

2023

Industry / Insights / Design

FORECAST



SOFT SERVE STUDIO

Foreword

After taking stock of the past few years and then looking forward to 2023 and beyond, it's hard not to feel like we're in the middle of a grey zone. A confusing, quasi-post-pandemic period that's somewhat of a paradox. On the one hand, there are renewed freedoms to embrace while on the other there are new risks to navigate. In many ways, the tension between embracing life and simply existing is greater than at any time in the last three years. In this edition of the Forecast, we look at a handful of these opposing forces and explore how they are driving us and influencing design in 2023.

Forecast 2023

Insights

The things, ideas and people that are influencing customer, brands and products.

Design

Emerging details and directions from the world of soft goods.

Presented in partnership with

Carryology

Cover artwork by Cricket Saleh

Insights

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Insights

You First

In 1993, Wu-Tang declared that cash rules everything around us. Jump forward twenty years, and although price tags and wages are still dominant forces, for a growing number of people their importance is being reprioritised. Back in 2020, when huge numbers of workers found themselves working from home for the first time, the snap change to remote work prompted a moment of self-reflection. Across most developed

countries around 50-70% of the workforce found themselves working from home, many for the first time. The isolation combined with the existential threat of a global pandemic caused many of those workers to re-evaluate their priorities, with many questioning the pursuit of money. According to a recent Gallup poll, over 60% of respondents cited “work-life balance” or “personal well-being” as

the most important factor in deciding whether to take a new job, not remuneration. A shift that’s been a driving force in the “Great Resignation” phenomenon of the last two years. Thanks to the experience of remote work, these same people also know that businesses are capable of changing to accommodate their needs. This awakening of personal values and self-empowerment is not only relevant to the workplace but to how consumers shop, what they shop for and their expectations of brands.

The home office is one place where this new empowerment of workers is having a practical impact. Workers are increasingly putting themselves first by crafting their work environments to facilitate their ideal lifestyle. This has led to a boom in home office renovations and new office furniture solutions. A September 2021 report by Allied Market Research estimates the global home office furniture market will more than double from \$3.03 billion in 2020 to \$7.61 billion by 2030. Or for those wanting to separate work from home, there is a huge range of backyard office solutions hitting the market in all shapes and for all budgets, from the

flat-packed “Room In The Garden” to the conceptual Hanare Zen outdoor office. Or if staying home isn’t what you’re after, Nissan recently released the NV350 caravan office pod, which they describe as

“a business vehicle for professionals and outdoor enthusiasts alike.”

A concept vehicle for the ultimate digital nomad lifestyle. Some may see these as simply the natural move away from working at the kitchen table, but given the investments being made (from \$5k to over \$30K), it represents a significant commitment to a long-term lifestyle vision. One in which health and happiness come first.

This awakening of personal values is not just changing workplace relations, it’s also playing out in how consumers are spending. Increasingly, shoppers are expecting more from brands than a good product at a good price. Now personal values are a major factor when it comes to purchasing. According to a 2021 Ipsos poll, 70% of respondents from across 25 countries say they buy



Insights

Digital Experiences

from brands they believe reflect their own principles – an increase from 40% in 2013. Values-based shopping is particularly important to younger generations, with 83% of Millennials favouring brands that align with their values. Whether consumers are looking for brands that are committed to environmental action or diversity and inclusivity, the bottom line is, shoppers are putting their beliefs before their

money. They are avoiding brands that do not align with them on a personal level and are spending more with those that do. The key message is that it's more important than ever for brands to go through the same soul-searching process in order to clearly understand and communicate what they believe and why they exist.

In March 2022, Decentraland, a virtual destination for digital assets, hosted the first Metaverse fashion week. Users were able to create an avatar and explore the digital retail world inspired by Avenue Montaigne in Paris. This is the first time big brands such as D&G and Elie Saab have started to innovate within the virtual space, with designs that replicate their runway collection and showcase new exclusive digital clothing. This is a significant milestone for the fashion industry as it begins to experiment with the new medium and explore how it can merge with the traditional, in-person fashion week experience.

convergence of digital and physical are real, with over 100 billion dollars a year spent on virtual goods. And as the metaverse market saturation is still so low, smaller businesses should not be afraid to experiment because even small moves will stand out.



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Insights

Going Small is Big

COVID-19 has played havoc with global supply over the last two years, and the disruption to centralised sourcing models has left many businesses reassessing the large amount of risk tied up in these vulnerable supply chains. For the first time ever, a McKinsey survey identified supply-chain turmoil as the greatest threat to growth across all of the companies and countries' economies with which they are involved – greater than the pandemic, labour shortages, geopolitical instability, war and domestic conflict. Out of this new reality, a new term has emerged in the lingo of CEOs, COOs and entrepreneurs – “micro production”.

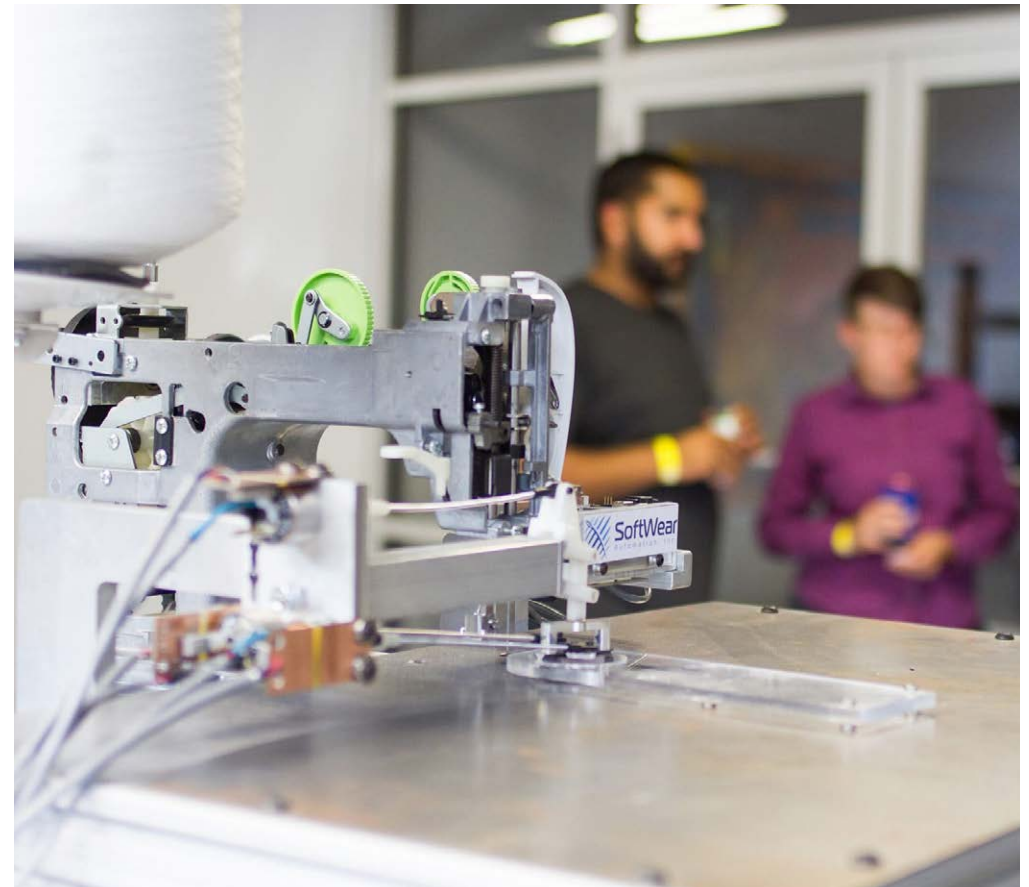
As the name suggests, micro production is all about going smaller. According to Tarek Sultan, Vice Chairman of the global supply chain company Agility,

“Micro supply chains are finite, decentralized, agile ‘mini operating models’, with flexible supplier contracts and relationships, and manufacturing closer to the point of purchase”.

By using a network of smaller, distributed factories that each serve their regional markets, micro production mitigates the risk compared to a large production centre that ships products worldwide. On top of the reduced risk, these supply chains are also super flexible and can react to changes in the market. As the production facility is reduced in size and complexity, changes to products can be made faster, with less overall disruption. Being closer to the customer also greatly reduces transportation costs and time. And thanks to advances in technology, especially RFID, micro-production can be an option for small businesses, allowing raw materials, production status and inventory to be tracked and managed in real-time.

One major disadvantage to consider before going micro is the increased production cost that occurs with the reduction in production efficiency. And as smaller production lines change more often, maintaining quality standards can be problematic, meaning a greater level of quality control is required. But despite the cost increases at a product level, utilising the emerging micro-production options can

be a way to reduce initial inventory costs and free up cash flow. A model that both reduces risk and can potentially help brands to grow more sustainably.



Insights

Pandemic Revenge

On a daily basis, each of us is forced to find a balance between living and existing. From the big decisions down to the smallest details, we oscillate between enjoying the moment and thinking long term. Now, after two years of focusing mostly on existence, the pendulum is swinging back toward living life to the fullest. As people regain more freedom to travel and spend, they're making the most of it and making up for lost time. But, more than that, many are venting frustrations and letting go of their inhibitions by travelling, dressing and spending the way they've always wanted but never felt bold enough to.

For the first time since the start of the pandemic, travel spending in April 2022 (\$100 billion) was 3% above 2019 levels. Not only are people travelling more, but they are also willing to spend more to do it. One example of the new kind of travel that's driving this growth is GOAT (greatest of all time) travel, which is all about seizing the day and ticking off bucket list items. Expedia reported that 73% of Singaporeans are planning to go big on their next trip, with a new "no regrets" style of travel.

Christie Hudson, Senior PR Manager for brand Expedia, commented that

"Travel is no longer just about going somewhere. Travellers are planning to be more present and live in the moment, immerse themselves in culture, splurge on experiences and seek out excitement."

Boldness has also been a consistent theme across the catwalks in 2022. Although there was a continuation of comfort being king, there was also a fresh injection of colour and focus on fun. From the acid tones of Versace to the enduring popularity of 90s rave graphics and Y2k themes, designers and shoppers are having more fun with their wardrobes. One new trend to have emerged is "Kidcore", which has been described as "dressing for your younger self, uninhibited by drab office wear or 'adult' standards of formality". According to the State of Fashion report by McKinsey, the industry has seen a decrease in revenue of over 20% since 2020, but there are signs of a rebound, partly driven by consumers wanting to "reboot".

