After studying this chapter, you will be able to:

- describe how clothing helps satisfy human needs.
- explain how your clothes reflect your personality, your values, and your self-concept.
- describe how clothes can create positive first impressions.
- give examples of how body language conveys messages about people.
- describe how clothing can be used to play up your good points and play down your poorer ones.

Key Terms

- need
- modesty
- conformity
- peer pressure
- self-esteem
- self-adornment
- culture
- status
- self-actualization
- individuality
- personality traits
- environment
- values
- self-concept
- body language

Chapter 1  Your Clothes Speak for You

Clothes are an important part of your life. You wear them every day, and they help you look your best. They can even help you feel good about yourself. They also tell other people a lot about who you are. Your clothes can speak for you. They can express your personality, your values, and your self-concept. You can even use clothes to express your individuality. However, there are some very basic reasons why people wear clothes as well. Let's begin there.

Why People Wear Clothes

All people share certain basic human needs. A need is something required for a person's continued survival. These needs cause people to behave as they do. Everyone has the same basic needs. It's how people meet those needs that vary from person to person.

Maslow, a noted psychiatrist, suggests that humans are motivated to satisfy five basic types of needs. He arranged these needs in order of importance from the lowest to the highest. See 1-1. The lowest needs must be satisfied before the higher needs can be met. These needs are physical; safety and security; love and acceptance; esteem; and self-actualization. The physical needs are the most basic and must be met first.

Clothing can help to satisfy physical, psychological, and social needs. Protection, comfort, and safety are physical needs. Self-adornment and identification are psychological needs. Status and prestige are social needs. Clothing can help meet all these needs.

Physical Needs

Protection from weather is the most important physical role played by clothing. Whether you live in a cold climate or a hot climate, clothing helps to maintain the body temperature. Eskimos wear clothing with fur linings. Warm air from their bodies is trapped in the clothing and creates a layer of warmth. People in some African countries wear long, white robes and headdresses. White reflects heat, and the long robes keep the sun from
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shining directly on the skin, 1-2. The loosely fitted garments let air circulate around their bodies. This helps to keep them cooler and more comfortable.

Where you live will often determine what types of clothing you will need for protection and comfort. If you live in Minnesota, you will need more clothing to keep you warm than if you live in Florida. Hats and gloves help keep you comfortable by helping your body retain its heat in cold weather. You may wear a cover-up at the beach to protect yourself from overexposure to the sun. Rain gear keeps you and your clothes dry, 1-3. When going on a long hike, it's a good idea to wear hiking boots to protect your feet from being blistered or injured.

Safety and Security Needs

Clothing is sometimes worn to keep you safe from harm or injury. When boating, you wear a life vest. Football and hockey players wear safety headgear. Bicycle and motorcycle riders wear helmets. Race car drivers wear special helmets and safety clothing made of flame-resistant fibers. Cyclists and runners often wear reflective-fluorescent tapes on their clothing so they are more visible to motorists, 1-4. If you have in-line skates, you probably also have knee pads, elbow pads, wrist supports, and a helmet.

Safety clothing is required in some occupations. Firefighters wear heavy boots and flame-resistant clothing. A specially designed hat is also worn. On many industrial construction sites, workers wear hard hats and safety shoes with steel reinforced toes. Road repair workers, traffic officers, and school crossing guards wear brightly colored vests so they can easily be seen. If they wear regular clothing, drivers may fail to see them, causing an accident. Agricultural workers who handle chemicals are advised to wear special gloves. Medical workers wear gloves, gowns, and masks to protect themselves and their patients from exposure to disease-causing organisms, 1-5. These coverings are then disposed of after one use.

Love and Acceptance Needs

The need for love and acceptance can influence how people choose to dress. People have a need to receive affection from others. They also want to feel like they belong to a group. This need guides them in their clothing choices. Through the years, you learn from your family, friends, and teachers what is expected of you. These are standards that are pretty well set. They include behavior guidelines as to what is considered acceptable in this society. They also include standards of dress. These standards of dress can vary from one culture to another. They can also change over time.

