers, the focus on commercialism is creating fears that young talent is getting squeezed out. Although uniformity of look may sell well, fashion, if anything, has always been about youth, subversion, and playful creativity.

“

Yes, fashion design requires consumers to consume, but we can do our bit for society by running our companies in a socially responsible way, and by creating products that promote respect for social and environmental issues.

GIORGIO ARMANI

”

◀ FAR-REACHING FACE

Kate Moss, as the face of fast-growing Spanish fashion house Mango, looks out from a billboard at the Villaggio Mall, Doha, Qatar.

2002 ONWARD

RED CARPET GOWNS

Rolling out a red carpet for important guests dates back to Ancient Greece, but in modern times it is most closely associated with the Academy Awards. In the 1930s radio presenters would describe every detail of the stars and their dresses to a rapt audience, then in 1952 it was presented live on television. Although there have been fashion faux pas aplenty, screen-goddess glamour continues to reign on the red carpet, and the Oscars have remained one of the sartorial events of the year. In the last 10 years red-carpet events have become a major showcase for fashion designers and determine how and what they design. This has filtered through to fashion retailers who provide “occasion wear” for events ranging from prom dances to ladies’ days at the races.

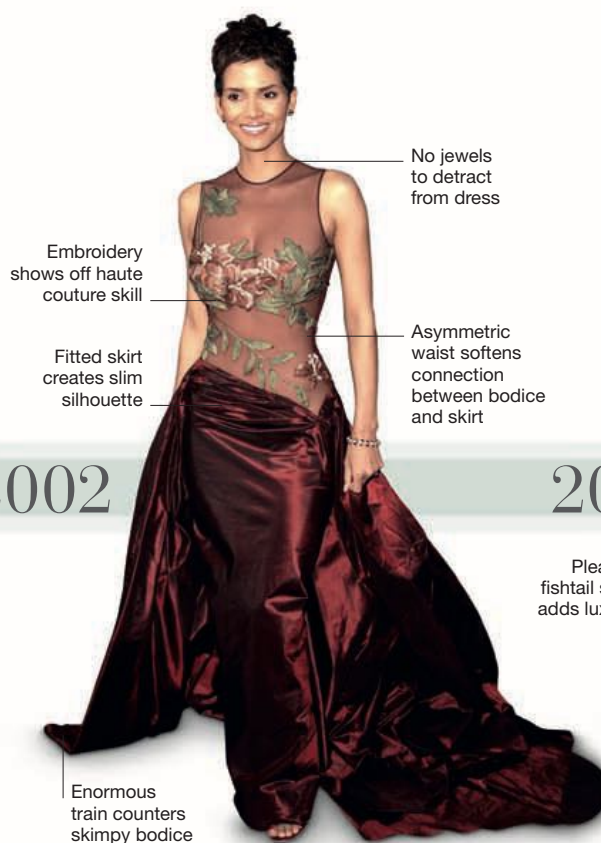
SHOW-STOPPING SHOES



Manolo Blahnik

In the early days of Hollywood, the stars turned to Salvatore Ferragamo, Charles Jourdan, André Perugia, and Beth Lavine for fantastic red carpet footwear. In the 1990s a new generation took over. Credited for show stopping heels are Christian Loubotin, Manolo Blahnik, and Jimmy Choo, who have a cult following. Now designers Nicholas Kirkwood and Brian Atwood are creating chic shoes too.

2002



Modern hybrid Halle Berry's deconstructed ball gown, by Lebanese designer Elie Saab, is a clever mix of formal wear and showgirl pizzazz. The sheer net bodice is saved from being too overt by exquisite embroidery and a grand skirt.

2006



Dark romance This deep plum creation from US designer Vera Wang conveys intensity with its rich color, and in the way it appears to tightly wrap Keira Knightley's body. An asymmetric neckline and bold necklace keep it modern.



Wow factor Bright red needs careful handling to maintain an appearance of elegance rather than brashness. Britain's John Galiano conjured up old Hollywood glamour with this tomato-colored gown with fabric wrap standaway collar.



Daring choice Beyoncé Knowles attracted praise and criticism for her tight, black, fishtail dress decorated with metallic gold roses, from her mother's House of Dereon clothing line. Bold patterns and motifs are considered risky for the red carpet.

