Specialty

Wearable design

Designs devices worn on the body, such as watches, bands, glasses or garments with sensors, so they are comfortable and useful while the person moves.



In Spanish
Diseño de wearables

Origin
Gemperle et al. (1998)

What problem it addresses

A worn device touches the skin, has weight, gives off heat and moves with the body all day. If it is uncomfortable, it ends up in a drawer.

Principles

Where it gets in the way least

Some areas of the body move little and are similar in size in almost all adults, such as the forearm or the waist.

For a body in motion

The form follows the body's curves and doesn't restrict its movements.

At a glance

What it shows can be read in an instant, because it is looked at while doing something else.

Applications in design

✓ Use it like this

Test prototypes worn for hours during everyday life, not just on a table.

✗ Avoid

Designing only the screen and forgetting weight, the clasp or sweat.

Don't fall for it

What you wear is also seen: people choose what they put on by how it looks on them.

Connections

Builds on

- Ergonomics and human factors

Related to

- Fashion design
- Haptic design
- Industrial design

Authors and works

1998	**Francine Gemperle, Chris Kasabach, John Stivoric, Malcolm Bauer and Richard Martin**	Studied how a worn object relates to the body in motion and proposed 13 guidelines, such as placement, weight or heat, along with the areas of the body where it is least intrusive.

Sources

Original sources

- Gemperle, F., Kasabach, C., Stivoric, J., Bauer, M., & Martin, R. (1998). Design for wearability. In Digest of Papers, Second International Symposium on Wearable Computers (ISWC '98), 116–122. IEEE. View source (https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/729537)

Last reviewed: October 25, 2026

Atlas público de diseño, de Adriana Ojeda. Texto e ilustraciones bajo licencia CC BY 4.0.