Modesty

In our society, modesty is important. Modesty is covering the body according to what is considered proper by the society in which you live. Modesty standards may be different in other cultures. Muslim women, for instance, must cover their bodies and faces completely. Only their eyes are unveiled.

Standards of modesty can change through the years. In the 1800s, our society dictated that a considerable degree of cover-up was important for social acceptance. Women wore long dresses and layers of clothing. Today, it is acceptable for more of the legs to show. Think how swim suits have changed through the years. In earlier times, swimwear for both men and women nearly covered the entire body. In the 1960s, the bikini bathing suit became popular. Standards have changed in modern times, but a certain amount of coverage is still expected.
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Modesty standards vary according to the situation. What a woman wears to work in an office will be different from what she wears for a special evening event. More skin can show in evening wear. What you wear to school also must conform to certain standards. No matter what you choose to wear to school, school authorities require a certain level of decency in your dress.

Conformity

Conformity means following or obeying some set standard or authority. People choose to conform in order to feel accepted. Peer pressure can lead to conformity. Peer pressure is the force that makes you want to be like friends your age (peers). For instance, you probably prefer to wear the clothing styles that other teens are wearing. You want to “fit in” with what is in style this year. Jeans are popular choices for teens. When you wear them, you feel like you’re a part of the group—that you are accepted.

Attraction

Now that you are a teenager, you are more aware of the opposite sex. What you choose to wear may be influenced by your desire to attract the attention of someone you’d like to date. When you were younger, you probably didn’t care as much about what you wore or how you looked. You had other things on your mind! Now, you may spend a lot of your time planning what you’re going to wear to school the next day or to the game Friday night. If you’re a girl, you may spend most of your money on clothes and makeup. You may be trying to attract someone’s interest.

Esteem

In addition to love and acceptance, Maslow stated that people have a need for esteem. This is a need for respect, admiration, recognition, and social approval by others. It is also a need for self-esteem—feeling good about yourself. If you have self-esteem, you have a feeling of self-worth. You feel that you are important. Clothes can play a role in fulfilling this need.

Self-Adornment

Throughout history, people have practiced self-adornment, or decorated their bodies. People have followed certain practices to make themselves beautiful.

From its humble beginnings, the T-shirt has morphed into a canvas for designers. It has gone from an affordable undergarment to a vehicle for advertising. Where and when did it all begin? Though no one knows for certain, the U.S. Navy might deserve the credit. In 1913, a crew-necked, short-sleeved, white cotton undershirt was designed to be worn under the Navy’s deep, V-necked collared shirt. Because of its shape, it was called a “T.” It wasn’t until the late 1930s that companies including Hanes, Sears, and Fruit of the Loom started to market the shirts. In 1938, Sears proclaimed that the undershirt could also be worn as an outer garment. During World War II, the short-sleeved T-shirts gained popularity among soldiers because of their greater absorption under the arms and comfort under backpacks. Soldiers often wore them as outer garments. When the soldiers returned from the war, the shirts came home with them. The T-shirt gained popularity in the 1950s when Marlon Brando wore one in the movie classic A Streetcar Named Desire and James Dean in the movie Rebel Without a Cause. Walt Disney was one of the first people to see the marketing value of T-shirts when he began having letters and simple designs printed on the shirts for souvenirs. With the 1960s came the popularity of tie-dying among hippies, and T-shirts were easy to buy and dye. Improvements in printing and dyeing in the ‘70s allowed graphic images to be printed on shirts. Rock bands and performers sold T-shirts with their images on them. The era of message T-shirts had begun. Corporations also found a new way to advertise. Imagine a walking billboard!

