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CHOOSING AND CONSIDERING BODY SHAPES IN MODERN CLOTHING DESIGN: ARTISTIC-CONSTRUCTIVE AND SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS

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Abstract: This article analyzes the peculiarities of choosing and considering body shapes when creating modern clothing designs, exploring its artistic-constructive and socio-psychological aspects. In the contemporary fashion industry, couturiers and designers no longer limit themselves to standard templates; instead, they focus heavily on the plasticity, proportions, and visual correction of diverse body structures. The article provides a theoretical and scientific justification for the role of lines, fabric textures, color harmony, and constructive solutions in garment design for various body types. Furthermore, it highlights the principles of creating ergonomically and aesthetically flawless garments by ensuring a harmonious balance between the consumer's individual identity and physical form. The study also considers the methodological stages of the design process, the influence of age and cultural context, the relationship between sizing systems and body morphology, and the growing importance of inclusivity and sustainability in contemporary fashion.

Keywords: clothing design, body shape, proportion, visual correction, fabric texture, constructive lines, aesthetics, ethno-minimalism.

Modern clothing design encompasses complex bionic and geometric relationships related to the human figure, going far beyond the mere combination of fabrics and colors [1]. A garment is, in essence, a three-dimensional structure that envelops a moving, breathing and constantly changing body. For this reason, the designer works simultaneously as an artist who shapes silhouettes and as an engineer who solves problems of fit, balance, tension and mobility. The process of selecting the right body shape and integrating its unique features into modeling principles demands both artistic taste and deep engineering-constructive knowledge from a designer [2]. Today, the fashion industry is moving away from unified, standardized beauty ideals, placing a strong emphasis on individuality and inclusivity. Consequently, the success of a design is determined by how well it fits a specific body type, its comfort during physical movement, and its ability to visually camouflage anatomical disproportions. A beautiful sketch that cannot be worn comfortably, or a garment that distorts the proportions of its wearer, cannot be considered a successful design, regardless of its originality. The relevance of the topic is determined by several factors. First, the diversity of consumers has increased: women of different ages, professions, cultural backgrounds and lifestyles expect clothing that respects their physical characteristics. Second, the market has become highly competitive, and a collection that offers only a narrow range of silhouettes loses a significant share of potential customers. Third, researchers increasingly stress that clothing influences self-perception, confidence and social behavior, which means that the choice of a suitable cut is also a matter of psychological well-being [3]. The aim of this article is to systematize the principal body-shape types, to describe the artistic and constructive

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techniques used to harmonize garments with each of them, and to show how fabric, line, color and ergonomic principles work together in the creation of competitive, aesthetically complete clothing. The objectives include: (a) reviewing the morphological classification of female figures; (b) analyzing design strategies for each type; (c) examining the role of fabrics, constructive lines and color; (d) discussing the specific needs of middle-aged consumers and the potential of ethno-minimalism; and (e) formulating practical recommendations for designers. The study of proportion has deep roots in art and architecture. From the canon of ancient Greek sculptors to the golden section used in Renaissance painting, the idea that harmony arises from well-chosen ratios has shaped how people judge beauty. In fashion, the idealized figure of the sketch is often drawn at eight and a half or nine heads in height, although real bodies rarely follow this canon. The designer's task is therefore not to force the body into an abstract ideal, but to use the tools of composition to achieve a visual balance that suits the real figure. The perception of a garment on the body depends on several visual mechanisms. The eye tends to follow dominant lines; it compares widths and lengths of adjacent zones; it is attracted by contrast, brightness and complex detail; and it reads the overall silhouette before noticing the finer elements. These mechanisms are the basis of what is commonly called visual or optical correction. Vertical lines lead the gaze upward and downward and create an impression of height; horizontal lines stop the gaze and add apparent width; diagonal lines introduce dynamism and can break up a static, rectangular form. Areas of strong contrast or decoration become focal points, while quiet, tonal zones recede. Another theoretical concept is the distinction between the real body and the visual body. The real body is described by measurements: height, bust, waist and hip girths, shoulder width, back length and many others. The visual body is the image that observers form when they look at the clothed figure. Skilled design uses the controllable elements of clothing to bring the visual body closer to the harmony that the wearer desires, without denying the individual character of the real body. Finally, ergonomic theory reminds us that the body is not static. Sitting, walking, reaching and bending change the dimensions of the body surface; the back lengthens when a person leans forward, the hip circumference grows when seated, and the elbow and knee demand additional ease. A garment that looks perfect on a mannequin may restrict a living person. Thus, any discussion of body shape must be accompanied by a discussion of movement allowances, ease and the behavior of fabric under tension [1].

Classification of Female Body Shapes. Human body shapes are categorized into various morphological groups based on their anatomical structure, each requiring a specialized approach during the design phase (Figure 1). It should be noted that the classification is a working tool rather than a rigid rule. Scientific studies of figure identification analyze the relationships between bust, waist and hip dimensions, and they show that real bodies form a continuum with many intermediate and mixed types [4]. Nevertheless, a limited number of archetypes allows designers to formulate clear principles and to communicate them to clients and production teams.

