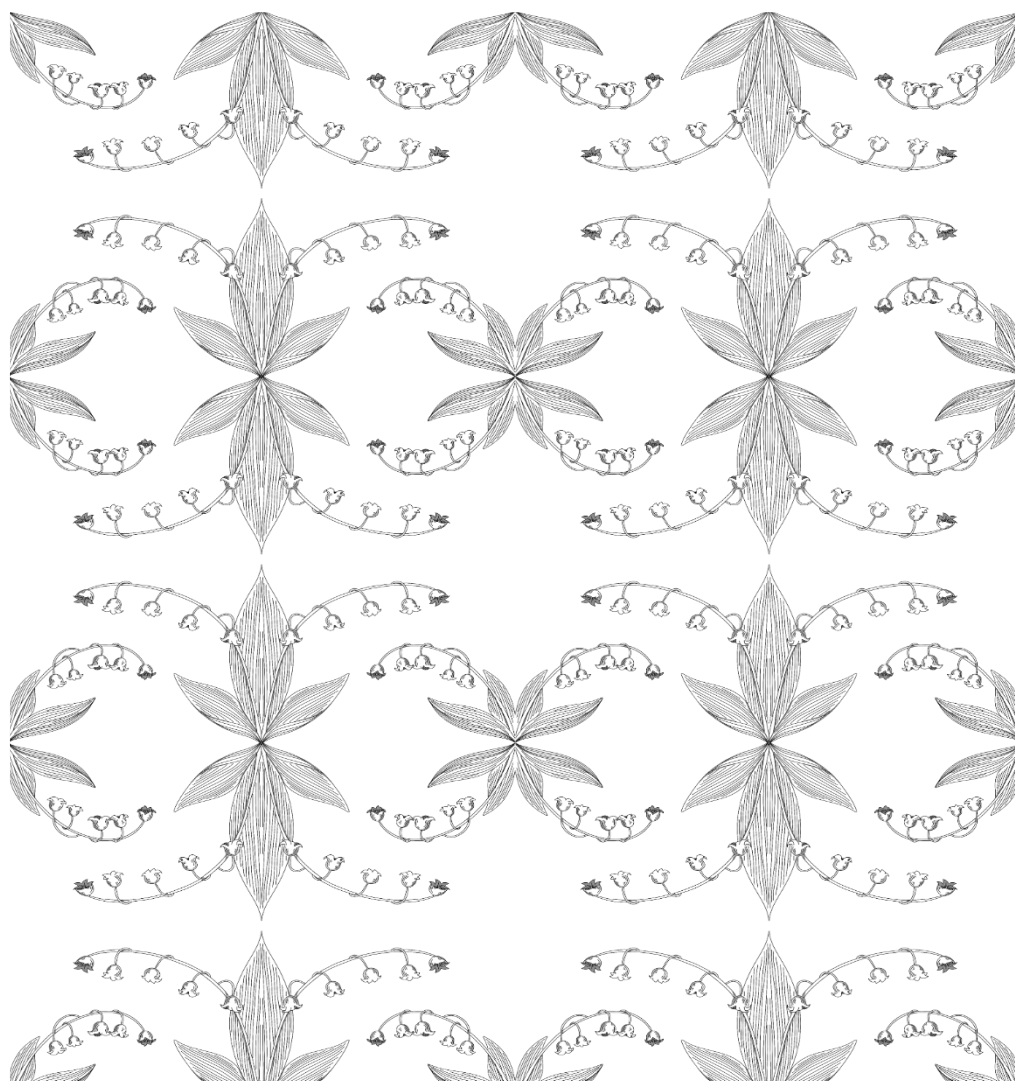


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By Savannah Gerber

Hello,

My name is Savanah Gerber, I am a fashion design student that is currently pursuing an honours degree at Nelson Mandela University in South Africa.