Enter the era of the fashion statement. When Sharon Stone paired a black T-shirt with an Armani skirt for the Oscars in 1996, the garment had truly arrived. T-shirts today come in different weights, colors, and styles. Sometimes they are plain and sometimes they are embellished. They can be layered with other T-shirts or worn under various garment styles. No matter how they are worn, they have become a staple of everyone’s wardrobe. The T-shirt has truly become a classic.
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according to the customs of their culture. The beliefs and social customs of a particular group of people form their culture, 1-7. People have painted their bodies with clay and vegetable dyes. They have inserted jewelry in their ears, noses, and lips. They have used colorful stones, metal bands, feathers, and animal teeth to decorate their bodies. Tribes in some parts of the world still carry on these practices.

Today, people still decorate their bodies, but a little differently. Cosmetics and clothes are used for adornment. Accessories such as jewelry, headbands, scarves, and neckties are also used for adornment. Beadwork, needlework, patchwork, and appliqué are some of the creative arts that are used. Some people use body piercing and tattoos as forms of self-adornment.

Status and Prestige

People wear clothing to express status, prestige, or importance. Status refers to a person's position in relation to others. Some clothing symbols are used to recognize achievements. Service stripes on military uniforms show years of service in the armed forces. Ribbons, pins, and badges show achievements in scouting. Letters on school letter jackets indicate performance in athletic or academic events.

Some people choose clothes to imply they are of a higher status than others. Designer clothes are used as a status symbol for some people. The names of famous fashion designers or their logos are often printed or woven into garments, 1-8. Expensive jeans or athletic shoes often have the name brand where it can be seen. Some people also consider expensive jewelry and fur coats to be status symbols. They may use these symbols to indicate their achievement in life.

Identification

You can often identify people by the clothing they wear. You can easily identify police officers and mail carriers by their uniforms. Flight attendants of an airline dress alike. Hotel staff or restaurant waiters may also dress alike. In this way, they can be easily identified. Their attractive uniforms help to create a good image for their companies. Different branches of the armed forces, such as the Air Force or Navy, have specially designed uniforms for their branches, 1-9. Uniforms are also designed to show rank. A general's uniform is quite different from that of a private.

In sports, such as football, members of one team wear the same uniforms. This helps you easily identify players and teams. Imagine how confusing it would be to watch a football game if both teams dressed alike. Think about the type of clothing referees wear. You can always identify them.

Clothing and jewelry are worn by some groups to indicate a certain religious membership. Some people wear jewelry such as crosses, stars, and other religious symbols. In certain religious events, special clothing, such as prayer shawls, christening gowns, or robes, are worn.
Sometimes special clothes are worn during certain ceremonies. At graduation, caps and gowns are worn by the graduates, 1-10. At a wedding, a bride often wears white, 1-11. At funerals, the mourners often wear black.

**Self-Actualization**

The highest level of need according to Maslow is self-actualization. Self-actualization needs are related to success in personal achievements, expressions of personal creativity, and self-fulfillment. To reach this level, the other levels of needs must be at least partially fulfilled. At this level of need fulfillment, people may choose to express their individuality. Individuality is what sets one person apart from others. Where conformity is dressing like everyone else, individuality is expressing one’s own uniqueness. If everyone seems to be dressing the same way, this person will choose something entirely different. He or she is rejecting peer pressure to conform, choosing instead to make a personal statement. Clothes are often used as a form of self-expression.

**What Your Clothes Say About You**

Just as no two people look exactly alike, neither do people think and feel the same. The thoughts and feelings that make you different from others are a part of your personality. Your clothes say a lot about you—your personality, your values, and your self-concept.

**Your Personality**

Your personality is everything about you that makes you unique. It includes your behavioral and emotional tendencies. Your habits and actions as well as your interests and skills are part of your personality. Your personality is made up of many traits. Traits are qualities that make you different from everyone else. What traits are included in your personality? Study the chart in 1-12. Make a list of the personality traits you think belong to you. You might ask a friend to name the traits she or he would use to describe you, then compare the lists.