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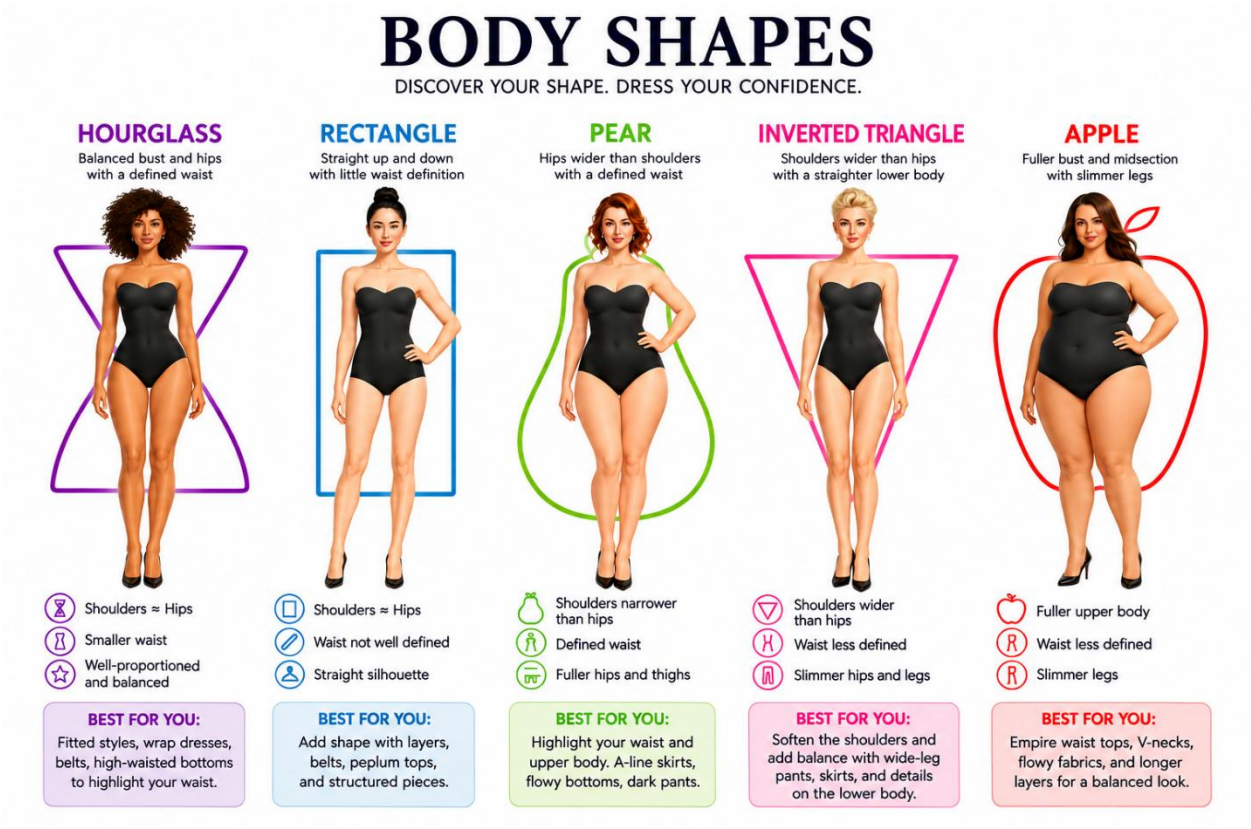


Figure 1. Types of female physique.

"Hourglass" Body Shape. This figure type possesses classic proportions where the shoulders and hips are of relatively equal width, and the waistline is clearly defined. In modern design, the primary goal for this shape is to maintain its natural symmetry and emphasize the waist. This is achieved through waist-accentuating cuts, fitted silhouettes, and structured belts. Additional strategies include the use of wrap constructions, bias-cut skirts that follow the curve of the hip, and princess-line bodices that trace the bust-waist-hip relationship. Designers should avoid boxy, shapeless forms and heavy layering at the waist, which hide the strongest feature of the figure. At the same time, fitted garments for this type require precise darting and accurate balance lines, because the pronounced difference between bust, waist and hip makes any fitting error immediately visible. Stretch fabrics with good recovery, as well as fabrics of medium weight with a soft hand, are particularly appropriate.

"Rectangle" Body Shape. In this profile, the shoulders, waist, and hips are of nearly identical width, with less pronounced feminine curves. When designing for this figure, designers aim to visually "create" a waistline. To achieve this, asymmetric cuts, diagonal lines, contrasting color blocks at the waist, and draping techniques that add volume to either the shoulders or the hemline are highly effective. Peplum details, gathered or belted waists, layered skirts and garments with side ruching also introduce curvature. The rectangle figure is

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often athletic, and it can carry structured tailoring and bold geometric prints very successfully. Rather than concealing the straightness of the figure, a designer may choose to celebrate it through clean, architectural, androgynous silhouettes. This demonstrates an important principle: visual correction is an option, not an obligation, and a conscious decision to emphasize a feature can be as valid as a decision to soften it.