2008



Ethereal ivory White is a classic Oscar choice since it makes a dramatic contrast with the red carpet, looks striking on camera, and lends a pure, untouchable quality. French designer Jean Paul Gaultier's dress for Marion Cotillard gives the impression of a mermaid.



Construction mastery On the red carpet at Cannes in 2008, Milla Jovovich wore a satin dress by Italian designers Atelier Versace that referenced the 1950s with its color, fabric, and structure. Tight pleating wraps the torso to create an hourglass shape with pointed bustline.

Crimson goddess Anne Hathaway's deep red dress by British brand Marchesa creates impact through the interplay of intense color and the classical romance of draped silk chiffon. It appears to be tethered at the shoulder with nothing but a garland of roses.



Feathered fantasy Italian fashion house Gucci Première created a silver-gray lamé and ostrich-feather gown for Hilary Swank at the 2011 Academy Awards. Its slender silhouette and surface decoration recall the gowns worn by 1930s screen sirens.

Long train creates statuesque line



DESIGNER

ALEXANDER MCQUEEN

One of the most important British designers of recent decades, Alexander McQueen reintroduced tailoring to fashion with his sharp suits and frock coats and brought new technology into couture. With a creativity that drove forward his quest for the new, he also reinvented the fashion show. "You've got to give them an extravaganza!" was his philosophy. At first unsettling, by the time of his untimely death at 40, McQueen's shows had become theatrical events.

East End beginnings

Born in 1969, Lee Alexander McQueen was the son of a London cab driver and the youngest of six children growing up in Stratford, East London. Encouraged by his mother, a teacher, the young McQueen showed an early interest in fashion design, and at 16 enrolled as an apprentice cutter and tailor at Anderson and Sheppard, then tailors to HRH Prince of Wales. Legend has it that the teenage McQueen wrote obscenities in the linings of suits for the prince and other clients; what is certain is that he showed an extraordinary aptitude. After 18 months he had mastered the "forward" (a perfectly made test jacket), then learned to cut trousers at Gieves and Hawkes, and finally historical costumes at Angels and Bermans costumiers. Moving into high fashion, he became a cutter for the avant-garde designer, Koji Tatsuno and for Milan-based designer Romeo Gigli.

In spite of a lack of certain requirements in art, McQueen was accepted to the MA Fashion course at Central St. Martins, London. His degree collection *Jack the Ripper Stalks His Victims*, featuring bustled jackets, papier-mâché appliqué and his own hair incorporated into linings, caught the attention of stylist Isabella Blow, who became McQueen's supporter and advocate. McQueen immediately began showing

under his own name. His "bumsters" (low-rise pants) at his second show *Nihilism* scandalized many, revealing the cleft in the models' buttocks, at the same time as elongating the torso and shortening the legs. This was a totally new idea, which launched a decade of low-slung, pelvis-hugging pants in mainstream stores. His shows became must-see events, made on a tiny budget with a dedicated team. *The Birds* (Spring/Summer 1995), held in an unoccupied warehouse was based on Hitchcock's eponymous movie and, with the theme of road kill, featured tire prints on dresses and corsetier Mr. Pearl with his 18" (46 cm) waist in McQueen women's wear. Iconoclastic and transgressive, it was a fashion moment that blew away the cobwebs.

History and nature

Skilled tailoring, revealed in the frock coats, suits, and jumpsuits that were signature McQueen, coupled with meticulous research enabled the designer to realize his extraordinary ideas.

Shows like *Highland Rape* (1995), based on historic border conflicts, were testimony to McQueen's fascination with the past and his ability to make it modern, cutting tartan on the bias and updating body-molding corsets.

He was also inspired by nature, using feathers, skin and bones, and even live falcons in his shows.

McQueen's tenure as head designer at Givenchy was not always a success, given its essentially genteel French signature, but he went on to find the creative freedom he craved at the Gucci Group. The designer was multilayered in his talent and vision, and his later own name collections, *Horn of Plenty* in 2009, and his final show, *Plato's Atlantis* in 2010, raised questions about the future of the planet and man's careless approach. His label continues under the creative directorship of Sarah Burton, designer of the Duchess of Cambridge's wedding dress.

