



# Successful Samples FREE Cost Calculator

How to reduce costs, save time and  
have a more peaceful process so you  
can scale your brand

**For intimate apparel and swimwear brands who are tired of wasting time and money on samples that never quite work.**

**My sampling cost calculator will help you to:**

- Understand exactly why your samples keep coming back wrong and what's actually causing it
  - Know what needs to be in place before you cut anything so you stop wasting money on avoidable rounds
  - Identify the specific gaps in your current process that are costing you time and margin every season
  - Walk into every development feeling in control instead of bracing yourself for another round of corrections
  - Finally get samples back that accurately reflect the vision you had when you started
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## **Hi, I'm Yelena, designer and digital pattern maker with 14 years of experience in intimate apparel and swimwear garments.**

I've seen established brands cancel an entire season's collection because they couldn't get their samples to match their vision. I've seen launches delayed for years due to brands spending far more than their budget, changing manufacturers multiple times, going round in circles. And by the time they finally get to launch, they're burnt out from the process.

It's not that the vision is unrealistic. It's that the process is missing essential foundations, and those foundations need to be in place right at the start of product development.

This is exactly why I love what I do. With 14 years of experience in technical design and pattern drafting, I create technically accurate blueprints that give your sampling process the strongest possible starting point.

Like my client Hayley, who came to me wanting to create an innovative bra brand. By perfecting the fit and function in house first, she went to the factory with a solid blueprint, thus saving her from costly and time consuming factory sampling rounds.

Not only do I tech test every design before it's even created but I also include digital pattern drafting and sampling in my process so that designs can be tested before they are even sampled up.

I've created this guide so you can audit your business and see what areas you could improve to streamline your sampling process, creating less wasted money, time and resources.

I'd love to know if you found this helpful!

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## **Let's put your process to the test**

Use my unique Sampling Cost Calculator to see what your numbers are really telling you! I designed this especially for fashion brand founders like you so you can see where improving your systems could save your money and time.

# What is your sampling process *really* costing you?

Enter your numbers below to see the true cost of your current process and what it could look like with fewer rounds.

[Click here to go to the calculator](#)

## The sampling audit:

### Where is your process breaking down?

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After having read through this guide and putting your numbers into my Sampling Cost calculator, you should have a better understanding of areas you could improve on now to create more successful samples. This is the important part of the guide because it really confirms what you could improve on.

**Tick any statements that feel familiar -**

- The first sample often looks or fits differently to what you expected
- You're making more changes than expected after the first sample
  
- Fit or balance issues only become clear once the sample is made
- Samples come back with issues like twisting, pulling, or imbalance
  
- Samples come back close, but not quite right
- You find yourself explaining the same thing more than once
  
- You often need more than 2–3 rounds to get a style right
- The same issues appear across multiple rounds
- Fixing one issue creates another elsewhere in the garment
  
- The product fits well in one size, but not consistently across the range
- Fit feedback or returns tend to come from specific sizes

- Costs increase due to multiple rounds, remakes, or delays
- Getting a style to approval takes longer than expected

### How many did you tick?

**0-3** Your sampling process is likely running efficiently.

Minor issues may still come up, but they're unlikely to significantly impact timelines or cost.

**4-7** There are clear points in your process where extra rounds, time, and cost are building up.

These aren't major issues individually, but together they will slow development and affect consistency.

**8+** Your sampling process is likely creating repeated inefficiencies across development. The good news: getting this right will save you significant time and margin from your very next development.

## How to refine your sampling process

After using the calculator and audit you should have identified where your process is leaking money and time. The next step is addressing those gaps but not by overhauling everything, but by tightening the specific points that have the biggest impact on your sampling rounds.

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### Actional steps

1. Define what your first sample is actually for. Are you testing fit and construction? Or are you unsure of the fabric behaviour and want to test it out?
2. Check your tech packs before sending to your manufacture  
Are they clearly detailed? Is there any contradicting information?
3. Review your patterns with a beginners eye  
Are the instructions clear? Has anything been assumed?
4. Add a visual layer to your development process. Can you clearly visualise how your samples will be before they've been made?
5. Track sampling issues that happen repeatedly. You'll be able to find out the root cause and correct them before you've spent time and money on the same problem.

## How your business could look in 6 months with a more streamlined process

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- **Your collections are launching on time** because development isn't running over
- You're spending your sampling budget on bulk, not on rounds that should never have happened
- Your manufacturer relationship is stronger because the back-and-forth has stopped, it doesn't feel exhausting anymore
- Your size range fits consistently and your customers notice **because you see them buying from you again and again**
- You now have headspace to focus on **growing** the brand instead of feeling stuck

## If you want help to fix your sampling process...

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I work with intimate apparel and swimwear brands to build the pattern and sampling foundations that get collections from vision to production in fewer rounds, with less cost and less back-and-forth.

### [Apply to work with me](#)

Let me know what your current problems are and if this is something I feel I can help you with, I'll invite you to a free 30 min discovery call where we can go over this in more detail and see if we're a good fit to work together. Looking forward to helping you!

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[Website](#)

[Selected Works](#)

[Linkedin](#)

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*She demonstrated exceptional skills in pattern cutting, grading, and populating tech packs for our factory, along with a keen attention to detail and dedication to quality. As a member of the product development team, she played a vital role in bringing our designs to life. Her ability to transform ideas into tangible products that met our brand's high standards was remarkable. Her contributions to the team were invaluable, and her positive attitude and willingness to collaborate with others made her a pleasure to work with.*

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Naomi De Haan – Edge O Beyond Founder

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*Working with Yelena has been an incredibly positive experience. Her technical expertise, combined with her patience and calm, thoughtful approach, made what could have been an overwhelming process feel structured and manageable from the start. My project involved developing a complex pumping bra that needed to balance beautiful aesthetics with real functionality and Yelena achieved both to a level that far exceeded my expectations.*

*As a complete novice, I was met with understanding and guidance at every step. Yelena's thorough process meant that I didn't just end up with a fantastic product; she also helped me clearly define who the product is for and why it is needed. She was consistently professional, responsive, and supportive throughout, and I wouldn't hesitate to recommend her to anyone looking for an exceptional technical designer.*

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Hayley – Lulled, Breast pumping bras

*This project was the first time I had ventured into the world of pattern design and creation and what an experience it has been! From the first meeting we had Yelena understood my vision and through her amazing talent brought that vision to life. She made the whole process go very smoothly and I wouldn't think twice about working together again on a new project. Thank you Yelena for all the hours you put into my pattern!*

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Asmaa, winner of the Sewing Bee 2023 – Imperfectly Perfect