"Pear" (Triangle) Body Shape. This anatomical structure features narrow shoulders and a smaller bust, contrasted by significantly wider hips and thighs. The design objective here is to shift visual attention from the lower body to the upper torso to balance the silhouette. This is successfully executed using volume-adding elements on the shoulders (such as ruffles or yoking), distinctive V-necklines, and straight or slightly A-line cuts for the lower garments. Boat necklines, off-shoulder cuts, structured shoulder lines, bright or patterned tops and darker, plain skirts or trousers all help redistribute visual weight. Fabrics for the lower part of the garment should hold their shape without clinging; medium-weight crepes, ponte knits and wool blends are suitable, whereas very thin, clinging fabrics emphasize the hip and thigh. Attention should also be paid to the position of pockets and seams at the hip: flat, well-placed pockets are preferable to bulky patch pockets. **"Inverted Triangle" Body Shape.** Contrary to the pear shape, this figure features broad shoulders and a well-developed bust, paired with narrow hips and a subtle waist. When modeling clothes for this body type, the main focus is adding volume to the lower half. Flared skirts, pleated trousers, large lower pockets, and raglan sleeves that visually soften the shoulder line help restore proportional harmony. Soft, unstructured shoulder lines, deep V or scoop necklines that break the horizontal width of the shoulders, and dark, simple tops combined with light, textured or patterned bottoms are recommended. Wide-legged trousers, tiered skirts and full, gathered skirts create the missing volume at the hip. Padded shoulders, horizontal stripes across the bust, and heavy embellishment at the neckline should generally be avoided, because they further emphasize the width of the upper body.

"Oval" (Apple) Body Shape. This category is characterized by volume concentrated primarily around the chest, waist, and abdominal areas, often paired with relatively slender legs. Working with this shape is highly relevant when implementing loose-fitting principles, especially within ethno-minimalist concepts or apparel targeted at middle-aged demographics [5]. Visual correction techniques include utilizing vertical princess seams, elongated collars, asymmetric hems, and raising the waistline closer to an empire silhouette [6]. Other helpful solutions are open-front jackets and long cardigans that create a continuous vertical line, V-shaped or wrap necklines, A-line or trapeze silhouettes, and the display of slender legs and arms through shorter hems and three-quarter sleeves. Fabrics should skim rather than cling: fluid crepe, matte jersey and soft cotton blends avoid both stiffness and excessive tension. Elastic waistbands with smooth finishing and hidden shaping panels provide comfort without drawing attention to the abdomen.

Mixed and Transitional Types. In practice, many clients do not correspond exactly to any one of the five categories. A figure may combine a narrow upper body with a full abdomen, or a pronounced waist with a very straight back and flat seat. Posture, shoulder slope, bust prominence, the length of the torso relative to the legs and the height of the person all create additional variation. For this reason, the experienced designer treats the classification as a starting hypothesis, then verifies it with measurements, photographs and fitting sessions, adjusting the pattern to the particular individual [4].

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A short-waisted tall woman and a long-waisted petite woman may both be classified as rectangles, yet need entirely different proportions of bodice and skirt.

Summary of Design Strategies

Body shape	Main design objective	Recommended solutions
Hourglass	Preserve symmetry, emphasize waist	Fitted silhouettes, wrap styles, belts, princess seams
Rectangle	Create the impression of a waistline	Asymmetric cuts, diagonals, peplums, waist color blocks, draping
Pear	Shift attention to the upper body	Shoulder volume, V-necklines, A-line or straight skirts, bright tops
Inverted triangle	Add volume to the lower half	Flared skirts, pleats, raglan sleeves, lower pockets
Oval (apple)	Elongate the torso, lift the waistline	Princess seams, empire waist, long collars, asymmetric hems

In conclusion, the correct selection of body shape and the consideration of its architectonics in modern clothing design represent one of the most critical factors determining the success of the garment projection process. Today, clothing is no longer merely a means to protect the human body from the environment, but a complex work of art that ensures self-expression, aesthetic perfection, and socio-psychological confidence. Research indicates that studying the unique aspects of diverse body structures and effectively utilizing constructive lines, optical illusions, and the plastic properties of fabrics allow designers to visually correct bodily imperfections while accentuating advantages. Particularly, the integration of ergonomics and ethno-minimalism principles in contemporary fashion opens new perspectives for creating elegant garments that respect the physiological characteristics of consumers, including various age groups of women, without restricting their freedom of movement. Consequently, the mutual harmony between body anatomy and garment composition serves as the fundamental basis in design activity for creating competitive products that not only possess high artistic-aesthetic value but also comprehensively meet market demands. Only when a designer truly masters the symbiosis of body anatomy and fabric architectonics can they create competitive, highly aesthetic clothing collections that meet the rigorous demands of contemporary fashion.

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