

Fashion figures

1 Work with a partner to talk about the statistics. Is there anything you find surprising?

2a Read the magazine article about influences on fashion in different countries. What are the main influences on fashion in the UK and the US, India and China?

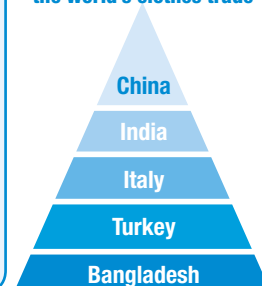
Top five global fashion companies in 2015



Did you know?

- The world clothing and textile industry value is around \$3 trillion.
- Womenswear accounts for \$621 billion and menswear for \$402 billion.
- There are 57.8 million people employed in clothes manufacturing and textiles worldwide.

Top five clothes exporters which supply 54.4% of the world's clothes trade



In the fashion world the market is growing ever more competitive and companies have to find innovative ways to attract their customers. Advertising is no longer restricted to radio, TV and billboards; it is everywhere. This is the same throughout the world. However, different countries follow different fashions – no doubt partly based on advertising as well as culture and climate, but also because they follow different influences.

France is still widely believed to be the fashion capital of the world. Its designers have been leading not just the country but the world with their ideas for centuries. Almost 400 years ago, Louis XIV demanded the highest quality fabrics and set a high standard for luxury clothing. When haute couture began in the nineteenth century, Paris was the obvious home as it had the best materials to hand. Most of the big fashion houses have their headquarters in Paris and, as the inventor of catwalk fashion, Paris is home to the grand finale of fashion week. For the French, as Yves Saint-Laurent said, “Dressing is a way of life”, and so with fashion in their blood they are the ones to influence others.

In **the UK and the US** celebrities play a big role in setting the fashion trends, influencing the population with their appearances on videos, in the press and on social media. In the UK, almost 50% of women follow celebrities for style advice, with successful models and popstars having a strong influence. For some the ultimate celebrities are royalty, and the Duchess of Cambridge certainly has some influence on fashion, as seen by the coining of the phrase “The Kate effect”. This is when certain outfits sell out almost immediately after photos of her wearing them appear in the press.

India is also influenced by celebrities but from a very specific area: Indian cinema, otherwise known as Bollywood. With a huge population to entertain, Bollywood is a billion dollar industry producing over 1,500 films a year. In many cases, the actors are remembered more for the clothes they appear in than the film itself. Some designers



use films to launch their latest designs. Manish Malhotra is one of India's top designers now. His clothes in the film *Rangeela* (1995) were noticed by the Indian



population and his career took off from there. Now tailors all over India await the release of a new film and then reproduce the costumes as best they can.

China, another country with a large population – around 1.3 billion to date – also has huge fashion market potential. However, the sheer size of the country means that there are wide regional variations in fashion. In addition, the strict media regulations mean consumers seek their influences elsewhere. In 2013 China became the world's largest digital retail market, and online fashion retail is growing fast with both Chinese and global fashion companies competing for customers. People who shop online are increasingly looking to social media for guidance on trends and style. This has resulted in the growth of fashion bloggers who have a strong influence. They are now invited to runway shows and fashion events. Clothing labels send them samples in an attempt to court them and obtain their endorsement.

As the world gets smaller, with the rise in technology bringing everyone closer together, fashions will spread more and more easily around the world and will be less and less limited to one country. However, many countries will still have particular people that influence fashion, and it will be their seal of approval that the fashion industry seeks to endorse their products.

2b Read the article again and write the country.

- 1 People seek advice from bloggers who share their ideas and experiences on the Internet.
.....
- 2 The country's film industry has a strong influence on fashion.
.....
- 3 This is where the grand finale of Fashion Week is held.
.....
- 4 Members of the royal family are the ultimate endorsement.
.....
- 5 This country is the one that leads the way in the fashion world.
.....
- 6 Clothing designers use films to show their new collections.
.....

2c Read the article again and match the two halves of the sentences.

- 1 The fashion market is increasingly competitive
socompanies
 - 2 Haute couture became popular in Paris because
 - 3 French people seem to have fashion in their
blood so
 - 4 'The Kate effect' is a catchphrase that has
caught on due to
 - 5 Bollywood films are sometimes used to
 - 6 China is such a large country that there
- a introduce a designer's new collection to the public.
 - b the popularity of the Duchess of Cambridge and her fashion sense.
 - c have to be more creative with their advertising campaigns.
 - d are wide regional differences in fashion.
 - e all the best quality materials were readily available.
 - f they are the ones that influence others.

Gateway to culture

3a Work with a partner and discuss the questions.

- 1 Do you follow fashion at all? Why/Why not?
- 2 What or who makes you consider something to be fashionable?
- 3 Why do you think fashion varies from country to country?

PROJECT

3b You are going to work on a presentation about influences on fashion in your country and another of your choice. Read the questions and prepare your project research.

- 1 Work in pairs and brainstorm fashion in different countries.
- 2 Choose one country in addition to your own and find out more about fashion influences in both countries. Answer the following questions:
 - Who or what influences fashion in the two countries? Why?
 - Have these influences changed over the last century?
 - What are the differences in influences between the two countries?

3c In pairs, use your notes to give a presentation to the rest of the class on your research. Your presentation should be around three minutes long. Make sure you compare the influences of the two countries and have reasons for any variations.