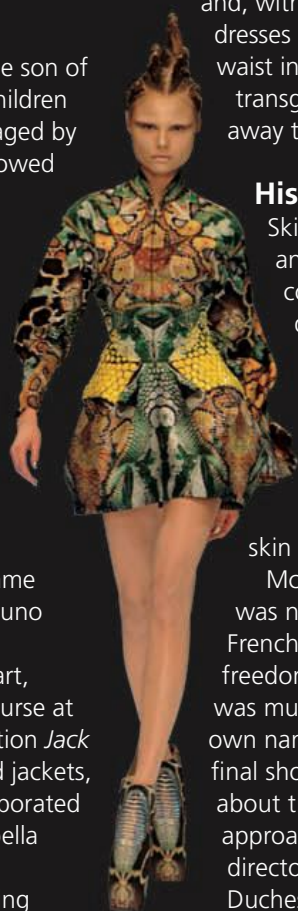


△ TAILOR AND CRAFTSMAN

McQueen was awarded British Designer of the Year four times. He was presented with a CBE and voted by CFDA (Council of Fashion Designers of America) International Designer of the Year in 2003.

◁ PLATO'S ATLANTIS

This dress from McQueen's final collection shows his skill in print and art and his love of the environment.



TIME LINE

1989 Employed as a cutter of historical costumes at Angels and Bermans, London

1990 Worked as a cutter for designer Romeo Gigli in Milan

1993 Bumster pants unveiled at *Nihilism* show

1985 Begins his apprenticeship at Anderson and Sheppard, Savile Row, London

1992 *Jack the Ripper* graduation collection at Central St. Martin's College, London

1996 & 97 UK designer of the year

◁ 1997 Brown ponyskin jacket with impala horns on shoulders from *It's a Jungle Out There*

2001 ▷ Voss dress with black ostrich feathers

2009 *Horn of Plenty* show

2003 International Designer of the Year awarded by CFDA. Presented with CBE by HRH The Queen

2010 *Plato's Atlantis* —final collection focuses on future of the planet. McQueen's death

2011 *Savage Beauty* retrospective exhibition of McQueen's work at The Met, New York

○ 1985

○ 1990

○ 1995

○ 2000

○ 2005

○ 2010

2010 ONWARD

A NEW GENERATION

In recent years fashion has moved in new directions to meet the desire of consumers for increasingly varied and individualistic looks. No longer satisfied with the big labels from Paris, Milan, and New York, and suffering from "It" bag and logo fatigue, women have been on the hunt for fresh looks and original ideas. The economy too has played a part in this change. In September 2008 economic meltdown in many markets meant that wearing overtly expensive clothes and status labels was no longer thought to be prudent. It was up to a new generation of designers to woo women back to fashion. Alexander Wang, for example, has shown how street cred and savvy design can make millions with his global empire based on grunge meets downtown, while Phoebe Philo's uncompromisingly modern stance at Céline has made the once-dowdy label one of the hottest of the early 2010s. The visionary Christopher Kane has his own collections but is also helping to make Versace's *Versus* line cool again. Designers like these are reinvigorating fashion and showing the exciting possibilities ahead.

VICTORIA BECKHAM

It is not unusual for pop stars to start clothing lines, but few have built as refined a fashion empire as Victoria Beckham. Her wealth and exposure to luxury designer goods, combined with her own sleek style, have given her the aesthetic judgement to head her own label. Starting with a small range of jeans and eyewear in 2006, Beckham moved on to her natural oeuvre in 2008, the world of high-end ready-to-wear. She specialized in sculpted, sheathlike dresses, carefully constructed to shape the body and create a long, lean silhouette. Initially sceptical, the fashion press have given rave reviews, and her collections have been a commercial success. Beckham has since added handbags, coats, and a second clothing line to her fashion stable.



2012

Young cosmopolitan

Manhattan-based Taiwanese-Canadian Jason Wu designs luxury sportswear and beautiful evening dresses, like this one from Fall/Winter 2012. First lady Michelle Obama chose four of his dresses in 2008 to wear to public events, including the Inaugural Ball.



