

 **BIGIMOTIK**  
corporate skills adapted for a cosplayer world



# Cosplay Design

## Reference Images

© 2020 Bigimotik Cosplay



**Instagram** | [bigimotikcosplay](#) | *Work-in-progress pictures*

**Facebook** | [facebook.com/bigimotikcosplay](#) | *Photo Albums: WIP, references, project files*

**Website** | [www.bigimotikcosplay.com](#) | *Costume portfolio, content archive*

# BIGIMOTIK

## References



One of the first steps to a cosplay is collecting reference images to get a better understanding of your character. In this guide, we will cover some specific types of references you should look out for and how you can incorporate these references into your final design. .

### Agenda:

- ✓ Getting started with collecting reference images  
Examples of screen grabs or scans to collect before starting the design process
- ✓ Building a Silhouette for You  
Reference images that capture silhouette and making them work for you
- ✓ Caring about Colors  
Taking samples to find a “true” color for your design
- ✓ Deviating from the Design  
When your design needs to deviate from the reference images
- ✓ Historical Inspiration  
References outside of the original source material
- ✓ Nike Lermercier – Final Design  
An example of a design (for comparison with the reference images)



### Example reference and design

Nike Lermercier  
*World is Still Beautiful*

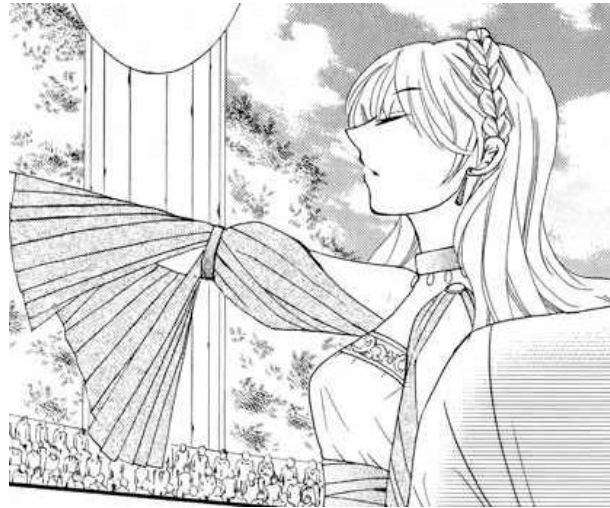
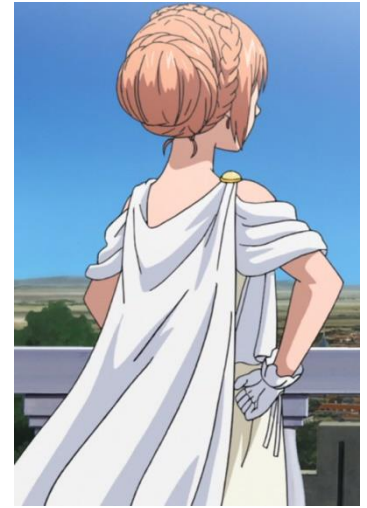
Turn to the next page to see some examples of break downs.  
Go to page 3 to learn how this skill can be applied in a professional setting!



# BIGIMOTIK

## Collecting Reference Images

The goal here is easy: grab as many reference images from as many different sources as possible. This gives you flexibility when deciding which elements you'd like to include in your final design.



**Pro Tip:** Try to find similar shots or poses from multiple media sources to compare and contrast.

These also can help give you ideas for how to pose once you are done with the costume!



# BIGIMOTIK

Building a Silhouette for You



When collecting reference images, I always make sure to get full length shots that show off the full silhouette of the costume. This is critical for adapting the costume to fit my body shape – as I am not a tall, slender anime heroine.

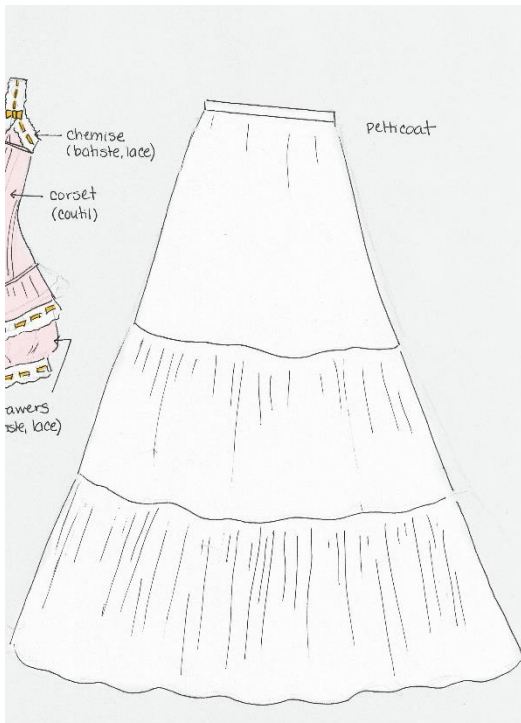


Silhouettes will often vary between sources – whether that is anime, manga, or video game. I try to collect references from all media because then I can pick and choose where I want to draw inspiration.