**Influences on Personality**

Why is your personality unique? It has been influenced by many factors over your lifetime. Your environment affects your personality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONALITY</th>
<th>TRAITS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>Dishonest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td>Easygoing</td>
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<td>Agreeable</td>
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<td>Aloof</td>
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<td>Boring</td>
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<td>Crabby</td>
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<td>Capable</td>
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<td>Considerate</td>
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<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>Happy</td>
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<td>Critical</td>
<td>Honest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependable</td>
<td>Introverted</td>
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Your unique personality can be described by traits such as these.
environment is everything around you. It includes your family, friends, school, and community. They all affect your personality in some way.

You were not born with your personality. It develops and changes as you mature. You may not have the same personality all of the time. When you are around people who you don't know, you may be reserved and talk very little. They may think you are a quiet, shy person. When you are with your friends, you may talk a lot and laugh often. You may show a different type of personality according to the occasion, 1-13.

Your personality also develops from your experiences and activities. As you grow, change, and have new experiences, your personality traits will also change. You will have new interests, new friends, and learn new skills.

Personality and Appearance

The way you dress is one way you express your personality. If you are a carefree person, you may be less concerned about what you wear than someone who always wants to look perfect. You may... a personality that says you enjoy being original and different. What type of personality do your clothes express?

Your Values

Your **values** are the qualities, standards, principles, and ideals you consider important or desirable. They guide your actions and influence your decisions. They influence almost all aspects of your life in some way or another. Some of the values you have may relate to family, friends, education, wealth, and status.

Your values have been forming over your lifetime. Many of your values are influenced by your family. For instance, your family may place a high value on caring for one another, being honest, and persevering. Because of the way you were raised, you are likely to have these same values. Family values are often passed down through generations. Values are also influenced by your friends, school, and community. Cultural traditions often influence value formation.

How Values Influence Dress

The decisions you make about what you wear are often influenced by your values. For example, if you value status, you might choose clothes with logos showing they were created by a popular designer. If this logo is popular with your friends, wearing clothes with this logo can give you status within your group of friends.

If you value wealth, you may buy expensive clothes to show off your wealth. On the other hand, if you value economy, you might be more inclined to buy clothes that are practical, durable, and can be laundered. You may likely look for classic styles that will not go out of fashion. You may place a higher value on education, choosing to save your money for future educational expenses. If you value entertainment, you may choose to spend more money on movies and concerts and less on clothes.

Your values will change throughout your lifetime. What you value as a teen may change during your adult years. Right now you may value clothes that are unique and trendy. In the future, as a young, working professional, you may value basic wardrobe pieces suitable for starting a career. As an older adult, you will probably place more value on comfort in clothing.

Your Self-Concept

The mental picture you have of yourself is called your **self-concept**. This is your idea of who you are and what you are like. These ideas are usually personal and private. If you like the way you see yourself, you have a positive self-concept. If you don’t like what you see, you have a negative self-concept.

A Positive Self-Concept

You have a positive self-concept if you feel good about yourself and if you feel you are a worthwhile person. You enjoy life and you like people.
You feel you can accomplish many things. When you have a positive self-concept, you generally have a good outlook on life, 1-14.

What influences your self-concept? Your family, friends, environment, and experiences affect your self-concept. Your family is a strong influence in your life. Many families provide security, love, encouragement, and guidelines. This provides a sturdy base for a positive self-concept. Your friends also help you in forming your self-concept. Their support for you in what you do gives you a feeling of belonging and of being a worthwhile person. Your environment and experiences also play a major role in shaping your self-concept.

A Negative Self-Concept

Some people do not think highly of themselves. They have a negative self-concept. They think of their shortcomings and failures instead of their good qualities. When given a compliment, they shrug it off thinking they are not worthy of praise. They may be unsure of themselves and uncomfortable with others. Often, they accept the ideas of others and seldom know how they really feel. When they make a mistake, they dwell on their failure instead of learning from it.