And given that the luxury category is making a huge comeback, it would appear that consumers are taking the chance to be bold with both their style and their money.

While there is no end in sight for the pandemic, and with multiple other global catastrophes either taking place or on the horizon, it's possible that this phenomenon is not simply a short-term rebound but rather a long-term change in consumer outlook.

Years of simply existing might have altered the daily calculations, making boldness part of the new normal. With this shift comes an opportunity for brands to also take a bold approach. For the right brands, there's a chance to take a risk on more niche or more expensive items. For others, it might be the chance to show some of their true personality by experimenting with new materials, colours and finishes.

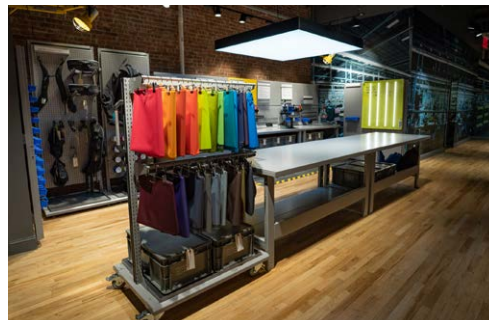


Insights

Frugal Consumer

At the same time as many of us are increasingly looking to buy more ethically or just cut loose with our spending, the negative global economic outlook is adding another dimension to our purchasing decisions. With ongoing supply shortages, war, rising inflation and interest rates, the recent economic forecasts have been bleak. Across most developed economies, the debate is mostly around exactly how bad things are going to get. But whilst the discussion is all speculative, the effect it's having on consumers isn't. Kantar recently revealed that 61% of global consumers are concerned about the state of the global economy to the point that they are beginning to take action. Of these respondents, 70% reported paying more attention to prices, 58% were looking for products on sale and 42% were delaying big purchases. Clearly, with such uncertainty on the horizon, consumers are taking belt-tightening steps to feel confident in their own financial future. But while budgets are tightening, both shoppers and brands are looking for creative ways to make their money go further. Spending strategically so that they can still have a glass of champagne, despite the beer budget.

The frugal consumer isn't looking for the cheapest option, they're looking to spend smart. Longevity and multifunctionality play a big part in assessing if something is of good value. Smart brands are thinking creatively about how to add more value to products without increasing the cost. Korean retailer S.I. Village launched a capsule collection "10 Months", an efficient, high-quality clothing system to maximise the value of each piece. The range was designed so that garments can be layered up and de-layered to cover a full year of wear. In the US, Arcteryx has been rolling out its ReBird repair stores across major cities. According to Dominique Showers, VP of ReBird, the initiative is all about keeping gear in the field longer - something that's good for the environment but also good value for the customer.



Insights

Wellness Infused

As more and more reports are released on the effects of lockdowns on mental health, it's clear that the past two years have had a net negative effect across the world. But, despite these detrimental effects, it has also forced an acknowledgement of the importance of mental health across all sectors of the community. The New Zealand government recently listed "improving mental health" as its fifth highest priority, with Australia following suit this year. The general awareness around mental health and self-care has now grown to a point that it's become an ongoing discussion. This discussion is not confined to private medical settings but is happening at home and within workplaces. Now the collective awareness of wellness principles is increasingly influencing how we work and travel, as well as driving a new wave of health-focused product design.

As the wellness movement aims to promote practising daily healthy habits, elements of wellness are becoming infused into everything around us. Within the home, products are capitalising on this movement, such as the Gravity x Modernist Weighted Robe. The robe has a 1.36 kg weighted collar

that provides pressure stimulation they claim will increase serotonin and melatonin - hormones responsible for relaxation - and decrease cortisol, the stress hormone. Sleep is another strong focus for many recent wellness innovations. Gamma Ray Optics Blue Light Blocking Glasses are designed to mitigate the amount of blue light in our lives, which may disrupt our brain's natural sleep-wake cycles. Blocking this light aims to help wearers get a better night's sleep and reduce anxiety. This surge in wellness products has grown in tandem with the general pandemic-induced awareness of mental health, which in turn is driving demand for solutions.



Even products traditionally focused on fitness are now being reframed around wellness.

The fitness tracker Noom, which last year saw its revenue double to \$400 million, recently stated its plans for growth, which are all about expanding beyond fitness.

They see the greatest potential moving from weight loss into broader aspects of personal health, such as sleep and anxiety.

When it comes to travel, self-care has been one of the greatest driving forces, even before the pandemic. According to the Global Wellness Institute, prior to the pandemic the wellness tourism was already growing at a faster rate than the overall tourism industry. Now, with a significant percentage of the workforce suffering from stress and burnout, wellness travel has evolved beyond just yoga retreats. The “Vitamin Vacay” has been one of the most talked about travel trends of 2022. What makes it notable is how loose the concept is; nobody seems to know exactly what a Vitamin

Vacay looks like, but they all agree the goal is a vacation to focus 100% on your own well-being, which might even mean doing nothing at all. According to a 2022 report by Expedia, the trip experience 38% of Americans are looking forward to the most is the chance to “relax and do nothing” - the most popular response. Far from the Instagram-friendly trips of pre-2020, today more than 36% of US travellers claim “searching for a sense of contentment and mental well-being” is their main travel goal.

While most brands wouldn’t feel directly connected to the wellness market, the shift in public attitudes is still relevant. As public awareness around mental health and wellness principles seeps deeper into mainstream culture, increasingly it will play into customer decision-making. Customers will be more aware of making choices to make their lives easier, less chaotic and more sustainable, and brands should be taking these factors into consideration when designing goods and services.



Insights

Carbon Positive

As world leaders and companies around the globe race to limit the rise in the global average temperature there is naturally a strong collective focus on reducing emissions – specifically carbon emissions. While the debate about how best to reduce emissions dominates the headlines there is a lesser-known movement on the other side of the equation that’s building momentum, carbon removal. What is carbon removal? As Kathy Fallon, director of land and climate at the Clean Air Task Force puts it;

“If you think of the atmosphere as a bathtub and you think of the water as carbon dioxide, emissions reductions are turning down the faucet, so turning down the flow of water into the tub. Removals is opening the drain and drawing out the amount of carbon that’s already in the atmosphere or the amount of water that’s in the tub.”

Up until recently, for a business that manufactured goods, carbon removal

has generally meant adopting an offset program such as reforestation. A number of brands have had great success in recent years by connecting sales with tree planting. As beneficial as this approach is, it tends to view products as a burden to be balanced out. Now material scientists are looking at products through a carbon removal lens and asking how fabrics and products can contribute more directly. One example is Bloom foam, an EVA substitute made partially from algae cleared from polluted



waterways. Compared with conventional foam, the use of algae has a number of environmental advantages to offer. For Bloom, the two key benefits they chose to promote are the litres of water cleaned and the volume of CO2 sequestered by the algae.

Going another step further is the pilot program taking place at the Fotografiska museum restaurant in Stockholm. There, an experimental apron has been developed that actively absorbs carbon

dioxide from the environment throughout the day. The restaurant then releases the carbon dioxide into its kitchen greenroom through a heat-activation process, feeding the surrounding plants. According to Edwin Keh, the project instigator from The Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel, A T-shirt made from the carbon-capturing fabric would be able to absorb about a third of what a tree absorbs per day.



Design

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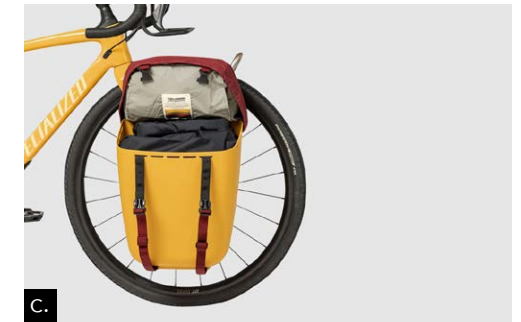
Design Themes

Humble Design

Tom Sachs General Purpose Shoe has been one of the biggest sneaker releases of 2022, proving that boring is popular. Amid the rush to innovate and differentiate, simple honest products are cutting through the noise. Getting back to the idea that products are in essence tools for daily life. Keeping things simple is key to humble design, along with ensuring great functionality and quality.