For my fashion apparel entry, I will be presenting a concept titled “Natural Summer”, in which I aim to reinvent summer for the everyday consumer. The idea behind the design was to create a garment that is functional and stylish but is not so extravagant that it becomes unwearable. The design’s simplicity allows versatility so that it can be worn by all ages and styled according to their personal taste. This simplicity supports easy marketing and creates opportunities for alternative variations of the design to be considered.

One of my key goals when designing the garment is to ensure that, if it were to be produced on a large scale, that it would be affordable for many buyers. Sustainable fashion is not accessible to everyone due to the high cost associated with it– which is a result from cost of natural materials, and environmentally friendly production practices as they are not yet the standard in the industry.

During my research, I was particularly influenced by Karl Aspelund’s *The Design Process*, where he discusses the importance of working within consumer culture to promote sustainability as a far more successful choice than protesting the culture itself. This insight shifted my perspective and helped define what kind of garment I want to create.

For the fabric, I have chosen a hemp and organic cotton blend which creates a light linen-like material, making it ideal for summer or spring seasons. The fabric is breathable, comfortable, and environmentally conscious. Hemp is sustainable because of its fast growth and low usage of water, while organic cotton uses alternate methods of farming by eliminating the use of harmful pesticides, making it a safer and more eco-friendly alternative.



Natural Summer



Inspiration

The source of my inspiration was a skort and how I could transform it into a jumpsuit that is still breathable for either summer or spring when the temperature rises. For the design, I wanted the design to be fashionable and fun by including a floral print design, but also simple for the everyday consumer by designing a garment that can be worn as is and accessorised or layered with other clothing items to fit the consumer's unique style.

Sustainability as inherent constraints

The brief requires sustainable and ethical considerations for materials used in the design, so I would need to decide on a fabric that fits the style and breathability that I am looking for while also meeting the requirements of the brief.

For the design, I want to use a minimal amount of materials so that the final cost of the product is not too high for it to be affordable for consumers. The price of the finished garment needs to be reasonable so that sustainable clothing is made available for people with different incomes.

If the garment will have a print design, the method of printing must meet the sustainable and ethical requirements of the brief.

Exploration of alternatives

Hemp can be considered as an alternative for its minimal environmental impact: it reduces the amount of chemicals, water and energy that is normally used with conventional farming. Not only does it consume less and lower the carbon footprint, but the fabric is also hypoallergenic and durable. Hemp Fibre can either be woven on its own or it can be blended with other natural fibres such as organic cotton.

Hemporium, based in Cape Town, South Africa, offers a variety of different hemp weights and blends. The fabric that fits the requirements of my design in terms of breathability is their summer weight organic hemp linen fabric, in which they offer a normal and wide width. The fabric is blended with 55% hemp and 45% organic cotton. Hemporium offers price breaks on bulk orders, where you can save more by buying more.

Organic cotton uses farming methods that minimise its impact on the environment by making use of sustainable practices and is farmed in an ethical manner.