Improving Your Self-Concept

If you have a negative self-concept, you can learn to overcome it. You can feel good about yourself. Think about your positive traits. Everyone has some positive traits. Try being friendly to a new student at your school or helping your neighbor with some chores. These persons may say positive things about you because of your actions. You may be complimented on your new hairstyle or on a good test score. Accept these compliments and feel good about them. Look for other good points you have. This will strengthen your self-concept. Don’t sell yourself short; focus on your good qualities. Recognize your strengths. When you do something well, pat yourself on the back. If you like yourself, others will find it easier to like you, too.

Your Appearance and Self-Concept

The way you dress and your overall appearance can affect your self-concept. When wearing a new outfit, you may feel great all day. You know the color is one of your best and the style is very “in” right now. When you know you look good, you feel better about yourself.

Sometimes the opposite happens. Suppose you got up late one morning. You had to dress quickly. The clothes you grabbed did not go together well and had some stains on them. All day long you may have felt grumpy, embarrassed, and uncomfortable because of the way you were dressed.

Studies have shown that your feelings about yourself usually show in your appearance. Clothing reflects your mental attitude. Do you try to look nice most of the time, but dress sloppily one day? You may reflect your unusual mood that day through your choice of clothing.

Some teens think that looking good is never important. They do not feel that clothes can express what is inside a person. This is the exception. Most young people who have positive self-concepts show this by dressing well.

First Impressions

Along with your self-concept, you have a public image. This is the way you look to others. Within a few seconds after meeting you, people will form their impression of you. They may guess your age, size, nationality, and whether they would like to know you better. A first impression is the way you feel about people when you first meet them. What are your first impressions of the young people in 1-15?

The way people dress is one way they give you your impression of them. Their clothing is the first thing you see. You notice their clothing before you see their faces or hear their voices.

Someone has said that clothing is a silent language—it speaks for us! Therefore, clothing is important in making a first impression. What first impression do you want others to have of you? If you want others to want to get to know you better, start with a good first impression. They will then want to learn more about you.

Body Language

What you do or say when you first meet people also helps them form a first impression of you. The way you use your body, such as your eyes, arms, and hands, communicates something about you. Your facial expressions and your posture also tell others about you. This nonverbal communication is called body language.

Looking people in the eye when you meet them sends a message that you are friendly. Not making eye contact is interpreted as a sign of lack of interest. Body language can also express anger,)(( or other feelings. It is important to be aware of your body language because it can communicate your feelings to others.
contact could say you may be shy. If you look away while they are talk-
ing, they may feel you are not listening to what they are saying. This
could cause them not to be interested in getting to know you.

Gestures with your arms and hands and how you handle your body
also send nonverbal messages. For instance, a clinched fist can send a
message of approval or anger according to the facial expression that
goes with it. Winning a contest could cause you to have a big smile and
raise a clenched fist in the air over your head. The same clenched fist
with a heavy frown on your face could say you are angry. Many people
are not aware of how much they talk with their hands.

If your arms are folded or crossed, you may be sending a negative
message. You may say you are uncomfortable or wish to be left alone.
This gesture could also say you are bored. If your eyes are looking away,
this shows a lack of interest or nervousness.

You can communicate a variety of emotions by your facial expressions.
You may appear happy, sad, angry, interested, bored, excited, or puzzled.
When a teacher asks you a question and you answer it correctly, you may
have a pleased look on your face. If you cannot solve a problem, you may
look puzzled.

Tapping your fingers on a table could say you are impatient. You may
not be interested in what people around you are saying. Shrugging your
shoulders tells people you do not know or care about what they are saying.

Your posture—the way you stand, walk, and sit—also tells others a
great deal about you. People with poor posture may send a message of “I
don’t care.” They seem to be either bored, tired, or in poor health. None of
these messages may be true; poor posture can become a habit. You may
not be aware of the messages you are sending if you have poor posture.

The Way You Look

Some people look great all the time. Others never look more than
just “so-so.” Still others could care less about their appearance and look
sloppy most of the time. What makes the difference? The best looking
people do not necessarily have perfect features. Their face shape, eyes,
nose, ears, or mouth may not be the ideal. Neither do they always have
a good body shape. What is their secret? They’ve identified their good
and bad points. They’ve found ways to play up their good points and play
down their bad ones.