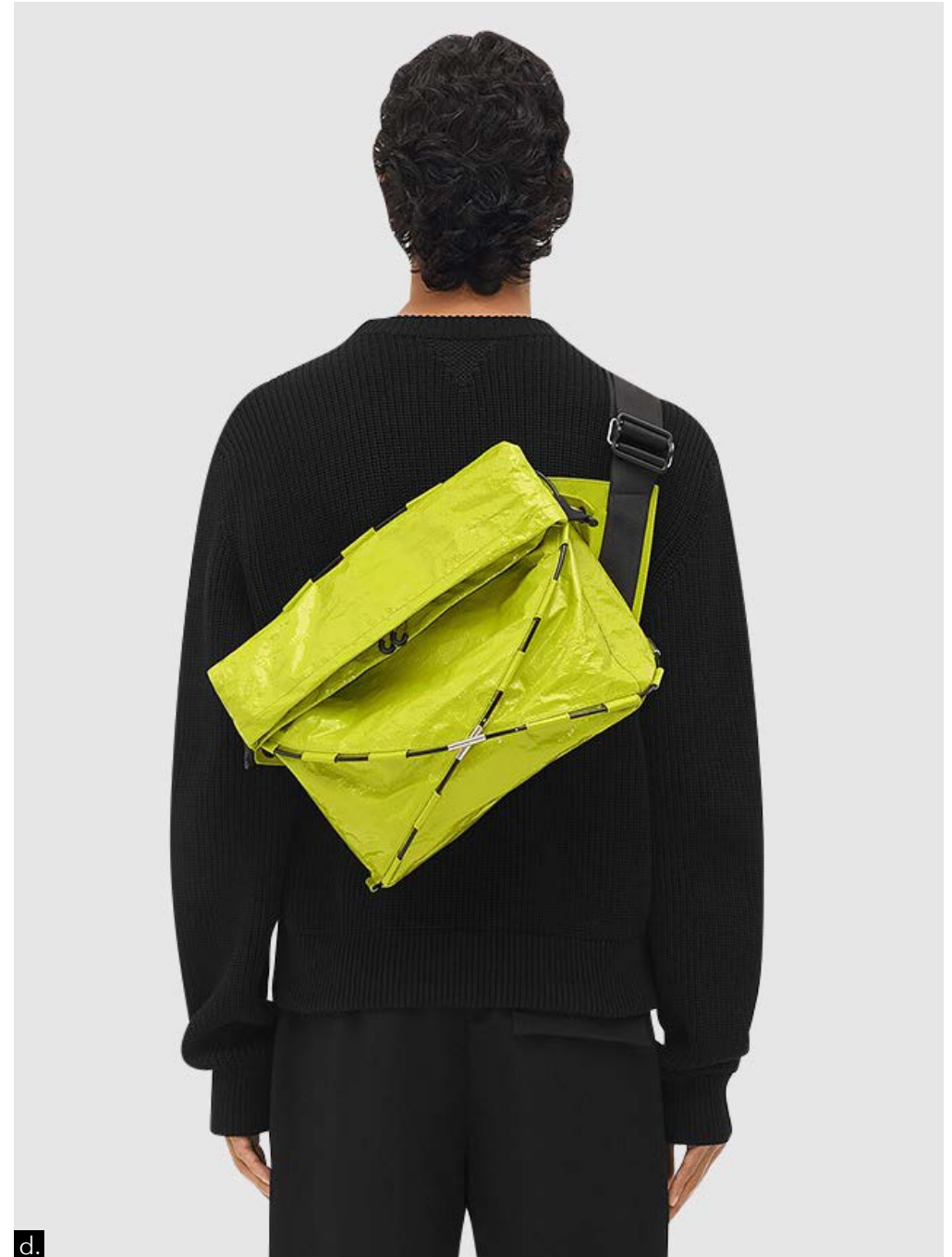
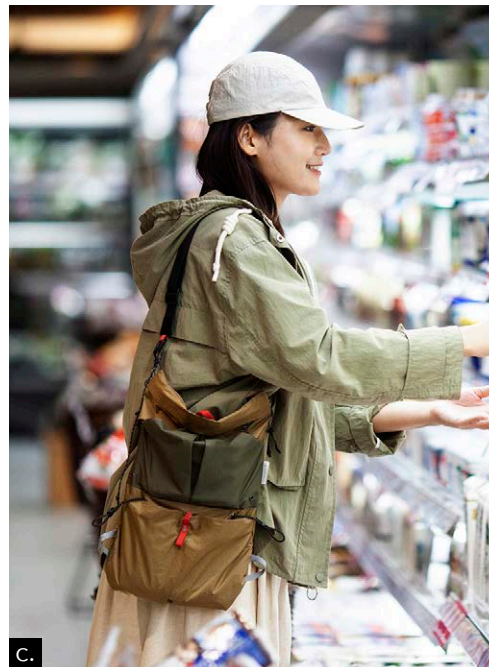
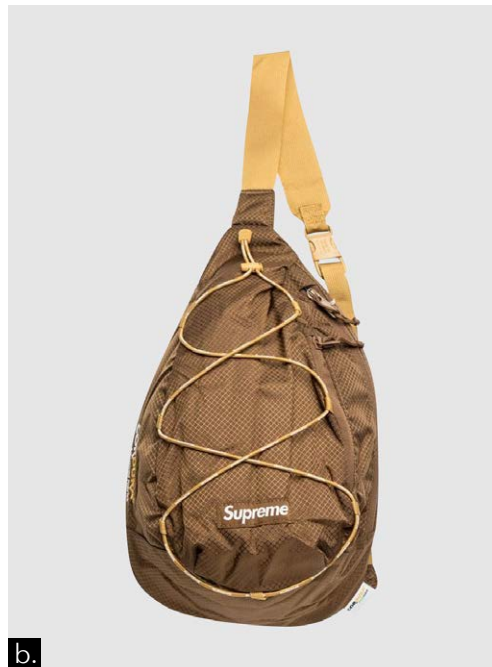
- a. Bottega Veneta, Logo Print Shoulder Bag
- b. Marni, Logo Shopper Tote
- c. Specialized X Fjallraven, Cave Lid Pack
- d. Tom Sachs, General Purpose For Nike
- e. Specialized X Fjallraven, Bike Packs



Campfluence

Getting back to nature remains a strong driving force for both consumers and brands. The trend of blending the outdoors and everyday is now taking inspiration from 80s and 90s camping gear. From rudimentary shapes to bold colours and shock cord details, the old-school camp styles feel simple and familiar.

- a. Dior, Summer 2023
- b. Supreme, Logo Patch Sling Bag
- c. Greenroom, Marcher 3 Way Bag
- d. Bottega Veneta, Tent Bag



Nostalgia

The growing wave of nostalgia is bringing back bold colours and obscure pop culture references from the 70s, 80s and 90s. It's partly about boldness and partly about a retreat into a safe place. When the future feels scary, there is comfort in returning to happy memories.

- a. IWEARUP, Clear Skies Backpack
- b. Adidas X Gucci, 2022
- c. Porter X Doraemon, Long Wallet
- d. Moschino, Toy Letters Wallet



Modern Military

The military has always been a strong influence on both the outdoor and fashion industries. For the most part, the influence has been literal, replicating actual military styles or camouflage patterns. Now, these traditional designs are being reimagined into something new. While the army connection is still obvious, there is a futuristic or surreal twist to the new crop of designs that's both refreshing and a lot less macho.

- a. *Emigre*, Black Travel Backpack
- b. *Études*, Gradient Effect Belt Bag
- c. *Helly Hansen*, Logo Top Handle Tote
- d. *Loewe*, Military Backpack



a.



b.



c.



d.

Design Styles

Classic Hiker

There's a reason that the classic hiking backpack has barely changed in over 140 years. The marriage of casual style with comfort and function makes the style hard to improve on. Thanks to its simplicity the classic hiker naturally finds the sweet spot between relaxed and work-friendly. What's more, it's inherently waterproof, making it a great bike-to-work option. Keeping things soft and unstructured is key to blurring the line between work and weekends.

- a. *Ally Capellino, Patrick Backpack*
- b. *Stone Island, Aggressives Gommato*
- c. *Stone Island, 40th Anniversary Backpack*
- d. *Stone Island, Mussola Gommata*



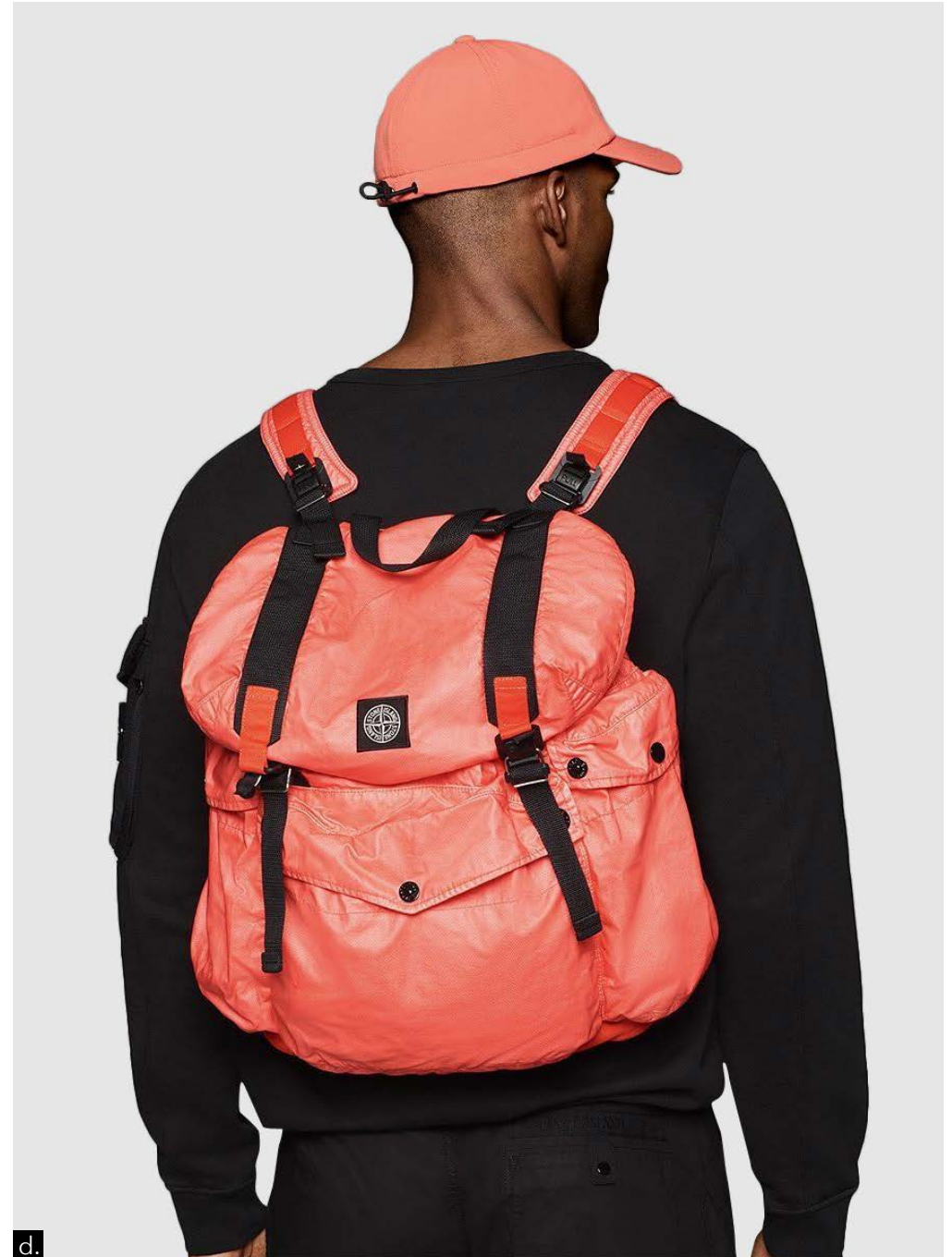
a.



c.



b.



d.

