

TEXTILES, CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR



Australia's Textile, Clothing and Footwear sectors are exciting areas for innovative, creative people who are interested in fashion, fabrics and textiles.

Our reputation in local and international markets is built on the quality of our processed wool, cotton and synthetic fabrics, bed and bath products, carpets and, of course, our designer clothing, adventure wear and shoes. There is also a growing market for technical and non-woven industrial textiles.

There are opportunities in all areas of manufacturing from raw materials processing, synthetic fibre production and textile making through to concept design, pattern-making, manufacturing and promotion. You can learn about millinery, textile testing, or computer aided design (CAD), including the latest in design, pattern-making, grading and cutting technology.

The supply chain in textiles and clothing is truly international, so your skills in this area could see you working for global companies or even overseas.



Kristen Morris

"The biggest challenges are meeting the deadlines; making sure everything comes in with the correct fabric, correct printing, embroideries and stitching; making sure that everything is perfect on that garment.

If you have some fantastic idea's in your head, and you put them on paper and follow it through to the finished product that you know will sell well, that's the best feeling you can get - because you're creating something that everybody else loves..."

Merchandiser @ Quicksilver Australia

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TEXTILES, CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

EARLY STAGE PROCESSING



Before wool, cotton and leather become manufactured goods and textiles, they are processed to remove impurities and prepare them for use. Our fibres and leathers are recognised globally for their superior quality and performance.

Wool needs scouring, carding, combing and spinning before it can be processed into woven, knitted or spun fabrics for use by textile manufacturers. Cotton fibre is cleaned and combed at a cotton gin, where the valuable seeds in cotton bolls are extracted. The cotton is then classed and graded – a job that takes many years of experience to be really excellent.

Animal hides are processed in tanneries, where they are soaked, limed, pickled and tanned before they can become high quality leather.



The cotton plant is a member of the Hibiscus family. The most commercially grown species, *Gossypium Hirsutum*, was developed by the Mayan civilisation in Mexico over 1000 years ago.

Fibre from one bale (227kg) of cotton can produce 215 pairs of jeans (or 250 single bed sheets, or 750 shirts, or 1200 T-shirts, or 2100 pairs of boxer shorts, or 3000 nappies, or 4300 pairs of socks or 680,000 cotton balls). Australia produces around 3 million bales a year, and a cotton gin can produce up to 60 bales an hour. So that 's potentially 129,000 pairs of jeans an hour, or 645 million pairs a year!

DENIM FOREVER

These high volume processes use a range of sophisticated machinery, and you could become one of the High Level Operators, Supervisors and Specialist Mechanics who run and manage them.

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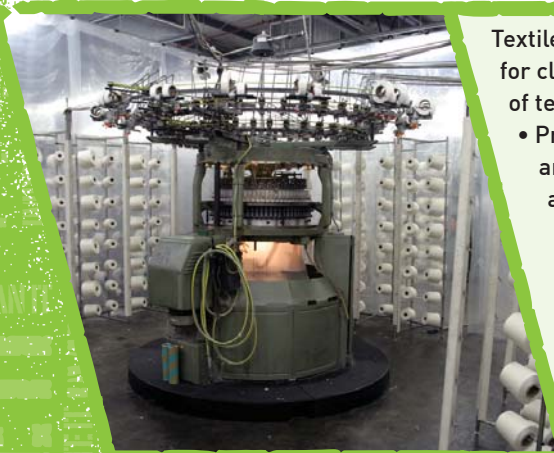
TEXTILE PRODUCTION



Textile production is one of the oldest skills in the world. Spinning wool into yarn, weaving cotton into fabric – such skills have been around since man began farming. Today, companies that transform raw materials such as wool, cotton and man-made fibre into textiles need highly skilled and qualified people.

In textile production you could learn techniques involved in spinning, knitting, weaving, carpet making, and producing technical textiles or non-woven materials. Also, the development of hi-tech synthetic and polymer fabrics, like the multi-layered Gore-Tex, are becoming an increasingly important and fascinating area to explore.

You could specialise in dyeing and finishing, textile technologies and innovations, technical consulting or commercial testing of fabrics. You could work with textile



Textile manufacture is more than making cloth for clothes. Melba Industries produces a range of textiles for diverse applications:

- Protective textiles used for fire, police, military and industrial workplace e.g. heat resistance and metals splash protection, ballistic protection (bullet proof fabrics), fire protection, and chemical and biological threat protection
- Industrial textiles such as conveyor belting and medical barrier fabrics
- Theatre/seating products - auditorium, theatre and seating upholstery which can be found on seats all over the world

TAKE A SEAT

processors, designers and retailers in both the apparel and interior textile markets throughout the world. You could also work as a textile designer, producing original ideas and designs for a large variety of printed, woven or knitted textiles.

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TEXTILE FABRICATION



A huge number of industrial textile products are made of canvas, wool and synthetic fabrics. These include pool covers, awnings, tents, tarpaulins, horse rugs, annexes, vehicle covers, shade cloth, boat covers, banners, bags, rucksacks, camping accessories, and ski-gear – to name just a few!

You could work as a Textiles Fabricator, reading and interpreting technical drawings and specifications to cut patterns from paper, measure and cut materials, before sewing them together on specialised machinery.

You could specialise in weaving, felting, embroidery, stitchery, quilting, dyeing or printing to create finishings and decorative items. Or you might like to be involved in adventure sports accessories, making everything from a better tent-fly to waterproof bags or even parachutes!



In most aspects of modern living, consumers are demanding better, lighter, cheaper, faster...

