



Helen Welch

Sportswear Consultant

Manchester, UK

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Languages

English (Native)

About

I'm a creative, self-motivated and highly experienced designer with a wealth of technical knowledge. Passionate about sport, design, colour and rising to new challenges.

Best known for bringing ideas to life and developing designs that drive commercial success - developing garments that people can't help but buy. I've built up close working relationships with suppliers and manufacturers across the globe, which help smooth out product life-cycles.

I'm pragmatic, adaptable, highly efficient and used to working in time-pressured situations. Continually look for solutions to the problems that occur within critical path timelines.

BRANDS WORKED WITH

Designer

Experience

● Designer

Designer | --

● Co-Founder

| Jul 2015 -

Set up Sportswear Studio with Kate Kallaway, offering experience, expertise, creative thinking, clear and concise ideas to help clients create the designs and product they dream of.

From brand strategy, design & product development we have extensive knowledge & expertise across all sportswear ... high impact performance, fashion influenced ath-leisure, swimwear beach & pool. We can take on any discipline with knowledge & enthusiasm.

Knowing what the customer wants is our passion & we thrive on bringing ideas to life with real commercial impact.

● Freelance Womens Active Designer

| Sep 2013 -

I provided ongoing support & design, with specialist activewear knowledge, working with their in-house team. Designing 4 collections, leasing with buyers, graphic designer and product developer, growing JD Sport own brand Pure Simple Sport.

As well as research, colour predictions, designing, developing and fits, I also worked with marketing to provide information & ideas to promote women activewear within marketplace.

● Maternity Cover - Pure Simple Sport

| Sep 2011 -

Worked within the Womenswear team to research, design and develop 'Pure Simple Sport' active range.

I helped the team to develop better selling lines and a performance aspect of the range, a strong platform for the collection to grow.

● Freelance Senior Designer

| Jan 2006 -

Freelance Senior Designer, specialising in sportswear, casualwear and swimwear.

15+ years experience, based in the North-West.

Clients have included ; JD Sports PLC, Every Second Counts, Asquith London, Runderwear, Silou London, Blacks / Go Outdoors, Evamoso and Imperfect Pointes.

I have been working with existing retailers and brands, as well as start-ups. I also work closely with UK based sourcing companies to provide a complete service from initial idea to garment in your shop or warehouse. Experienced with breathing newness into existing ranges or guiding new start-ups. Increasingly working with brands with a sustainable ethos, helping with strategy and fabric development.
Maternity Leave taken from August 2012 - March 2013

● Freelance Designer

| Oct 2005 -

Working alongside SweatyBetty Founder/Creative Director, leading own-brand design. Researching & presenting trends, incorporating fashion & performance. Building colour palettes for the whole brand. Working with buyers, production & merchandising to bring in the right product at the right time. Created the premium brand quality through extensive fit sessions & fabric sourcing.

Designed & developed first performance ski range
Created & built up SweatyBetty beach to contend & surpass strong-selling branded in-store offer.
Designed swing tickets, gift boxes, pictorial information for internet & point of sale.
Recruited & manage sweatyBetty's second designer.

● Senior Designer

| Aug 2002 -

Elle Sport & Swim ranges, and Reebok Swim range working within a group of 5 designers and with freelance designers. I develop four sportswear and three swimwear ranges per year for Elle, as well as retail specials for Elle stores and other key accounts. I also oversee the development of 3 swimwear ranges for Reebok.

Achievements at Actif Group
Elle Sport and Swim sales have risen each season since I joined.
Built up strong relationships with Far Eastern, Turkish and Portuguese suppliers.
Incorporated sales feedback quickly into the new ranges to keep Elle competitive within the market.
Developed performance skiwear range for Elle retail outlets and Harrods, the success of which has led to Allsports buying the range.

● Apparel Designer

| Jan 2000 -

A UK subsidiary of an international group based in Italy
UK company designs and sells - all manufacturing is outsourced.
I led a small design team and worked alongside a team of product developers. I developed 4 ranges per year, as well as exclusive packages for specific retailers. My role involved international travel to research trends, source fabric and approve development before production.

Achievements at Diadora
Built excellent working relationships within the team and with Far Eastern Agents.
Designed and developed, with the Diadora team, 3 Football Replica and Training Kits and Scottish Referees' kit.

● Assistant Designer

Designer | Jul 1997 -

Mens Casual wear - Baird Clothing
Assisted two designers in men's casual wear, including all CAD work and mood boards.
Liaised with suppliers and organised design samples and washes.
After 6 months a design executive left. I was asked to take on the role.

Degree Work Placements

Education & Training

1993 - 1997 ● **The Manchester Metropolitan University**
BA Hons, Fashion design with Technology