Side Sling

From biking to hiking or just walking the dog, getting out and active has never been more popular. For those heading out the door with the bare essentials, the side sling has become the go-to solution thanks to its body-hugging ergonomics. Perfectly sized to carry just the daily essentials, the style usually leans toward the technical but can easily cross over to more urban settings.

- a. Pa'lante, Side Bag
- b. Yesesyese X Hiker Workshop, X-3
- c. Klattermusen, Eldner 2.0



a.

Capsule Duffel

The unconventional boxy shapes and modern design lines of the capsule duffel are a lesson in form following function. The style is all about maximising the utility of the bag, letting go of traditional duffel shapes to make way for multiple carry options, innovative openings and smart organisation. This is all aimed at creating the perfect travel companion - sleek, lightweight and perfect for all sorts of adventures.

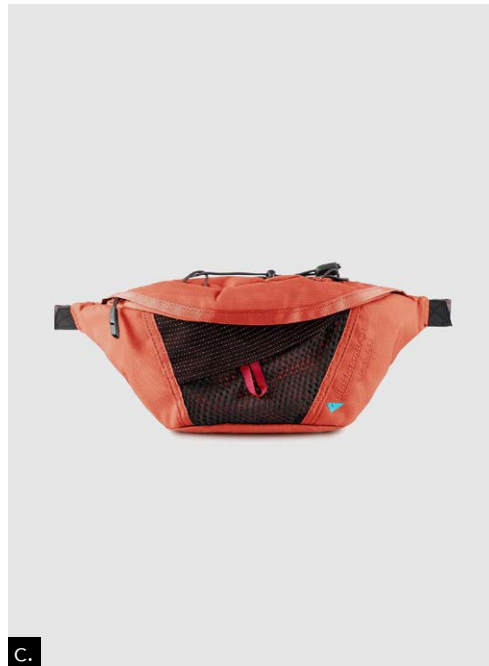
- d. Black Ember, Dex 30
- e. THULE, Aion Duffel
- f. Racing Atelier X Art & Science, Duffel



d.



b.



c.



e.

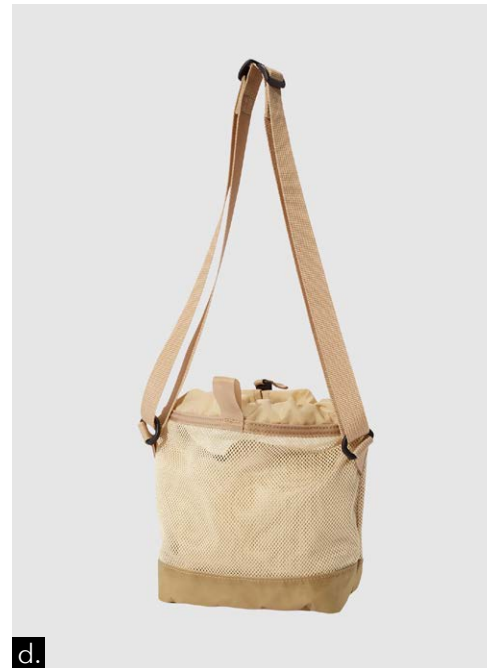
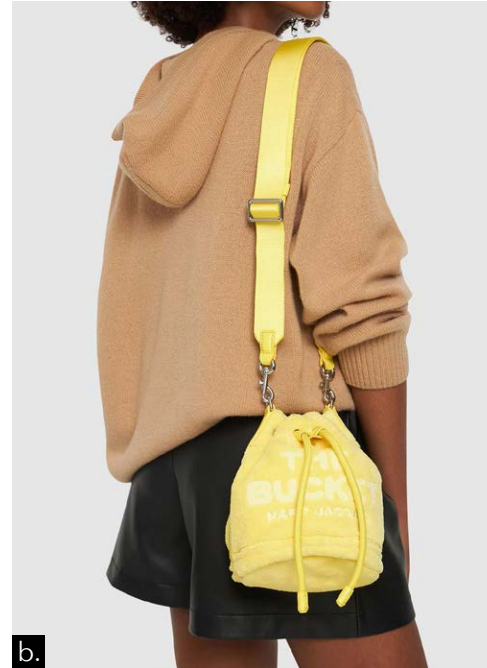


f.

Bucket Bag

Since around 2018 the bucket bag has been a topic of debate in fashion circles, yoyoing in and out of favour. Now, not only does the bucket bag seem to be making a fashion resurgence, but it is also increasingly crossing over into the streetwear and outdoor scene. Its casual simplicity makes it an interesting alternative to zipped shoulder bags, and the drawstring makes it feel at home in the outdoors context.

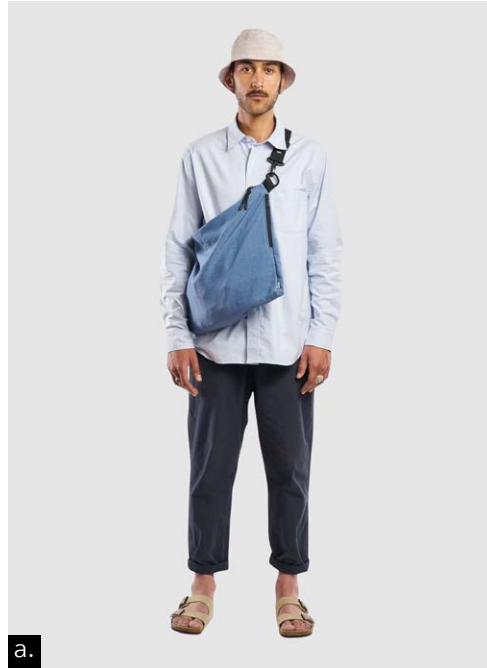
- a. Niwaki, Katan Bucket Bag
- b. Marc Jacobs, The Leather Bucket Bag
- c. Ramidus, Two Way Stretch
- d. Porter Yoshida X Saturdays NYC, Drawstring Bag
- e. Lastframe, Tsubo Bag



Musette Max

Sitting somewhere in the lineage between a tote and a sacoché, the musette max is becoming a popular option for those wanting an alternative to commuting with a backpack. It's reasonably sized for office carry, with capacity for around a 15-inch laptop. Plus, as it's essentially a zipped messenger bag, it's hands-free and bike-friendly, although not entirely waterproof. With its slightly sloppy relaxedness, the musette max is best suited to casual work and weekend duties.

- a. *Pale Berlin, Parc*
- b. *Fair Weather, packable Sacoche*
- c. *Lost Management Cities, LMC Eco Bag*



Grocery Bag

First, there was the plastic bag of the 1970s. Then came the reusable revolution of the early 2000s led by brands like Baggu. Now the humble grocery bag is being reinvented by everyone from luxury to street brands, each bringing their own take on the classic, super simple design.

- d. *Marni, Basketball Tote*
- e. *A.P.C., Logo Print Mesh Tote*
- f. *Porter Yoshida & Co, Packable Grocery Bag*



The Casual Camera Bag

This small, cross-body bag gets its name from the classic camera bag shape that it's based on. In recent years it's been a luxury brand staple, classically in high-quality leather. Now, thanks to its versatility, it's dressing down to become a casual option for everyday duties. Coincidentally, at the same time, there is a movement of more fashion-forward camera bags dressing up,

and the two are meeting somewhere in the middle.

- a. Long Weekend, Santa Fe Camera Bag
- b. Balenciaga, Car Camera Bag Mini
- c. Balenciaga, Car Camera Bag Mini
- d. Alexander Wang, Wang Sport Camera Bag in Nylon
- e. Maison Margiela, 5AC Camera Cross Body Bag



a.

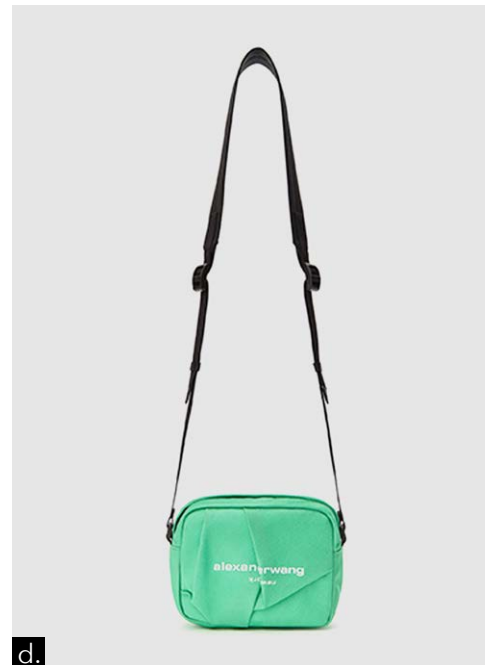
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b.



c.



d.

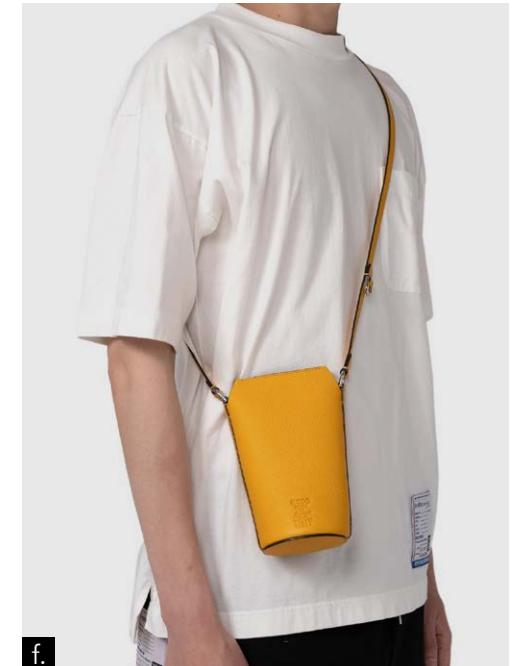


e.

Cylinder

One of the most basic geometric shapes, with only three sides. This super minimal shape is popping up more and more in all sorts of applications. And thanks to its simplicity the style lends itself to adventurous materials such as the Feng Cheng Wang, Bamboo Bag.

