

# PRODUCTION PROCESS 101

Time Line	Glossary
<b>Pre-Production</b>	<p><b>Tech Pack:</b> A document containing the technical information needed to manufacture a garment (materials, flat sketches, pattern grading, seam types, trim, notions, measurements, etc.).</p>
	<p><b>Flats/Flat Sketches:</b> Black and White line drawings with technical details of where seams and opening/closures are.</p>
	<p><b>BOM/Bill of Materials:</b> The list of every material and notion that is used in a garment, and how much. Can include ordering information for materials, swatches.</p>
	<p><b>Block:</b> A base pattern made to fit the brand's fit model exactly, from which other designs can be adapted (by changing sleeve length, or neckline, or making it fit more loosely, etc.).</p>
	<p><b>Fit Model:</b> The person that is being used as representative of the brand's fit/target market's body type. All of the samples should be fit on the same person to ensure consistency.</p>
	<p><b>Graded Patterns:</b> Patterns are made and initially prototyped in one base size, from which other sizes can be drafted using standard formulas. This is a job specialization that is usually contracted out.</p>
	<p><b>Pre-Production:</b> The garment making process from initial design concept to when a production order is placed with a factory.</p>
	<p><b>Marker:</b> This is a printed sheet with the pattern pieces laid out (nested) exactly as everything is to be cut out. It is designed to the usable width of the fabric and laid on top, to be cut as one with the fabric.</p> <p><b>Yield:</b> The amount of fabric needed to make one garment.</p>
<b>Production</b>	<p>The <b>First Sample</b> is the designer's proof of concept, made with the pattern &amp; fabric that you are intending to use for production, and used in fittings.</p>
	<p>The <b>Final Sample</b> is a sample made with any and all changes. May also be sent to the factory as the sew-by sample.</p>
	<p><b>Sew-by Sample</b> is the one you send to the factory or production stitcher to reference (or "sew by").</p>
	<p>The <b>Factory</b> or <b>Production Sample</b> is made by the factory or production stitcher to determine the cost of production, and to show how the final product will look as manufactured by them. Done before production order is placed.</p>
	<p><b>Tolerance:</b> The amount that measurements can be off from the specifications. Many seam allowances and finished garment measurements have tolerances in the 1/16" – 1/8" range.</p>
<b>Post-Production</b>	<p><b>Order Minimum:</b> At the factory level, the minimum amount of garments that need to be ordered (as determined by the factory). There may be an additional price break for much larger orders.</p>
	<p><b>Production Run:</b> The full order of garments being produced in an individual production order.</p>
	<p><b>Price Point:</b> The target retail price that a designer/brand is looking to sell their product at.</p>

## Fashion Production Roles:

Depending on the size of the operation some of these jobs may be done by the same person, by independent contractors, or provided as an additional service by a factory.

**Designer** – Comes up with concept, occasionally sketches.

**Tech Designer** - Creates the tech packs and flats.

**Pattern Maker** - Creates and alters patterns. Evaluates designs for feasibility. Includes suggesting appropriate finishings for intended price point and production ease.

**Pattern Grader** - A separate specialty, they “grade” the pattern up and down to different sizes, often using set drafting formulas.

**Sample Maker** - Usually has a holistic understanding of garment construction, and may give feedback on the pattern's efficacy and the construction process.

**Project Manager** - At brand and/or factory level. Oversees the full process from concept to fulfillment.

**Production Manager** - Usually at the factory level. Oversees the sewing process from the arrival at the factory to finishing.

**Cutter** – Lays out and cuts large batches of fabric.

**Stitcher/Machine Operator** - Production level.

**Fulfillment** - “bagging and tagging” garments for retail, and/or packaging to be shipped to the designer or to the customer.

## Free Online Resources:

- Fashion Incubator: Katheleen Fasenella is the original expert for the kind of production process that ‘Designer Entrepreneurs’ often work with. Her blog has an amazing amount of free resources and information, and her book is a gold mine. <https://fashion-incubator.com/>
- “Sew Heidi”: Heidi is a great resource for tutorials on tech packs and illustration (free and paid virtual workshops). Definitely check out her book and podcast on working as a freelancer in fashion. <https://successfulfashiondesigner.com/start-here/>
- Zoe Hong: A fashion illustrator and teacher out of San Francisco, Zoe has a long list of good videos including this one with ‘5 Tips for Freelancing in Fashion’ (including essential tips on costing your work and handling social media). [https://youtu.be/vtMxAn7A\\_dA](https://youtu.be/vtMxAn7A_dA)



**The Apparel Industry Board, Inc. (AIBI)**, a 501©6, dedicated to the needs of the sewn products industry, nurturing and supporting students, designers, patternmakers, and other industry professionals based in the Greater Chicago area. The Fashion Lab (a manufacturing co-working space) helps build product lines from the ground up using professional software, tools, and advice.

**The Apparel Industry Foundation, Inc. (AIFI)** is a 501©3 and the philanthropic arm of the Apparel Industry Board, Inc. It supports the Chicago fashion, apparel and sewn products industry through mentoring programs, scholarships, educational seminars, technical training and the retention and creation of jobs.