

## Design for Moving Bodies

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This activity reflects on the relationship between clothing and the moving body. Its central premise is that acknowledging fashion's influence on how we *feel*, shapes how we *move*.

Designing for the moving body shifts the focus in design to:

- Move beyond thinking fashion exclusively in terms of visual appearances and aesthetics.
- Move beyond thinking about movement in terms of performance and optimisation (such as in sportswear, which optimises qualities like speed and efficiency) and to tune into how movement can also possess many other qualities. For example, movement might be fast or slow, but it could also be furtive or brisk, measured or languid.
- Move beyond thinking about the aesthetics of movement to instead consider how it feels.

The focus for you, as the designer, is not to design clothing that looks 'languid' for example, although it might, but rather designing something to produce the feeling of being languid.

1. Explore several garments in your wardrobe. Consider them in terms of the criteria: material, form and relationship to the body. Some are long, others short, some tight, some loose, some crisp, some slack. They will relate to and contact the body in different ways and places, some may be snug or slim fit, while others might produce a sense of space and freedom in their relationship to the body.
2. Try the garments on, integrating them into ensembles that please you, one by one. Don't look at yourself in the mirror. Go for a walk, sit, stand, turn, stretch, dance and move. Explore the sensations of the garment. Reflect on the

different bodily sensations these garments produce and the feelings, movements and thoughts that you associate with them.

3. Trace connections between properties of the garments and those sensations. Write these down along with descriptions of the movement qualities they produce. Use this 'Movement Glossary' to assist you.
4. Drawing on your insights gathered in your Movement Glossary, identify a series of words you can use as a catalyst for design. Choose two as a minimum, but you could have three or four. These words should be associated with movement and should be descriptive. For example, perhaps you felt 'active, lively, sporty' while in another garment you felt 'languid, fluid and side-to-side', yet another 'brisk, simplified and direct'. Use your movement words as a starting point to design and construct a new outfit. You can use any colour, material or technique to do this. When designing its shape, form and material, imagine yourself wearing the garment and the kinds of physical sensations, thoughts and feelings that it might produce.

## References

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