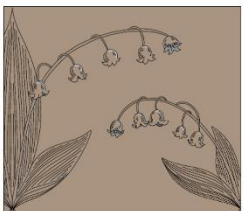
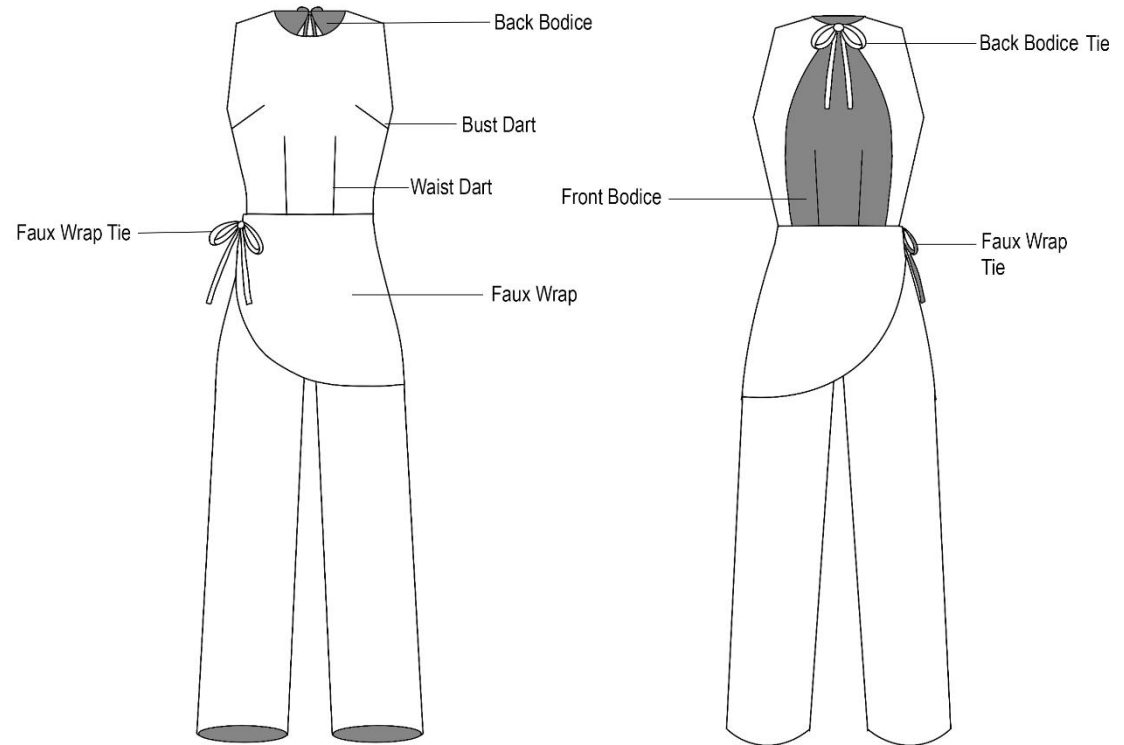
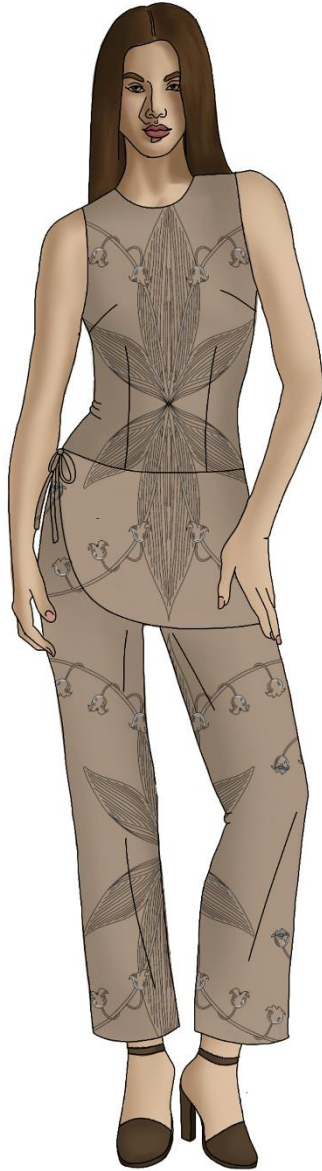
Adjustability is a consideration to allow a comfortable fit – instead of using a zipper – which elastic and drawstrings offer. There are elastic rubber bands made with natural and organic materials available.

For print design purposes, digital printing is a solution for sustainable printing. Digital printing cuts down water usage and waste while also offering eco-friendly water-based inks that are biodegradable.

Imaterial, based in Cape Town, offer digital printing services where they make use of eco-friendly water-based inks in their printing process. They make sure to cut down on energy usage and waste to lower their carbon output. Imaterial does offer bulk order services.