Most young people are critical of their bodies. They seldom accept all
the good points they have. Often, they think of their negative points
instead of their positive ones. There are some things that cannot be
changed: extra big feet, a short waist, or long arms. They need to accept
these features and not dwell on them. Instead, young people should
focus on their good points or assets.

Most people do not realize how many good points they have. Take a good look at yourself. Do
a self-evaluation. Decide what is best about you
and what you would like to make look better. Then
decide what you want to cover up and what you
want to show off to even better advantage.

There are many ways to accomplish this. The
style of clothing you choose can help. You can
also use color and design to enhance your good
points and to cover up your poorer ones. You will
learn how to use color and other aspects of
design in later chapters. Begin by choosing
clothes that express your personality and values.
This is the first step in making a positive impres-
sion others are sure to remember, 1-16.
CHAPTER REVIEW

Key Points

- Clothing helps satisfy human needs. These include physical needs for protection and comfort; safety and security needs; the need for love and acceptance; esteem needs; and self-actualization.
- Clothing choices are influenced by modesty, conformity, attraction, self-adornment, status, prestige, and identification.
- Your clothing choices reflect your personality, your values, and your self-concept. These are all influenced by your environment—your family, friends, school, community, culture, and religion.
- People form first impressions within a few seconds of meeting you. If this first impression is a positive one, they will want to get to know you better.
- Nonverbal communication is called body language. This is the way you use your body—your eyes, hands, arms, and facial expressions—to communicate.
- A self-evaluation of your appearance can help you identify your good points and your bad points. Then you can learn how to use clothing to enhance your best features.

To Review

1. Does everyone have the same basic needs?
2. How do clothes help meet your physical needs?
3. Which need is being met when you wear plastic goggles in chemistry lab?
4. Explain why modesty standards vary within a society.
5. Explain how peer pressure can lead to conformity.
6. Give an example of how clothing can express status or prestige.
7. Who or what influences a person's values?
8. People who only see their own weaknesses and faults are likely to have a _____________.
9. Explain how your appearance can affect your self-concept.
10. Give three examples of body language and tell what they mean.

To Do

1. Create a bulletin board showing examples of why people wear clothes. Use your creativity to write clever captions.
2. Interview employers about standards of dress in their businesses. Find out why they have these standards.
3. Research native dress or costumes worn in foreign countries. Select one item of dress typical of one particular country. Prepare a report to share with the class discussing how culture influences this dress.
4. Make a list of all the different groups to which you belong. Identify special clothing that you might wear to show that you are a member of each group.
5. Write a report describing the personality of a television character. Include both good and bad qualities. Discuss whether his or her personal appearance gives a clue to his or her personality.
6. Write a paper describing the values you have that were influenced by your family.
7. Write a paragraph “As I See Me.” Do not sign your paper. Give your paper to your teacher who will then give your description to another student to read. This student will try to identify who wrote the paragraph. Was the person who read your paragraph able to identify you? Do others see you as you see yourself?
8. Make a list of the things that affect your first impression of a person. Compare lists from all class members. Make a master list naming the most mentioned things first.
9. Make a list of types of body language that can help a person to make a good impression on others. Then make a list of types of body language that can make a poor impression on others. Discuss the lists in class.

To Think About

1. Discuss the popularity of certain brand names of clothes among teenagers. Is there pressure to buy expensive clothes to achieve status in your school? Debate the pros and cons of this trend.
2. Contrast conformity versus individuality in the way a person chooses to dress. Is one better than the other?
3. Analyze factors that influence personality. Include both positive and negative ones.
4. Identify the personality traits you like most about the employees in a store where you often shop. Identify traits you dislike most in store employees. Compare and contrast the two lists of traits.
5. Do you believe a first impression is important? Defend your answer.