- a. Feng Chen Wang, Bamboo Bag
- b. YETI, Panga 50L Duffel
- c. Louis Vuitton, Micro Papillon Bag
- d. Telfar, Tube Bag
- e. R.M. Williams, Bottle Bag
- f. Ecco X General Scale, Pot Bag



Dogs

With all this extra time at home, pet ownership is booming. In Australia right now a fifth of all pet dogs have been procured in the past two years. Younger owners make up a large proportion of these new owners and they are bringing a new take on pet parenthood. From food to clothes and accessories, younger pet owners want their dog's life to be a reflection of their own. An attitude that's driving a wave of new pet accessory design.



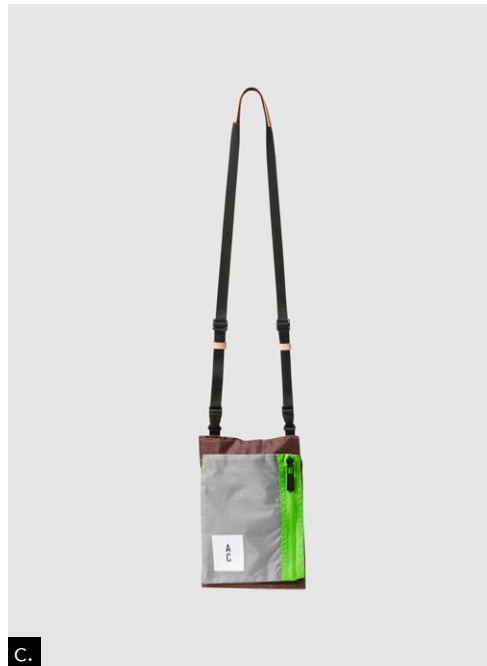
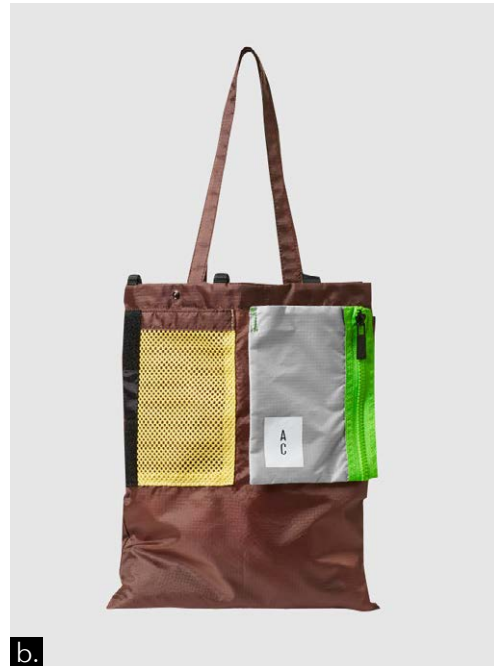
a. Dsptch, Dog Carrier
b. Ramidus, Dog Collar
c. Versace, Medusa Pet Waste Bag

d. Wild One, Treat Bag
e. Gucci, Pet Collection 2
f. Neighborhood X Found My Animal, Lead

Packable

It's hard not to like the simple magic of a packable bag, not to mention the practicality. Unfortunately, a glut of poor-quality options flooded the market in recent years, taking some of the shine off the stow-away. Now a few designers are injecting new life into packables and getting more adventurous, such as the Lululemon Evergreen Anorak, which has become a fan favourite.

- a. Lululemon, Evergreen Anorak
- b. Ally Capellino, Herve Pouch & Tote
- c. Ally Capellino, Herve Pouch & Tote



Gaming

As the gaming industry continues to grow, more and more mainstream brands are beginning to pay attention to the needs of gamers. Now even industry stalwarts such as Tumi are getting into gaming. And with the average age of a gamer now around 30, there is an appetite for more sophisticated designs. A big leap from the cheap licenced product that's typified the gaming accessory market until now.

- d. Timbuk2 X Astro, Gaming CS03 Crossbody Sling
- e. July, Xbox Series S Luggage
- f. Tumi X Razer Collection



Design Fabrics

Provenance

Much like the debate around a healthy diet, views on what makes a healthy material are becoming more and more nuanced. In the case of organic materials, it's becoming clearer that specific farming practices can make a huge difference to the environmental impact of any material. Putting that insight into practice, innovative brands are now publicly partnering with exemplary farms to source the

most eco-friendly fibers. This mimics the paddock-to-plate movement championed by the food industry over the past decade.

- a. Citizens of Humanity, Denim
- b. Ally Capellino X Margent Farm, Hemp
- c. Sheep Inc, Wool Jumper
- d. Citizens of Humanity, Jeans
- e. Sheep Inc, Wool



3D Knit

As 3D knit technology advances, so too does its range of applications. The technique has been mostly championed by the apparel industry for its ability to reduce production waste. Now companies like Bilio are exploring how it can help build form and function directly into fabric. Their range of face masks uses knitting to create the multiple layers of specific materials needed for effective protection from airborne viruses.

- a. Bilio, Kangaroo Face Mask
- b. Givenchy, TK-360 Mens Knit Sneaker
- c. Kobleder, Knit Sample
- d. Issey Miyake, Linear Knit Bag





a.

Raw

To launch their new electric car model, Mini recently tapped fellow brit Paul Smith to collaborate on a super environmentally friendly, one-off model. Their radically sustainable approach was to strip the car back to the bare essentials, aptly named the Mini Strip. By eliminating the unnecessary, the Mini Strip not only reduces the environmental impact, it also celebrates the beauty of raw materials. For example, the body was left as mostly unfinished steel, with only a gloss coat to stop corrosion.

- a. Paul Smith, Mini Cooper
- b. Local Works Studio, Woven Fire Hose Seat
- c. Racing Atelier, Rucksack #1



b.



c.

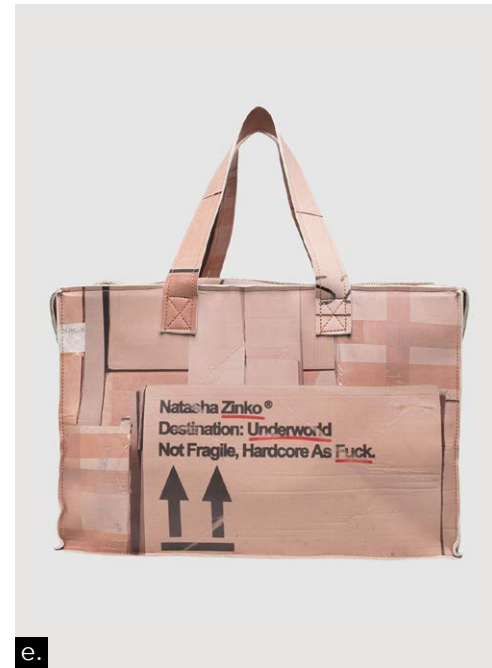
Distressed

Grunge is back. The iconic 90s trope of wear and tear is making a return, although this time with a sense of self-awareness. Instead of aiming to look like natural aging, there is a bluntness to the paint splatches and rips of today that is almost tongue-in-cheek. A prime example is the Natasha Zinko surreal box print duffel that's cardboard print is complete with shipping labels.

- d. Givenchy, Mens Spring Summer 2023
- e. Natasha Zinko, Box Print Oversized Shoulder bag
- f. Diesel, Logo Print Detail Tote Bag



d.



e.

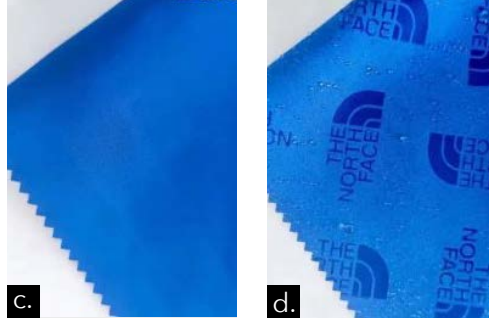


f.

Reactive

Hyper is another blast from the past that we can thank the 90s for. The heat-reactive colour change fabric is back, along with a slew of other new reactive material finishes. While there is a definite risk of naffness, if handled correctly reactive finishes have the potential to delight and surprise.

- a. Fendi, Swim Shorts
- b. Heat Reactive Fabric
- c. & d. Water Reactive Print
- e. Heat Reactive Fabric



Anodised

Continuing on from the liquid metal trend of 2022, anodised fabrics add a splash of colour to the metallic finish. Unlike the futuristic feel of silver, bright metallics are all about fun and glamour, bringing to mind both a precious stone and a cellophane balloon.

- f. Alexander Wang, Mini Scrunchy Bag
- g. Bottega Veneta, Mini Jodie Chlorophyll Bag
- h. Louis Vuitton, Zippy Coin Purse





a.

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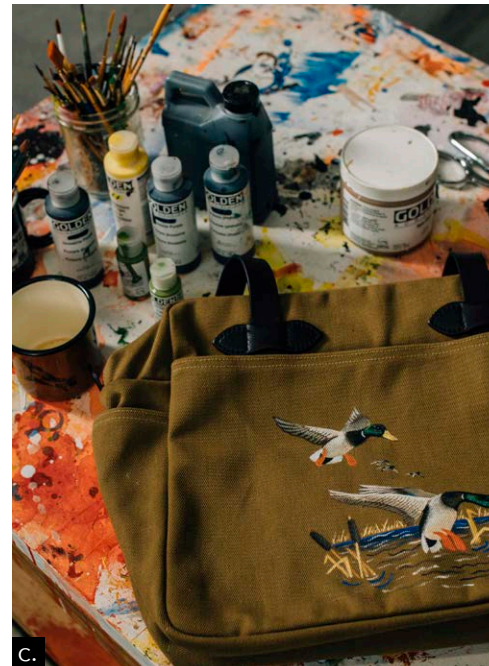
Artist Collabs

After years of lockdown, there is pent-up energy that's driving the creativity of both brands and artists. The growing popularity of artist accessory collabs also taps into the similar pandemic-revenge mentality of customers. Unlike t-shirts, bags and accessories aren't a simple canvas for applying bold artwork. For the best results, it's important that the artist strongly connects with the context of the product.

