

# Research Methods for Product Design (Portfolio Skills Product Design)

**Tutorial**  
**How to write a literature review**

Conducting a comprehensive literature review requires you to follow, step-by-step, series of important stages:

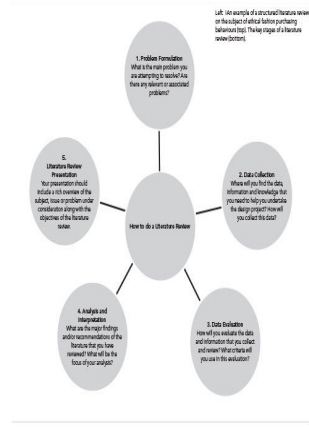
- 1. Problem formulation**  
 What is the main problem you are attempting to resolve? Are there any relevant or associated problems? What subjects and/or disciplines have data, information and/or knowledge that might help resolve the main problem and any associated problems and issues? For example, the root of the problem might be an 'energy' issue, and physical scientists and/or engineers may possess relevant information and knowledge. However, you might need to delve deeper to find the information and knowledge you require from more specific scientists and/or engineers, such as geologists, material scientists, mechanical engineers and electronics engineers. For example, you should always have an open mind on the data and information you collect and seek to find competing and opposing data. Are the 'reports' always correct? Is there another way? Why is information from sources A so different to that from source B?
- 2. Data collection**  
 Where will you find the data, information and knowledge that you need to help you undertake the design project? How will you collect it? How wide and deep will you search for it? You need to ensure that you cover as wide a review of the literature as you possibly can in the time permitting, including published articles, papers, books, reports,

academic dissertations, conference papers, trade magazine articles, patent searches, legal reports, analogous product information, statistical data, government and private bodies' reports and market 'smell' data. All of these would be relevant to a typical product design project.

- 3. Data evaluation**  
 How will you evaluate the data and information that you collect and review? What criteria will you use for this evaluation? For example, what is the provenance of the information – that is, how authentic is it and what is its quality? Is the report objective? How is the author being unbiased or prejudicial in his or her reporting of the research? How persuasive is the report? What is the value of the data and information that you have found and reviewed?
- 4. Analysis and interpretation**  
 What are the major findings and/or recommendations of the literature that you have reviewed? What will be the focus of your analysis? Will the analysis be based on quantitative or qualitative data, or both? The analysis and interpretation of the data and information that you have collected during your literature search is an important element of the literature review and should help you structure your report and presentation for the next stage.
- 5. Literature review presentation**  
 You need to ensure that you cover the literature you have reviewed as comprehensively as possible in your presentation. So, as a guide, your presentation should include a rich overview of the subject, issue or problem under consideration, along with the objectives of the literature review. You should then divide the work you have found in your review into categories (e.g. those in support of a particular position, those against and those offering completely different positions entirely), showing how each work is similar to or different from the others.

Chapter 3 Learning

Literature review	1. Changing times 1.1 Fast fashion 1.1.1 The true cost of fast fashion 1.2 Growth of the value sector 1.3 The high street 1.4 The ethical consumer 1.5 The fashion industry 1.6 Impact of the recession	4. Consumer purchasing behaviour 4.1 Ethical awareness levels 4.2 Influential factors 4.3 Justification strategies 4.4 Purchasing hierarchy 4.5 The intention-behaviour gap 4.6 The purchasing process
	2. Defining ethical 3. The ethical fashion market 3.1 Market segmentation 3.2 High street availability 3.3 Labelling	5. The role of the retailer 5.1 Corporate social responsibility (CSR) 5.2 Who controls the industry 5.3 Retailer-consumer communication
		6. Conclusions



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