Scientists and engineers are already developing the smart materials of the future; the clothes you wear could also monitor your body and respond appropriately e.g. insulating you more when you become cold.

Skiers at the 2006 Winter Olympics wore special suits made from a 'smart' material that instantly hardens upon impact, protecting the wearer from injury.

WHAT TO WEAR

As a Textile Technician, you would look after the technical aspects of the design, production and quality control of textile products. You would select and develop dyes, research better processes and materials and carry out quality control.

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LEATHER GOODS



In spite of advances in the use of synthetic materials, a large range of goods still utilise the special qualities of leather – hardiness, water & weather resistance, and flexibility. Saddlery, shoes, bags, jackets, handbags, wallets, belts, harnesses and gloves are all made extensively from leather.

As a leather worker, you will design, make and decorate leather goods. You'll learn to select suitable types and grades of leather, draw patterns and cut leather to size and shape using special cutting machines.

You will join pieces together with rivets, threads or adhesives and attach buckles, eyelets and metal decorations. You may use stamps to imprint the leather with patterns. You'll then apply a stain or dye and polish the leather to help protect it, while giving it an attractive finish.



Mike Murphy of Western Australia and Simon Martin of Tasmania both handcraft whips from kangaroo hide.

Simon makes whips for 5 times Australian and World Whip Cracking Champion Ben Hughes, and 3 times Australian Champion Chris Beck.

Mike won the 2005 and 2006 RM Williams Australian National Whip Cracking Championships (35-50 yrs). He also made the whip for Robert Dante to set the world record for most bullwhip cracks in 60 seconds - 214 cracks!

CRACK THAT WHIP

Many people find the natural texture and smell of leather preferable to a synthetic substitute. So if you like the feeling of working directly with natural materials, this might be a great job for you.

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FASHION DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY



If you love fashion and are full of ideas about clothing design and fabrics, then this is a great area for you to consider.

Working as a Fashion Designer, you will develop new styles and products for clothes and accessories by creating original designs or adapting fashions and then cutting and machining sample garments based on these designs.

You will need to illustrate your concepts by producing storyboard and specification drawings, then research and develop fabrics before creating patterns on a computer. You will have to stay up to date with current fashion trends, try to predict future trends, and use your talent to create fresh new ideas and designs.

To be successful, you will also need to develop a high level of technical skill and



Bowie Wong was born in Hong Kong and now lives in Sydney. He studied art, design, theatre, drama, and stage and costume design in Japan, Hong Kong and Canada.

He has shown at Hong Kong Fashion Week, Australian Fashion Week and London and Toronto Fashion Weeks.

Bowie worked for Paul McCartney's world tour, Madonna's European 'Girlie Show' and designed costumes for Delta Goodrem's Visualise tour.

DESIGNER TO THE STARS

understanding of manufacturing processes. You'll soon find yourself fitting samples on models, estimating costs and approving final samples before they go into production.

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CLOTHING PRODUCTION



Whether aimed at a select or a mass market, well-designed clothes and hats also need to be well produced – and this process involves the input of many specialists.

While much of the actual manufacturing of Australian clothes occurs off-shore, there are still many jobs available here in patternmaking, sample making, machining, tailoring, millinery and merchandising.

Boutique tailors make garments such as suits, dresses, skirts, trousers and overcoats for individual customers, doing everything from initial measurements to making a pattern and sewing the garment. Milliners design and make hats and other head gear such as caps, berets, bonnets and bridal headpieces.

While some clothing producers work alone or in small companies, most work in the



Two trusted Australian brands are cultural icons, synonymous with 'hard work' clothes:

Hard Yakka, founded in 1922 by David K. Laidlaw in the back of his parent's house in Brunswick, is one of the largest clothing manufacturers in the Southern Hemisphere. The Laidlaw family remain the major shareholders and Hard Yakka still manufactures extensively in Australia.

King Gee was started when Bob Adcock made his first pair of overalls in a tiny rented house in Sydney in 1926 "...all we had was good people and reliable merchandise at an honest price".

WORKING

mass production of clothing, as part of a larger team. Either way, if fashion is where your heart lies, then a job in clothing production is a great way to get into the business.

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FOOTWEAR PRODUCTION



Most 'brand-name' footwear is produced overseas. Larger footwear makers in Australia generally import components and assemble them here, concentrating on developing products that appeal to Australian lifestyles. However there are a few smaller Australian footwear companies that specialise in making custom shoes or shoes for niche markets like ballet shoes, golf shoes, riding boots, ugg boots, ice skating boots and therapeutic and industrial footwear.

In such companies, there are opportunities for Footwear Makers, Machinists, Finishers, Pattern Makers, Clickers and Tableworkers. There is also a growing market for medical grade footwear and orthopaedic shoes, and an increasing demand for skilled footwear repairers.

In Footwear Production, you would design and make footwear patterns, and cut



Jodie Morrison is Australia's leading film and theatrical shoemaker. She has designed and hand made thousands of custom made shoes including those for the movies 'Moulin Rouge', 'Crocodile Dundee' and 'Strictly Ballroom'.

Terry Biviano is famous for her sky-high stilettos featuring exotic skins, feathers and crystals. She supplies shoes to leading fashion houses worldwide and Terry even shows her own collections, one featured Lady Godiva on horseback, naked, except for shoes of course.

KICK IT

pieces of leather from patterns to form the upper parts of a shoe using a clicking press. You will also learn about the characteristics of leather, footwear adhesives and chemicals, cutting and machining.

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