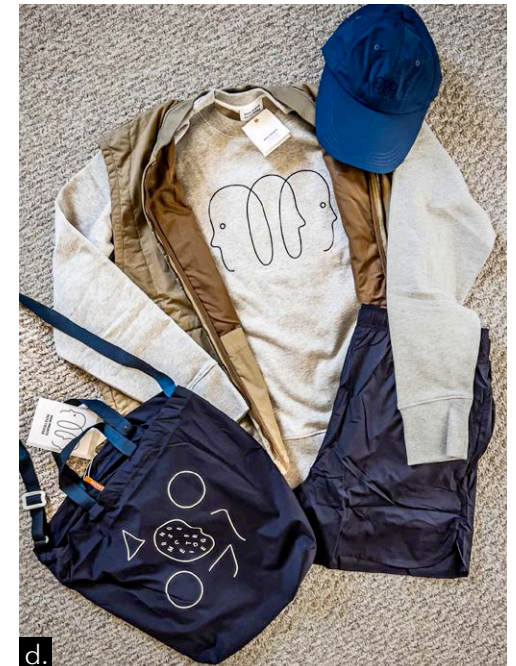
- a. Herschel X Andy Warhol, Backpack
- b. Ucon Acrobatics, Jona Bag
- c. Filson X Patric Hanley, Painted Tote
- d. Norse Projects X Geoff McFetridge



b.



c.



d.



a.



b.



c.

Colour Blocked

Not quite a material trend or a colour palette, colour blocking is about the application of different colours to materials and panels across a product. Most commonly colour blocking uses high contrast colours to create high impact, although recently there has been a move toward more sophisticated or unusual mixes.

- a. Sunnei, Reversible UFO Bag
- b. NATAL Design X NANGA, Envelope Sleeping Bag
- c. Schoenstaub, Recycled Tote
- d. City Creek X Sierra Designs, Mini Wagon



d.

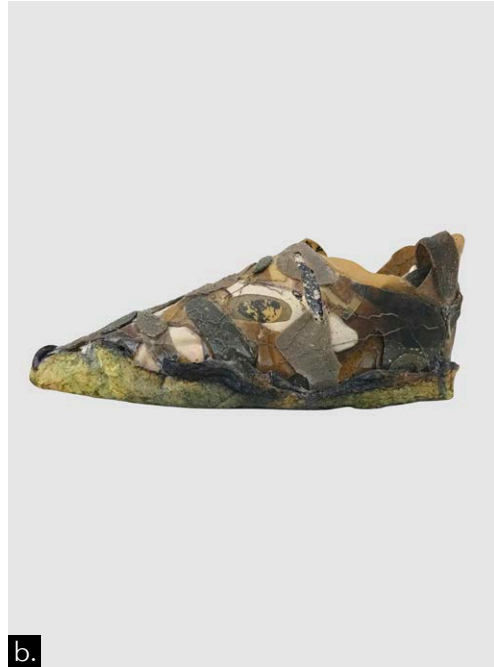


a.

Bio Tech

With each year the industry buzz about the fabric bio revolution gets louder in concert with the growing public awareness of the environmental crisis. So, it's no wonder that there is a shared fascination in both camps about what a sustainable future will look like. From the experimental to the commercially ready, bio-tech fabrics are exploring the possibilities of advanced biological fabrics that are more in sync with the natural cycles of life.

- a. Loewe, Spring Summer 2023
- b. Olaniyi Studio, Kajola Shoe
- c. Mirum, Plant Leather



b.



c.

Design Trims

Extrusion

The classic blind emboss has been a go-to move for premium minimal branding. Extruded details are bringing a similar finish to nylon. But unlike the simple stamping technique used to emboss leather or metal, there is technological wizardry needed to make graphics magically emerge from a piece of fabric. Depending on the scale of the emboss, the finish can go from subtle and sophisticated to kind of absurd or toy-like.

- a. Prada X Adidas, Re Nylon
- b. Dolce & Gabbana, AirPods Case
- c. Lacoste, Polo
- d. Loewe, Goya Bag



b.



a.



c.



d.

Translucent

From the late Virgil Abloh to Helmut Lang, over the recent seasons designers have shown an interest in transparency. In the right context, see-through materials have the ability to make a strong impression, sometimes sexy, sometimes political. Other times it can be mundane and disposable. Smaller trims offer a way to tap into these themes without going the whole hog, because not everyone wants a see-through suitcase.

- e. Lastframe, Ichimatsu Market Bag
- f. The Arrivals X Mapp, Alt Road Cap
- g. Diro, Spring Summer 2023 Mens
- h. Norda, Shoe Bag



e.



f.



g.

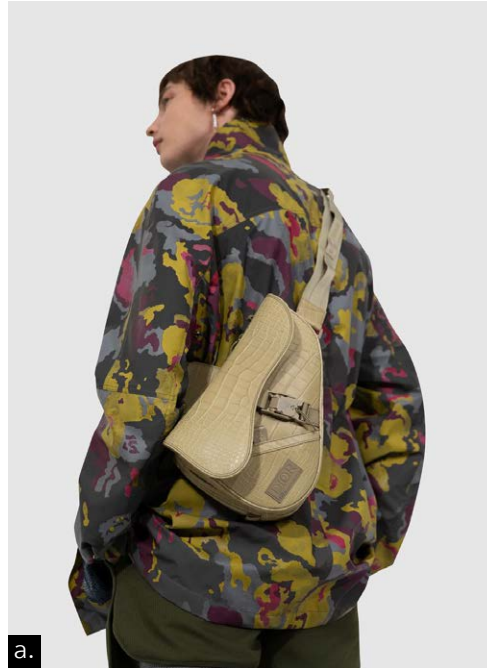


h.

Mil-Spec

Following on from the technical hardware of recent years, outdoor-inspired hardware is becoming more military grade. As opposed to the more lightweight, sleek finish of high-tech camp gear, mil-spec finishes are more rugged and rudimentary. Think less anodised aluminium and more molle loops, paracord and plastic buckles.

- a. Dior, Saddle Bag Spring Summer 2023
- b. Dior, Mens Spring Summer 2023
- c. Kojima, Ludens Peace Mark Unit
- d. Mont Blanc, Extreme 3.0



a.



e.



f.



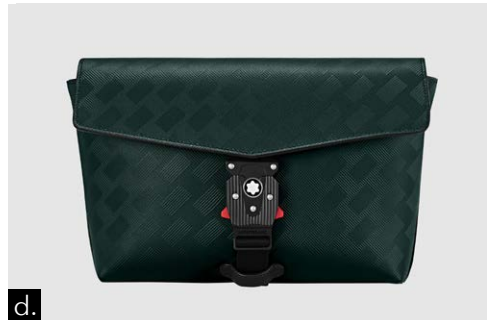
g.



b.



c.



d.



h.

Oversized

With comfort, safety and softness still a dominant theme, trims are also blowing up. While in some cases, oversized straps and padding give a sense of comfort, in other more extreme cases the gigantism becomes comical. Either strangely distorting the proportions or bulging and overfilled.

- e. Loewe, Mens Spring Summer 2023
- f. Dowel Jones, Big Friendly Single
- g. Marshall Columbia, Spring Summer 2023
- h. JW Anderson, Bumper Bag



a.



b.

Micro Cord

Everyone loves rope. With every other mainstream brand tapping into all things outdoor, cords and drawstrings are becoming ubiquitous. So for those brands who want to emphasise performance, the cord is going micro. Due to the size of the micro cord, it's common to double the number of straps, which leads to a more complex, tangled affair - but that's all part of the appeal.

- a. GR10K, Mobbs Bag
- b. Outlier, Nexhigh Transforming Bag
- c. Outlier, Nexhigh Transforming Bag
- d. Outlier, Nexhigh Transforming Bag
- e. Racing Atelier X Art & Science Tote



c.

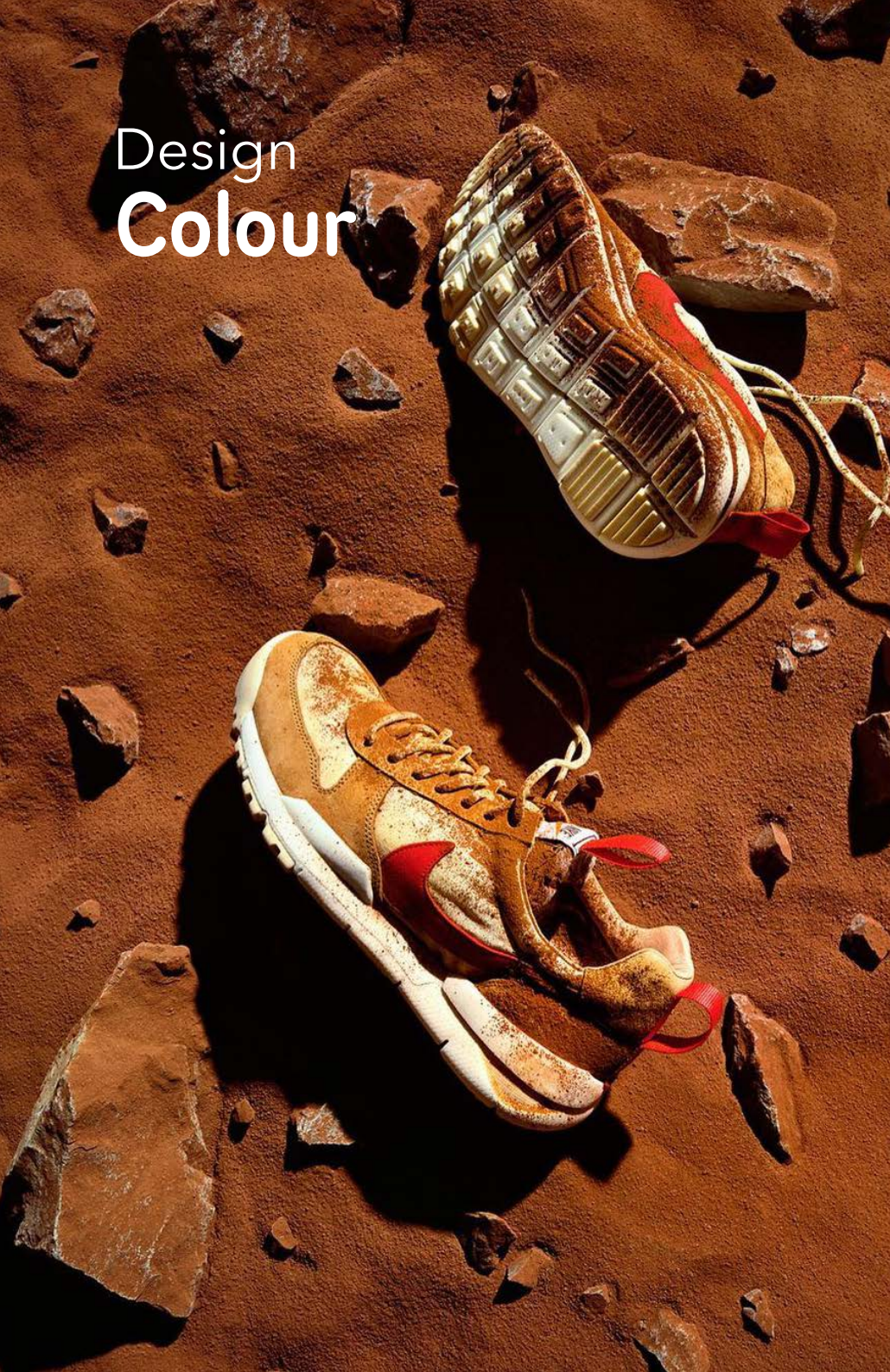


d.



e.

