



"I'm a fashion photographer"

Love messing around with a camera? Katie Wilson explains how to turn your passion for fashion and photography into a career.

How did you get into fashion photography?

"I was accepted into a degree in photography in London, then decided to move to Australia. I started out doing work experience at ABC TV in their still photo department. I was there for a week, and at the end of that week they offered me a job – it was a case of right place, right time. I started off as dark room printer, printing publicity pictures of the news readers and people in the ABC TV shows. They already had photographers there, so I just did their printing.

"I was there for three years, then left to freelance as a photographer's assistant. Assisting is the best way to learn, but the pay isn't very good. If you pick photographers that you like and it's the work you want to do, then they can teach you how to do that. I worked for a photographer called Michael Corridore – he let me use his equipment and studio, so I could start shooting my own things while I was still assisting.

"People like Michael sometimes recommended me for jobs they couldn't do. That's how I started to build a portfolio for myself. Then when I had enough pics in my portfolio, I started phoning magazines and making appointments to see people. You have to use all the contacts that you've got, and just keep calling people up. You really have to start off with small jobs that aren't very glamorous, but they seem to lead to jobs that are more interesting."

What kind of things do you photograph?

"I mainly shoot fashion for either editorial (pages of the magazine or newspaper) or advertising (ads for different brands). So far I've worked for magazines like *Who Weekly*, *Dolly* and *Qantas Inflight*. I've also done stuff for Channel Ten, *Australian Idol*, the University Of Technology, Sydney and even shopping centres."

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"I design clothes for Billabong"

Angela Dix has every girl's dream job – she's a product developer for the girls' division at surf label Billabong.

Qualifications "I did a two-year diploma of fashion at Moreton Institute Of TAFE in Brisbane. After the course, I got a job at Billabong in production through one of the lecturers (production is where they put everything together to get the clothes made). After nine months I was asked if I wanted to join the design team as an assistant – of course I did! I was helping out with whatever anyone needed me to do; it was good to see how everything was put together.

"From there I was given my own categories, then started designing. I look after girls' board shorts, some of the ladies' winter pants, sleep wear, underwear, some tops and shirts. That was three and a half years ago. Now I'm the product developer for the girls' division at Billabong."

The design process "We have lots of meetings to discuss trends we've looked at. We get inspiration from travel and magazines, and also what we see day to day on the street and at the beach. We also get inspiration from our team of surfers – with Billabong it's all about lifestyle, and they're living the lifestyle, so it's their attitude as well as their likes. We think about the market we're aiming our clothes at, then we'll design the pieces and discuss things like the price and if it's right for our market.

"The next step is selling to retailers. We make up a sample range so retailers can decide what they want to buy. The designs then go into production, are made, and then sent to the stores."

Tips for success

Don't ever give up. Be patient, willing to do lots of different things and work your way up.