From there, I try to pick out the key shape.

Nike's anime dress is more A-line, while her manga dress is more like a traditional ball gown.

Because of my short torso, A-line outfits tend to work better for me; I decided to go with an A-line, reinforced with a petticoat to give me the range of motion Nike has the anime (below: kneeling).

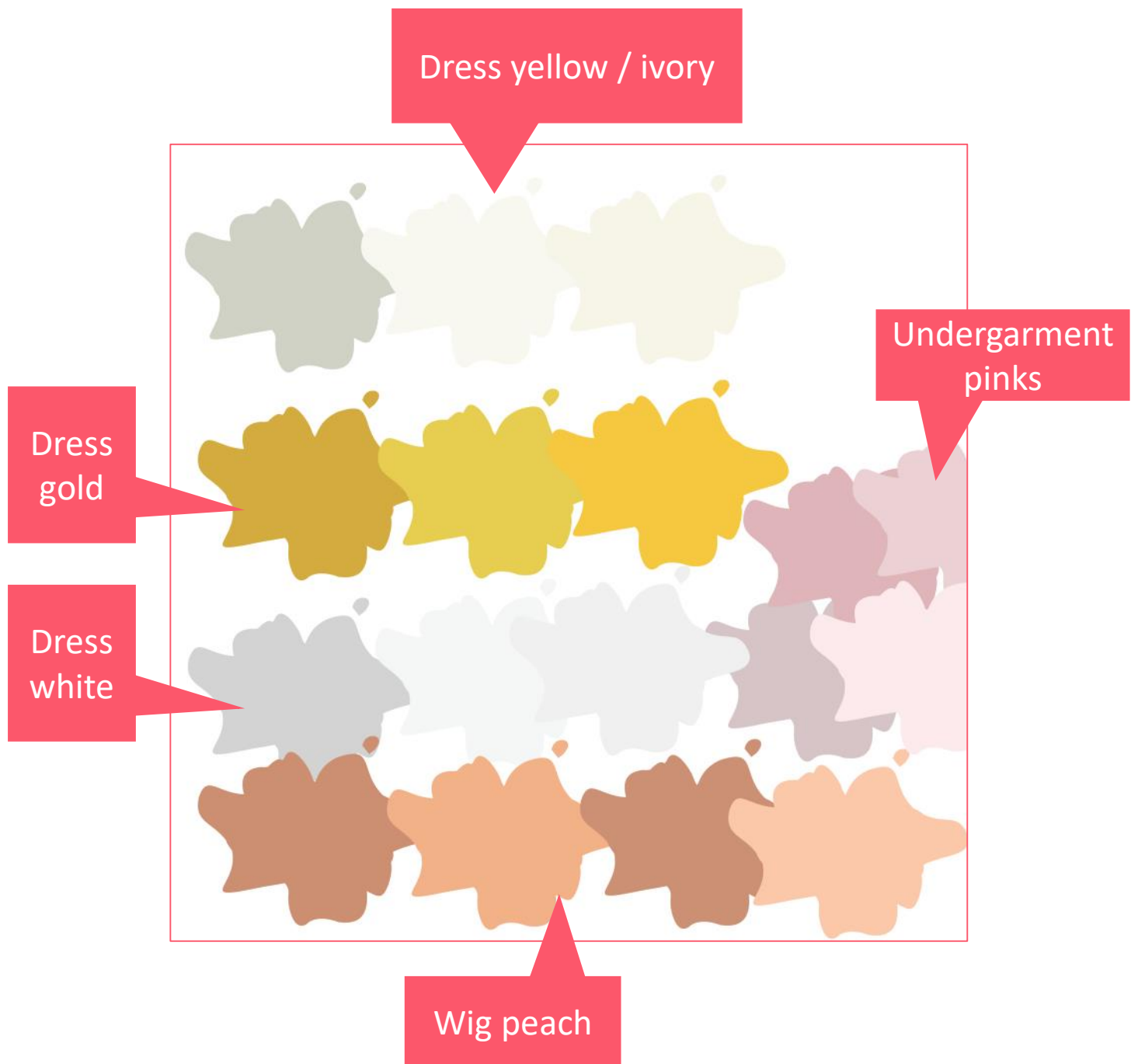




## Caring about Colors

Color is definitely an area where I struggle sometimes because I try to be as accurate to the source material as possible. That can prove difficult when the screen grabs vary drastically depending on the lighting, special effects, or just from the animation week to week.

