

# *A Simple Legal Guide for Fashion Startups in India*

by *Fashion Law IP Blog*

If you want your brand to grow and stay safe, you need to take care of some important legal steps. This guide breaks down the 5 most important legal things every fashion brand in India should do.

## ***1. Set Up Your Business the Right Way***

Before you sell your first product, make your brand official.

Why?

It helps you open a bank account, pay taxes properly, and build trust with customers and partners.

What to do:

- Choose how you want to run your business: as an individual (sole proprietorship), with a partner, or as a company (LLP or Pvt. Ltd.).
- Register your business with the government (Ministry of Corporate Affairs).
- Get a PAN (for taxes) and a GST number (if you're selling products).
- Open a bank account in your brand's name.

*Bonus tip: You might also need a trade license or shop license, depending on your city or state.*

## ***2. Protect Your Brand Name and Logo***

Your brand name, logo, and tagline are part of your identity. You don't want someone else to copy them.

What to do:

- Register your trademark, this gives you legal ownership of your brand name/logo.
- A registered trademark means you can stop others from using your brand name.

- After registration, you can use the ® symbol.

*Pro tip: Do a trademark search first to check if someone else is already using a similar name.*

### **3. Save Your Designs from Copycats**

If you create original clothes, prints, or embroidery, you should protect them too.

What to do:

- If your design is new and unique, register it under the Designs Act. This gives you exclusive rights for 10-15 years.
- If you create original artwork, sketches, or lookbook photos, they are automatically protected under copyright law, but registering them makes your rights stronger.
- You can't get both copyright and design protection for the same thing, so choose wisely.

*Why it matters: Many big brands lose money every year due to copycats. Registering your designs early can stop that.*

### **4. Use Proper Contracts**

Whether you're working with a tailor, a manufacturer, a graphic designer, or a brand collaborator, always have things in writing.

What to do:

- Use a contract when working with suppliers, photographers, models, or business partners.
- Sign NDAs (Non-Disclosure Agreements) before sharing your designs or ideas.
- If someone works for you full-time, give them an employment agreement.
- If you're giving someone permission to use your brand or designs, have a license agreement.

*Why it matters: Good contracts prevent misunderstandings and help if something goes wrong.*

## 5. Follow Product and Customer Rules

Once you start selling, you have to follow some basic rules to stay legal and earn customer trust.

What to do:

- Make sure your product tags or labels show:
  - Brand name
  - Size (in cm or standard sizes like S/M/L)
  - MRP
  - Manufacturer's or seller's name and address
  - Customer care contact
- If you sell online, also show your return policy, shipping info, and terms & conditions clearly on your website or page.
- Don't make false claims about your products. If something is defective, offer a refund or replacement.

*Why it matters: These rules come under India's consumer and e-commerce laws. Following them helps you avoid penalties, and builds loyal customers.*

*Quick Legal Checklist:*

- ✓ Register your business and get a GST number
- ✓ Trademark your brand name and logo
- ✓ Register original fashion designs or prints
- ✓ Use contracts and NDAs with everyone you work with
- ✓ Follow labelling and return policies for all products

Legal stuff might seem boring, but it's what protects your creativity, your money, and your brand. Take these 5 steps early on, and you'll save yourself a lot of trouble later.

Need help getting started? Reach out to *FL Legal Consultancy* via [fashionlawipblog.com](http://fashionlawipblog.com).