



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Marketing Sector

Sewing

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Sewing** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website (www.bgateway.com/businessplan), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **July 2025**.

What do I need to know about the Sewing market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ The Textile, Clothing & Leather Processing Machinery Manufacturing in the UK industry in United Kingdom is moderate competitive. The industry in United Kingdom is forecast to generate revenue of **£192.2m in 2024**, up 1.1% on the year. One of the most prominent competitive threats to industry operators is supplier power, which are at a High level in United Kingdom - this is also the case in 17 other countries across Europe, including France, and Turkey. (IBIS World, *Textile, Clothing & Leather Processing Machinery Manufacturing in the UK*, August 2024)
- ◆ Growing demand for shorter supply chains is reducing wholesaler numbers. Revenue is expected to fall at a compound annual rate of 3.9% to **£3.2 billion over the five years through 2025-26**. Revenue is forecast to decline at a compound rate of 0.3% to **£3.1 billion over the five years through 2030-31**. Textile wholesalers are highly susceptible to shifts in downstream demand from retailers. Retailers are bypassing wholesalers and establishing direct relationships with manufacturers, enabling them to cut 'middle-men' costs and offer products at lower prices. Wholesalers are investing in innovation to counteract this and are taking advantage of demand for luxury textiles and environmentally friendly goods. (IBIS World, *Textile Wholesaling in the UK*, May 2025).
- ◆ Over a third of under-35s participate in three or more art and craft activities in the last 12 months. Over half of adults did an arts and crafts activity (58% of women and 49% of men). 26% of survey participants participated in painting/drawing, 22% in colouring, and 17% in textiles (eg sewing, knitting). While 45% of survey participants found online tutorials for inspiration, 30% cited TV shows (eg Great British Sewing Bee). Current trends include social crafting sessions, clothing upcycling, sewing subscription boxes, and DIY/crafting workshops (Mintel, *Arts and Crafts Consumer UK*, March 2025).
- ◆ Consumers who live in the North East/North West, West Midlands and Scotland are significantly more likely than those living in other regions of the UK to associate a sustainable retailer with selling locally made items. There is scope for retailers to have some neighbourhood stores that partner with locally made fashion brands and use their stores to showcase these items. (Mintel, *Fashion & Sustainability*, June 2024)
- ◆ The national organisation for this industry include [Craft Scotland](#), [Crafts Council](#), [Creative Scotland](#), [Culture & Business Scotland](#) (formerly Arts and Business Scotland) and the [Society of Designer Craftsmen](#).



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Where can I find more information on my market?

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email info@bgateway.com.

- ◆ **Statista – Fashion lovers in the United Kingdom (March 2025).** Many fashion lovers have a high annual household income. Success and career advancement are relatively important to fashion lovers. 21% of fashion lovers are innovators or early adopters of new products.
- ◆ **Mintel – Fashion & Sustainability UK (2024).** Consumers aged 60+ are more likely to associate a sustainable fashion brand with promoting waste reduction, items designed to be reused or recycled, locally made items, minimising carbon emissions of items. Over two fifths of consumers (particularly Gen X and Baby Boomers) think companies should sell fashion made from recycled materials and at cheaper price. Costs will reduce over as time as investment in textile recycling grows and retailers use recycled fabrics for whole collections.

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

- ◆ **Craft Focus** is a bi-monthly trade publication for the craft industry, distributed to Art & Craft shops, Toy shops, Model shops, Haberdashers and Needlecraft retailers, they also have a supplier directory and news/events sections. (www.craftfocus.com).
- ◆ The **Craft Scotland** website has a directory of makers across all crafts, including sewing, needlework, upholstery and other textile work. They also have a What's On section covering upcoming events in Scotland, as well as free resources for makers through their Craft Community page which includes job and volunteering opportunities; commission work; surveys; research and more (craftscotland.org).
- ◆ **Culture and Business Scotland** is a charity that works with arts, culture and heritage related businesses. On their website you can find information about upcoming events, industry news, as well as upcoming funding opportunities, as well as free resources published by the charity (cultureandbusiness.scot).

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How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as [Yell](#), [Thomson Local](#) or [Google Maps](#)
- ◆ Trade specialists like [EuroPages](#) (European directory), [The Wholesaler](#) or [Free Index](#)
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as [Kompass](#)

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the [Companies House](#) website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Market and customer research](#) will help you to identify new trends, opportunities, customers and competitors.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these websites, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the [Census Area Profiles](#). Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ [Understanding Scottish Places](#) has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ [Scottish Government Statistics](#) provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- ◆ [The Scottish Household Survey](#) provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.



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How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) "[Find a Chartered Accountant](#)" tool

Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

Legal Help

Gov.uk "[Licence Finder](#)" tool

Law Society of Scotland's "[Find a Solicitor](#)" tool

Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

Please note: the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing](#)

Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

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