When I start a new project, I take color samples from multiple places and then use that as a baseline for picking my final colors. Below are a few of the colors I grabbed of Nike's engagement dress from Episode 6 of *World Still Beautiful*.



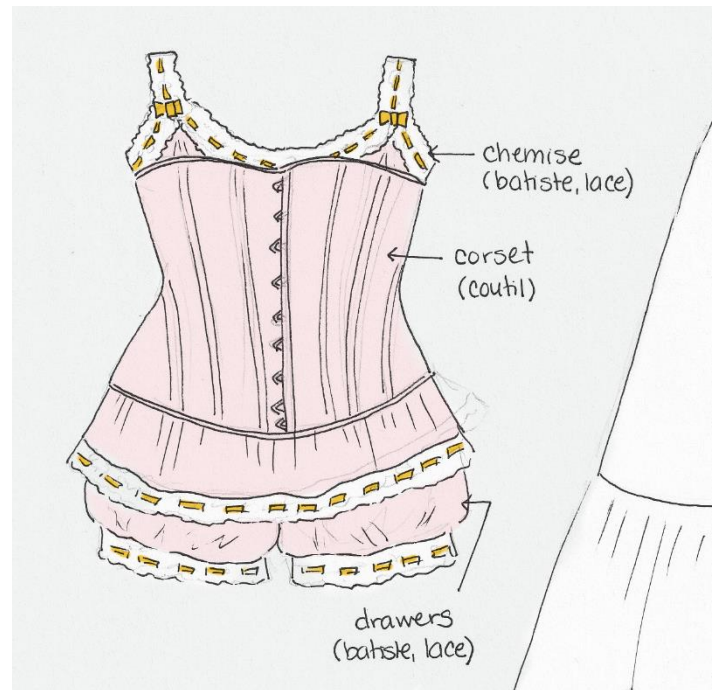
# BIGIMOTIK

Deviating from the References



## There are many reasons to want to deviate from the source material:

- The scaling is impractical for whatever you are creating the costume for (i.e. too big for travel or a convention)
- Making the design as-is would be cost prohibitive due to type, quantity or variety of materials
- The original design would be uncomfortable to wear physically or does not take wearing into considerable (see example below)
- You just don't like parts of the design and would like to change them



**Example:** Nike's original design had an over bust, Victorian-era style corset with closed drawers.

But it was not uncommon for corset wearers to don a chemise underneath to protect the corset (thus reducing how many times it needed to be laundered). My design added a chemise with lace. I then updated the drawers to have matching lace.

I'll also be wearing a petticoat, which was not shown in either the anime or the manga, but would be necessary to maintain the silhouette of the dress.

**Pro Tip:** If you are competing for craftsmanship, check the contest rules to see how much artistic license is permitted. Some contests do not mind, but others may have requirements like "must still be recognizable as the original design".

# BIGIMOTIK



## Using Historical Inspiration

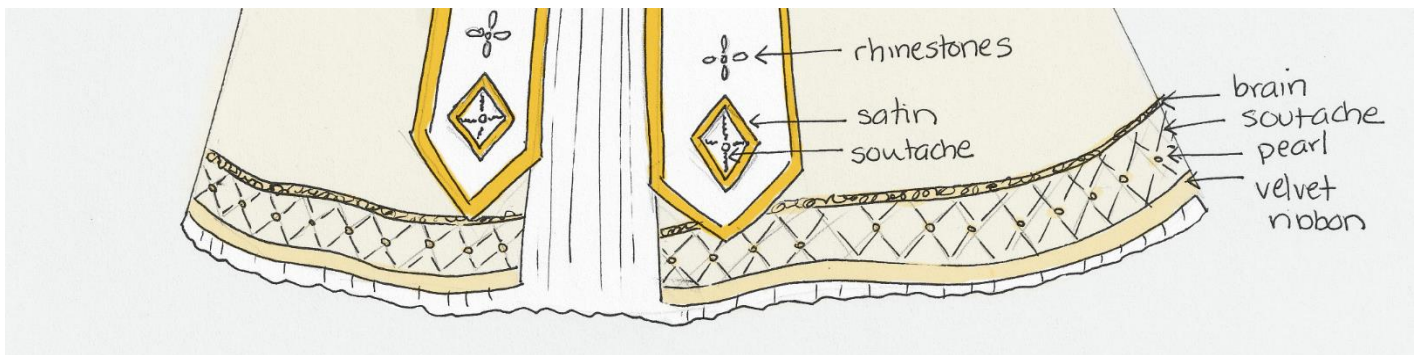


Many anime and manga designs are simplified to make it easier for weekly/monthly production, but that does mean the costumes may feel plain – especially when they are not supposed to be. When I want to add more detail, I often find historical pieces for inspiration whether via paintings and photographs.