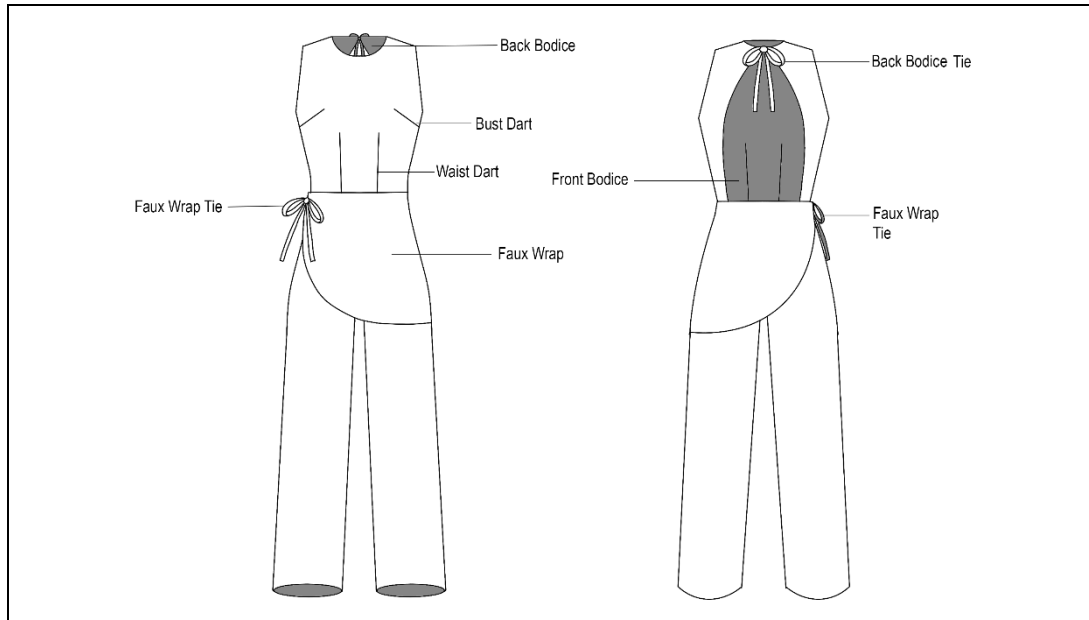
Natural Summer

"Natural Summer" is a jumpsuit designed for spring or summer seasons with its natural hemp material that is built for warmer weather conditions due to its breathability.



Only Natural Competition

Garment Type	Jumpsuit
Size	34
Designer	Savanah Gerber



Fabric: 45% Hemp 55% Organic Cotton blend

Colour: Natural Greige

Use: Outer and Inner

Width: 240cm

Pattern Makers Notes:

- Bodice and pants drafted as separate pieces
- Pants have a wide or slightly flared design
- Lining for front and back bodice
- 1cm seam allowance all around except pants and faux wrap hemline
- 1,5 cm seam allowance for pants hemline
- 1,5 cm seam allowance for faux wrap hemline
- Asymmetrical faux wrap with ties
- 4 x 20cm length and 2cm width ties for faux wrap skirt and back bodice
- Bust dart and waist dart for fitted bodice
- Open back for breathability

Machinist's Notes:

- Elastic for back of pants for adjustability
- Rolled hemline for wrap skirt
- Rolled hemline for pants
- Ties to ironed 5mm twice, then topstitched close to get desired look.
- Faux wrap side seam to be sewn with pants side seam

Material Breakdown

Only Natural Competition

Garment type	Faux Wrap Jumpsuit
Designer	Savanah Gerber

No.	Description	Price	Width	Quantity Used	Total
1	Hemp/Organic Cotton linen blend	R 437,00	245cm	100cm	R 437,00
2	Organic elastic ECRU/ Red Thread	R 77,06	10mm	Estimated 30 cm	R 23,17
				Total Cost	R 460,17

References

Hemporium. (2025). *Hemp Textiles*. Retrieved from Hemporium: <https://www.hemporium.co.za/textiles>

iMaterial. (2025). *Quality digital printing*. Retrieved from iMaterial:
<https://www.imaterial.co.za/Processes/Digital-Printing>