Design Colour



Global Colour

As the world tries to regain stability amidst all the uncertainty, consumers are focused on getting well, getting on and feeling good. It's more important than ever that colour reflects the mood of the times. Colours should connect to optimism, hope, balance and stability as well as a sense of recovery and wellness. Saturated tones will reiterate the feeling of looking forward to the future and expression via bold colours, while also nodding to the increasing impact of the digital world. In contrast, organic colour sources will continue to gain traction, taking cues from nature.

Key Points to Consider

- **Familiar but new**
Balance new colours with successful colours from the previous season to blend safety and newness.
- **Weave emotion into colour**
Connect with your consumer by choosing colours that reflect their attitudes and behaviours. Ensure your colours reflect the times we live in.
- **Look to minimise environmental impact**
Wherever possible, using low impact dyes, chemicals and less water. Be transparent about your sustainability journey as a brand and take the consumer along with you.
- **Be inspired by the colours of the digital realm**
Colours that are not only impactful but also reflect the innovation and digital will resonate with your consumer. Make sure that colour looks as impactful online as it does offline.

Swatches

Colours of 2023

Brown



19-1220



18-1027



17-1134



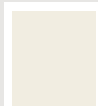
16-1148



16-0928



14-1208



11-0103

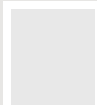
Grey



17-3802



13-4303



11-4800

Red



18-1354



17-1663

Peach



17-1361



15-1245

Yellow



13-1025



13-0942

Green



18-6018



18-0430



17-0636



16-0430

Blue



18-3949

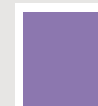


17-4139



14-4318

Purple



17-3730

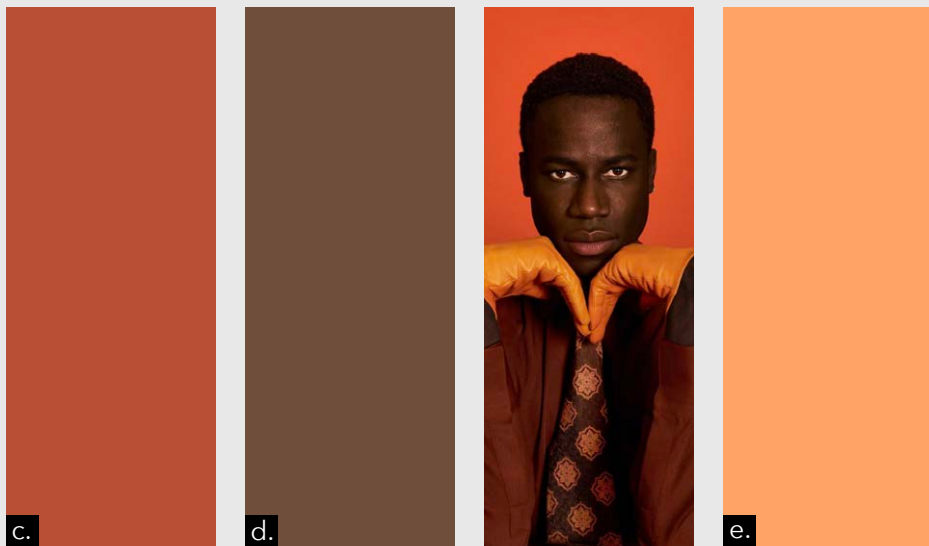
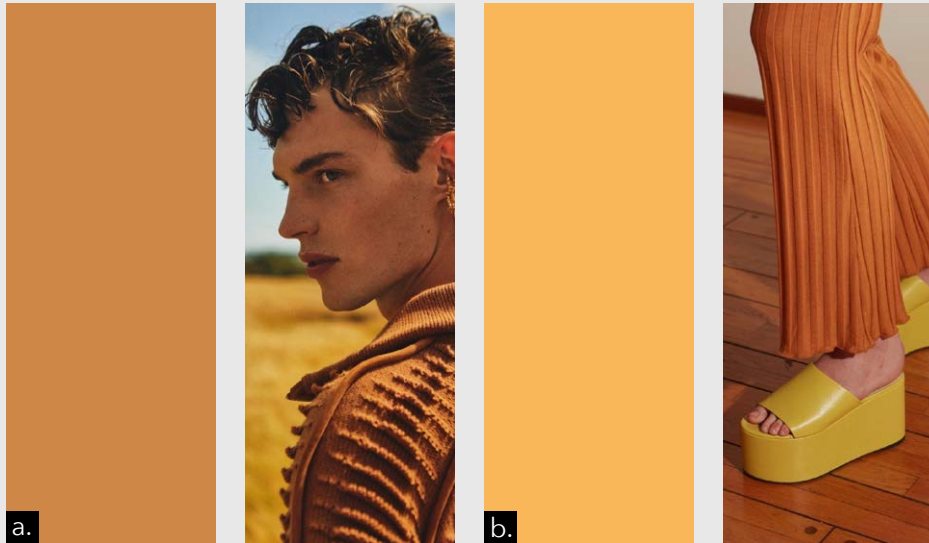
Pink



16-1710



16-3118

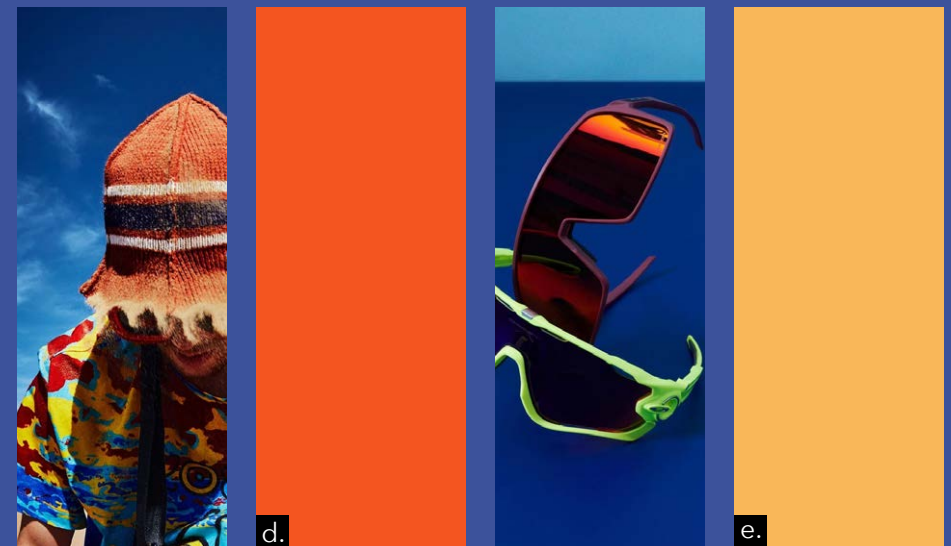
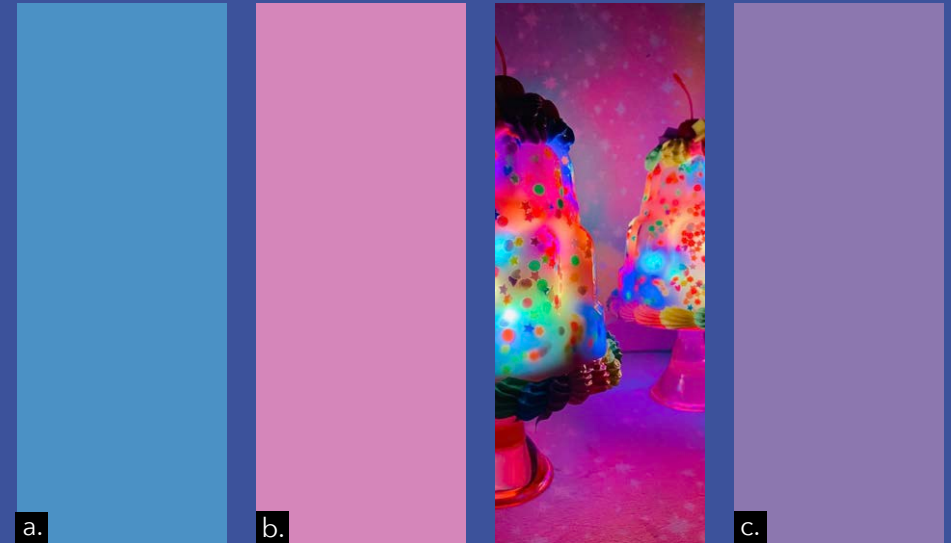


70s Sunset

A truly trans-seasonal colour palette that works across genders and seasons. These sepia-inspired tones evoke wellness, vitamins and the sun's warmth. A nod to 70s stories and ideal for updating streetwear/workwear pieces.