For example, for Nike, her gown is very muted – both in the anime and the manga. But in reality, an engagement gown for the future queen of an empire – one that the designer in the show has stated was ‘a work of art’ would not be so plain.

I found a painting of a ball gown with a trim that I liked and I incorporated it into the design, taking liberties with color, shapes, and textures that more closely match the original dress.

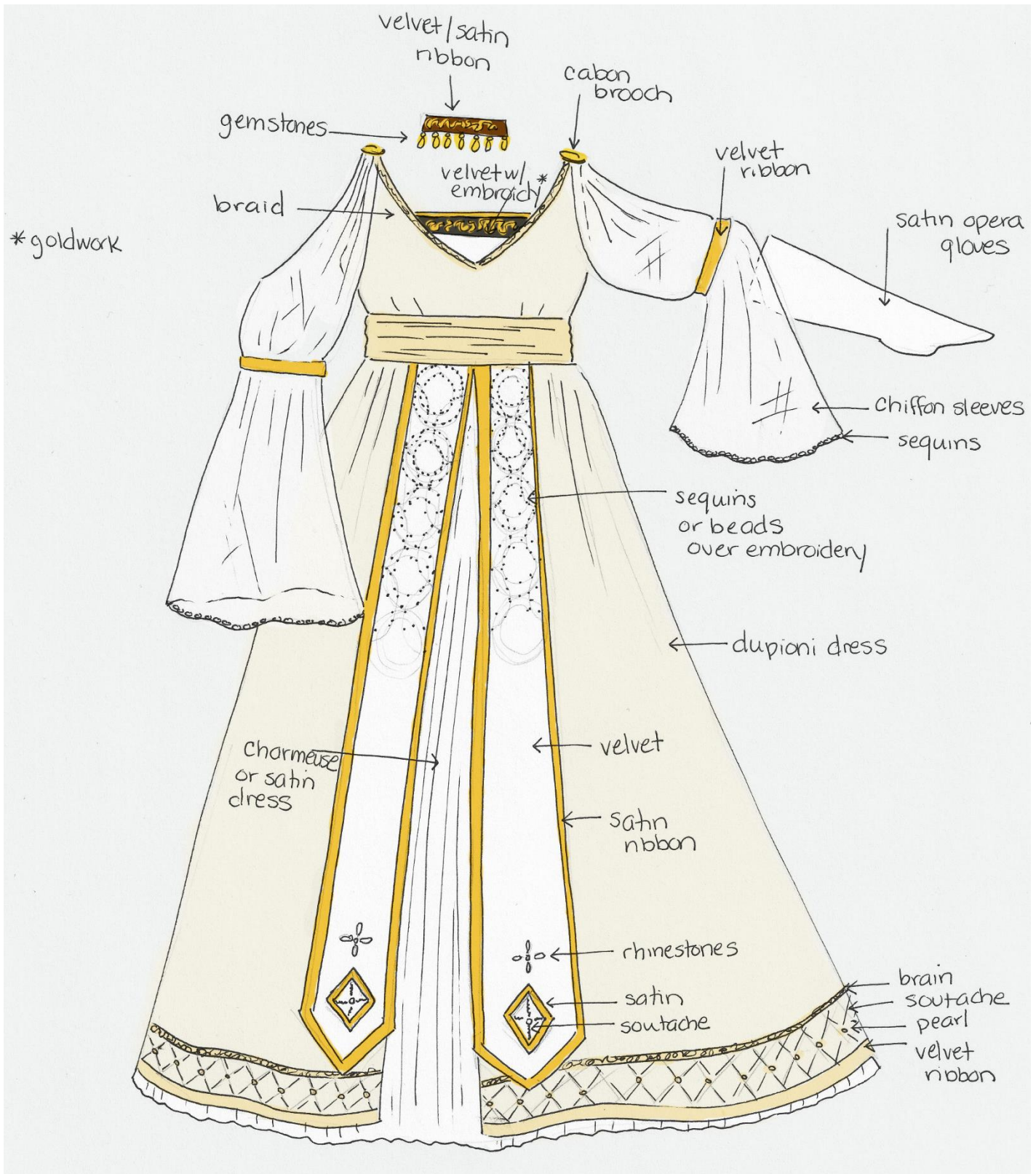
**Pro Tip:** Keep your inspiration pictures in a folder for the future!



# BIGIMOTIK



## Nike Final Design Reference Sheet





# BIGIMOTIK



## Nike Final Design Reference Sheet



BIGIMOTIK



Nike Final Design Reference Sheet





## Nike Final Design Reference Sheet



Get Connected



**Instagram** | [bigimotikcosplay](#)

**Facebook** | [facebook.com/bigimotikcosplay](#)

**Website** | [www.bigimotikcosplay.com](#)