

**APPAREL READINESS CHECKLIST****What do I need before I speak with factories?****Product Information**

Company Name	Company Contact
Company Phone	Company Email
Company Website	
Product Name	Number of Styles
Product Description and Styles	

Services Required

- Full Package: from procurement of materials to marking, grading, cutting, sewing, printing, finishing, folding, and packing
- Cut Make Trim (CMT): won't source any materials, sometimes requires you provide completed markers
- Piecemeal: (cherry-picked selection of needed services such as: marking, grading, cutting, sewing, packing, folding, printing, etc.) Services needed:

Comments

Completed Purchase Order Form

PO needs to break down:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Styles | <input type="checkbox"/> Addresses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sizes | <input type="checkbox"/> Delivery Dates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colorways | <input type="checkbox"/> Packing Instructions |

Approved Fabric and Trim

Create your Bill of Materials (BOM) for your approved fabric and trims for each style.

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|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fabric or trim description | <input type="checkbox"/> Material content | <input type="checkbox"/> Cost |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Usage/placement | <input type="checkbox"/> Color(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Minimum Order Quantity (MOQ) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vendor | <input type="checkbox"/> Width | <input type="checkbox"/> Lead time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Item # | <input type="checkbox"/> Weight | |

Tips: Go to a fabric mill instead of a retailer. Know whether a fabric is in stock or made to order. Get terms with the vendor. Have consistent composition fabrics for each variation of a style. Know your yield. Know your graded lengths for trims. Consider customized elastic and buttons. When starting out, source in-stock, low minimum fabrics; select fewer colors with fewer fabrications; leverage the same fabrics and colors across different styles.

Approved Patterns and Markers

- Approved base patterns - in digital Gerber Format or DXF file format.

- Graded patterns - the process of turning base size or sample size patterns into additional sizes using a size specification sheet or grading increments. Know your grade rules (how many inches you want between sizes).

- Markers – these are like a stencil that shows where garment pieces will be cut from the width of your fabric, to minimize fabric waste. This marker paper is used as a guide for the cutters to cut production (many plies of fabric stacked on top of each other).

Tips: Know the width of the fabric before getting markers made. Know the quantity for each size.

Samples

You may be capable of making production ready samples yourself. You may also be working with your factory on the creation of samples. Make sure any adjustments made in the samples are reflected in the patterns.

Types of samples:

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|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reference samples: a sample you use as a reference to communicate design details that you want very early on in the process | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-production samples: final sample made before production, should be made using fabric from same LOT or batch as production run |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proto samples: your first sample | <input type="checkbox"/> Sales- or Production-ready samples: garments that are exactly as they will be in production and nothing is to be changed or modified |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fit Samples: used to evaluate fit on the human body | |

Value Add Services and Materials

Know what additional services and materials you need, as well as their associated costs.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Hang tags | <input type="checkbox"/> Tape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sample yardage and trim |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stickers | <input type="checkbox"/> Pack and fold labor | <input type="checkbox"/> Set-up costs for dyeing and printing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Labels | <input type="checkbox"/> Shipping | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boxes | <input type="checkbox"/> Sample Making | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

If Printing

Submit vectorized artwork with dimensions and clear placement details.

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- Type of print - screen print – water-based, plastisol, sublimation, direct to fabric, etc.
 - Location - where on the garment
 - Dimensions and size of print
 - Color – Pantone color, etc.
 - Number of prints

Completed Tech Pack and Pattern Card

- Tech Pack
- Pattern Cards

Tips: Make sure your pattern card is detailed. Include which machine needs to be used on which part.

Price Points

Understand your costing model

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- Ideal retail price
 - Manufacturing Price
 - Unit Volume

Tip: If you're willing to pay more per unit when starting out, you can reduce quantities and make your total spend less.

Pitch

Prepare a pitch deck showcasing your company. Get the factory excited about working with you! Pick your ten most compelling message points and build the deck around your unique story. Cover the following key points along the way:

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- Your team and why you are the right team to build the business.
 - Product description and what makes it special.
 - Marketing Strategy: Understand who your target is, what their "pain point" is and how you will address it. Who is your market? How big is the market? If you are able to capture x amount of it, that means x units and x revenue. Where does your target market "hang out" and how will you reach them? Start developing customer demand up front to support distribution and production. Ideas: field marketing and demonstrations, fashion shows, tradeshow, trunk shows, email, social, videos, SEO, Google ads, guest posts, podcast ads and appearances, radio, billboards, print, public relations firms. Budgeting for and have someone on your team who understands marketing and the various options/platforms. Focusing on what your consumer wants: don't be afraid to pivot.
 - Competitive landscape: make sure you understand what similar products are already on the market. Describe your points of differentiation and intellectual property position.
 - Demonstrated demand: Have you demonstrated traction in the market yet? Do you have purchase orders or commitments already in place? Focus on quality revenue; 1000 who will be repeat customers and evangelists are more important than 10,000 one-time buyers. Do you have media coverage?
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- Distribution plan: be creative about where your product would be well received and diversify your distribution channels. Consider ecommerce/direct to consumer, online marketplaces, Amazon, retailers, boutiques, Kickstarter campaign

 - Funding: where is your funding coming from (revenues, friends and family, debt, venture capital, payment terms)? Many factories will want money upfront for research, development, and possibly production. How will you pay for the product? If you are looking for a loan, consider borrowing against a business asset such as equipment, or against a purchase order. Not having a track record can make obtaining a loan very difficult. Borrowing against your house or 401k is extremely risky – carefully consider all other options first. Friends and family loans are the most common funding sources for start-ups. Factories will run a credit check; be prepared.

 - Plan: Projections for next 5 years: projected volume, direction of the company or product line
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