

CUTTER

Cutters lay out and cut fabric to be made into clothing or soft furnishings. They interpret instructions from designers, patternmakers and production managers. Using pattern pieces, they create a lay plan of the patterns to be cut out on (often multiple) layers of fabric. Using the lay plan as a guide, the cutter either cuts the fabric by hand using electric hand-held cutting machines or supervises computerised cutting machines. This role requires accuracy, attention to detail, an understanding of textiles and their properties and of technical machinery. It is an integral part of bringing a product to life.

ROUTES IN

There are no specific entry requirements to become a cutter. A cutter may learn their skills on the job in a cutting workroom, starting as a table hand or trainee cutter and progressing up to a Cutting Room Manager or Head Cutter.



SKILLS NEEDED

- Excellent knowledge of textile properties, and ability to handle wide variety of textiles
- Knowledge of garment construction
- Understanding of digital and manual cutting equipment and methods
- Basic computing skills to programme cutting machines and check designs
- Accuracy and attention to detail

STUDY

- ▶ On-the-job training
- ▶ Fashion and textiles technology
- ▶ Pattern making, manual or digital
- ▶ Computer Aided Design (CAD) training
- ▶ Garment construction
- ▶ Textile technology

COMPANIES LOOKING FOR THIS ROLE

- ▶ Specialist cutting services
- ▶ Apparel and furnishing brands
- ▶ CAD Service Providers
- ▶ Uniform and workwear manufacturers
- ▶ Garment manufacturers

CAREER PATHWAY



NAME Mark

POSITION Head Cutter

COMPANY Cutting Services NZ

A TYPICAL DAY

We receive digitised patters from pattern specialists such as Quick Tech and Pattern Potentials. I organise the cuts and send all information to our cutters. Throughout the day, as well as using the machinery to cut fabrics, I interact with the team and direct daily activities, check the markers, machinery, and computers and make sure everything is working properly. I also check on the quality of the work as its being cut and once completed before it goes out to customers.

WHO DO YOU WORK WITH

- Fabric Suppliers
- Clients: New Zealand fashion brands and car manufacturers (we cut seat covers)
- The team - PAD Systems Operators - General Manager
- Technicians (who fix our machines)

CAREER JOURNEY

When I was 18, I finished school and did a cutting apprenticeship at Classic Fashions. That lasted for 3 and a half years, and then I went to Thornton Hall for at least 2 years. After a 2 year OE trip, I started up my own business in 1986. In the late 90s production started going offshore but we kept a core client base with some of New Zealand's most renowned designers. We now have a team of 5, and bring in contractors to help during the busy seasons.



LOVES

- Being part of a manufacturing team that's making fashion for New Zealand.
- Seeing designs and styles and how they develop.

CHALLENGES

- Having enough time to check all the work we do.
- Surviving in the downtime and between seasons.
- Machinery breaking down, which is a costly process with few servicing options in New Zealand.