Tasseled details appeared throughout Fall/Winter 2012 collection

Hot pink, draped satin shows dressmaking mastery

Shoulder reminiscent of Chinese armor

Lace embroidery inspired by Qing Dynasty



Hair painted white

All white looks fresh

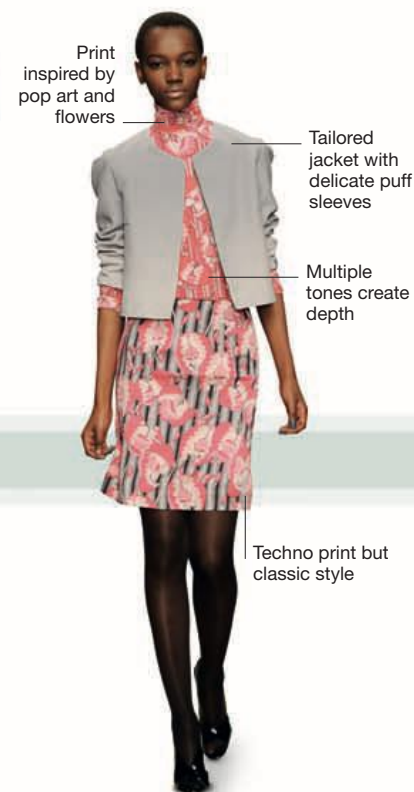
Deconstructed tailoring

Gold slashes evoke duct tape

Shoes are part of brand

2010

Cool kid US designer Alexander Wang, who fuses casual elements with laidback tailoring and sporty separates, is admired for being in tune with the needs of the modern customer. He has successfully built a global brand, while remaining edgy.



Print inspired by pop art and flowers

Tailored jacket with delicate puff sleeves

Multiple tones create depth

Techno print but classic style

Chic technocrat Bringing the handmade into the realm of the high tech is a recurring theme in Holly Fulton's work, as is the use of decorative embellishment and accessories. The Scottish designer's Fall/Winter 2012 collection explored tonal layering.

The prodigies Scottish brother and sister Christopher and Tammy Kane collaborate to produce collections with a strong, clear vision. Technical experimentation and a highly refined color sense have become their trademarks, both evident in this dress from Spring/Summer 2011.

Printed fabric
sewn in panels for
optical interest



2011

White
turtleneck
is base



2012

Red ruffle at neck
adds modernity

Blush pink is
subtle and
feminine

Black stripe
with ruffles
mixes pretty
and bold

Fire-engine red
platform shoes
toughen look



The minimalist British designer Philo describes her style as “contemporary minimalism.” Whether taking her inspiration from cars, buildings, or handicrafts, Philo’s collections for French brand Céline are strong, sensible, and chic. This design is from Fall/Winter 2011.

The sophisticate Serbian-born designer Roksanda Ilincic is best known for her elegant dresses. Working in silks, satins, and velvets, she often draws on the 1970s and 80s to create polished, structured pieces, as here for pre-Fall 2012.

The illusionist London-based, Greek-born Mary Katrantzou’s attention to detail in creating complex digital prints and piecing them together in intricate and thoughtful ways leaves fashion editors in awe. Her Spring/Summer 2012 collection used contrasting prints of natural elements and man-made objects.

Quirky quilted
fisherman’s hat

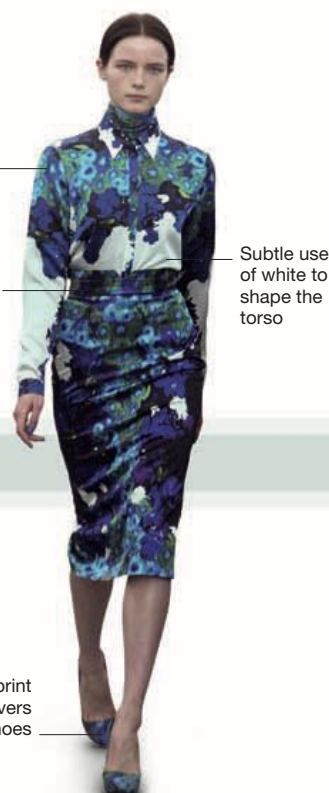


Meticulously
tailored and
tapered sleeves

Wide, notched
waistband with
buttoned tab

Subtle use
of white to
shape the
torso

Same print
also covers
shoes



The matchmaker London-based, Irish-born J.W. Anderson mixes a playful approach, tailoring skills, and apparently opposing forces to great effect. This often means the juxtaposition of masculine and feminine, kinky and elegant, as shown here for Fall/Winter 2012.

Print master With a talent for abstraction and precise construction, London-based Erdem Moralioglu creates romantic clothes with a contemporary edge. His innovative prints place dense patterns next to empty zones, often with deliberate asymmetry.