- a. Pantone 16-1148 TCX
- b. Pantone 13-0942 TCX
- c. Pantone 18-1354 TCX
- d. Pantone 18-1027 TCX
- e. Pantone 15-1245 TCX

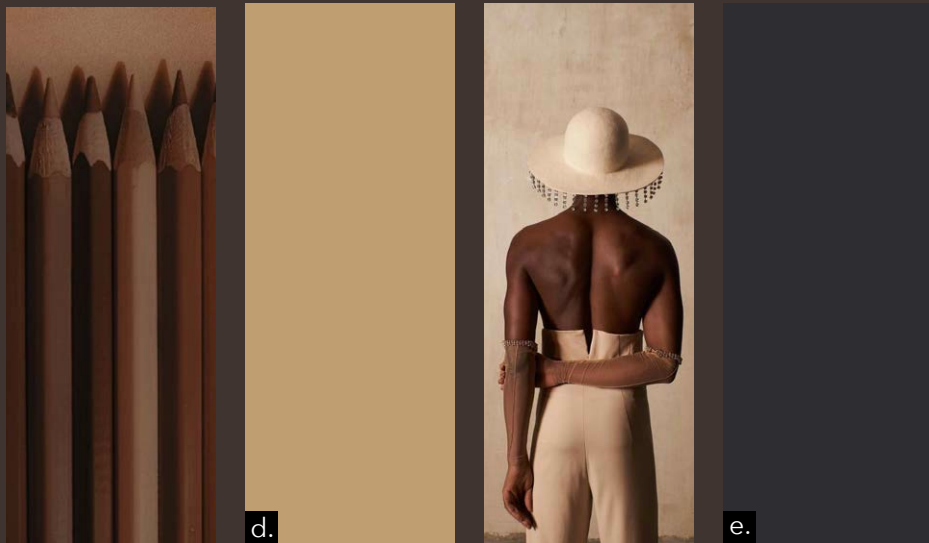
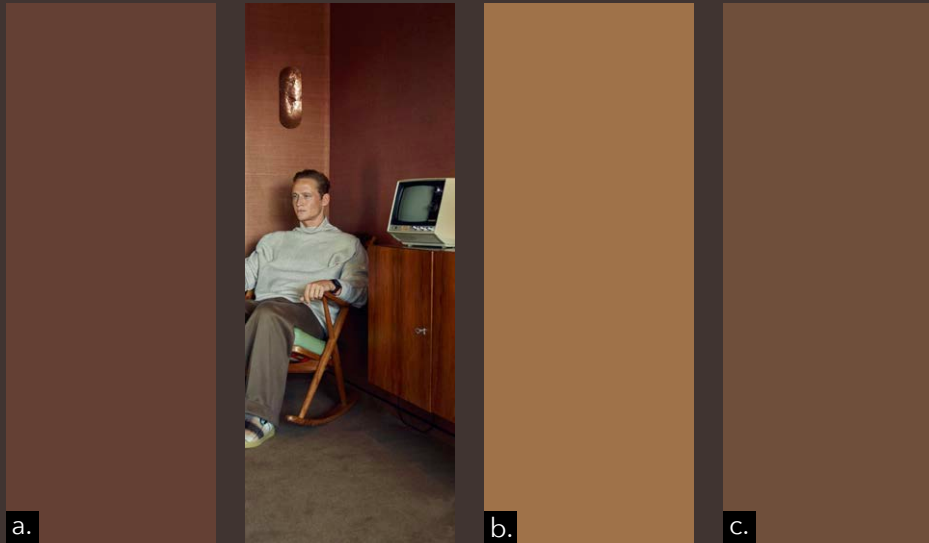
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Bombastic Brights

These dopamine-infused brights ooze with unapologetic self-expression. They connect with the current mood of dressing up, getting as well as tap into modern psychedelic culture and digital storylines. They work in piping contrasts, in panel work or colour blocked.

- a. Pantone 17-4139 TCX
- b. Pantone 16-3118 TCX
- c. Pantone 17-3730 TCX
- d. Pantone 17-1361 TCX
- e. Pantone 13-0942 TCX

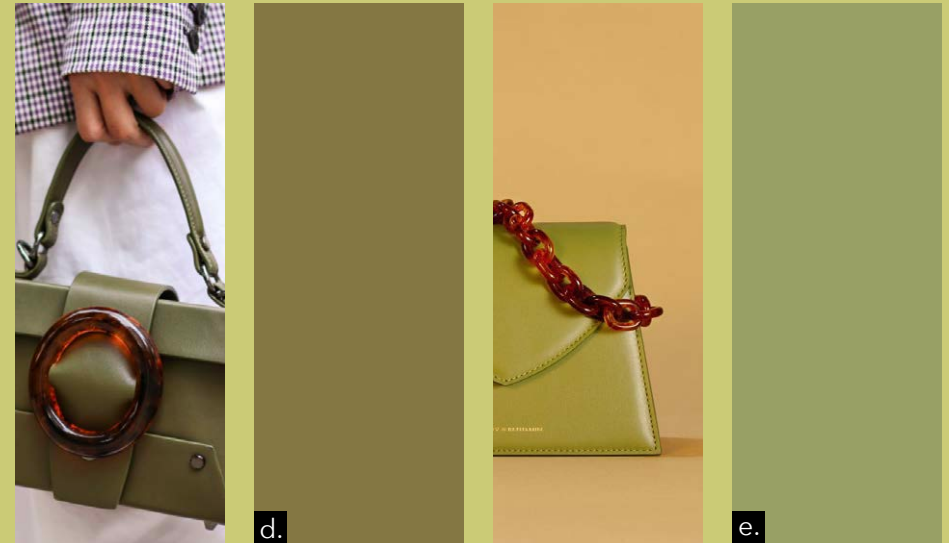


Downtown Brown

Browns remain important in delivering a message of timelessness and quality for consumers who are seeking to invest in products with longevity. Ideal for luxury ranges and suitable for updating canvas and leather ranges.

- a. Pantone 19-1220 TCX
- b. Pantone 17-1134 TCX
- c. Pantone 18-1027 TCX
- d. Pantone 16-0928 TCX
- e. Pantone 19-4203 TCX

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Green Scene

A palette informed by nature and the outdoor lifestyle. Greens highlight the importance of sustainable colour via vegetal dying techniques and low-impact processes. New shades of green add depth and explore foliage such as palms, bay leaf, olive and sage.

- a. Pantone 18-6018 TCX
- b. Pantone 18-0430 TCX
- c. Pantone 11-0103 TCX
- d. Pantone 16-0636 TCX
- e. Pantone 16-0430 TCX

37



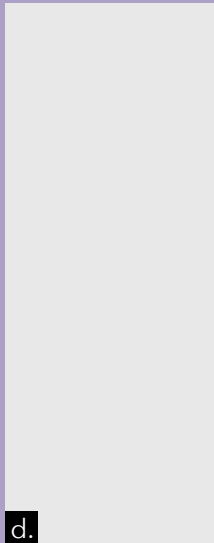
a.



b.



c.



d.



e.

Positively Pastel

Driving gender-inclusive ranges, tapping into the shifting masculinity of Gen Z men and feeding right into wellness collections, this range of pastels is a great way to update sports goods and add newness to prints. Taps into feelings of joy, optimism and balance.

- a. Pantone 13-1025 TCX
- b. Pantone 16-1710 TCX
- c. Pantone 17-3730 TCX
- d. Pantone 11-4800 TCX
- e. Pantone 14-4318 TCX

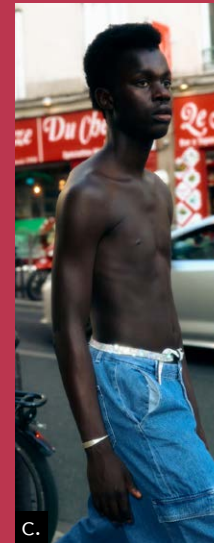
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a.



b.



c.



d.

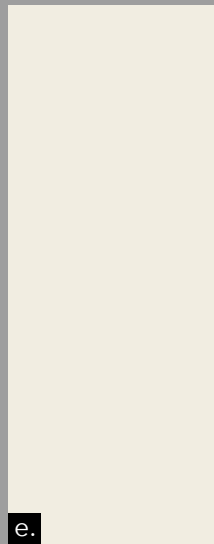


e.

Red & Blue

This classic combo of red and blue brings about familiarity. Combining two classics, like red and blue, can create a bold, striking look. Or break it up with the use of an off-white to soften the strong primaries.

- a. Pantone 19-3932 TCX
- b. Pantone 18-3949 TCX
- c. Pantone 17-1663 TCX
- d. Pantone 17-4139 TCX



Stone Cold

By mixing utility inspired greys with core neutrals, this otherwise usually minimalist and cold story is warmed up and creates a timeless palette. Undyed natural fabrications will drive this message even further to its roots of clean and organic.

- a. Pantone 17-3802 TCX
- b. Pantone 13-4303 TCX
- c. Pantone 14-1208 TCX
- d. Pantone 19-4203 TCX
- e. Pantone 11-0103 TCX

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Design Brands to Watch



Last Frame
Japan



Alexandre Pavao
Brazil



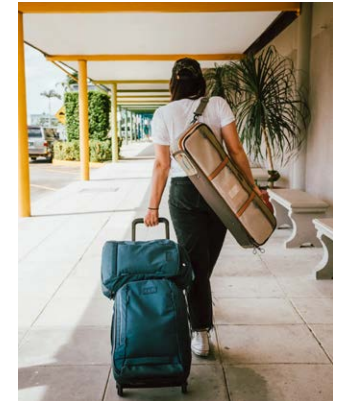
1733
USA



Mafia Bags
Argentina



Satisfy Running
France



Yeti
USA



Ally Capellino
UK



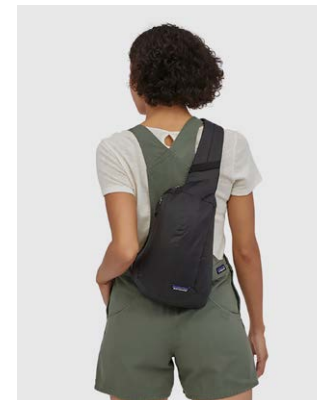
RUX
USA



Outlier
USA



Nike Forward
USA



Patagonia
USA



Racing Atelier
Germany



About Us

SOFT SERVE STUDIO

Soft Serve Studio was founded in 2017 by long-term collaborators Kaine Whiteway, Janis Lacey and John Jaworski. The studio brings together like minded designers, makers and industry professionals under the one roof to provide a world-class resource for businesses to design, develop and manufacture soft goods.

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