

Duane Lawrence

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Professional Summary

Senior Footwear Designer & Creative Director with 20+ years of global experience designing and engineering world-class products for industry leaders including Converse, Li Ning, Adidas, and Anta Sports. Expert at leading design initiatives from concept through production, delivering innovative, market-relevant footwear across multiple categories while managing complex projects under tight timelines. Adept at cultivating strong partnerships with international manufacturing teams to ensure quality and timely delivery. Known for fostering collaborative, high-performing teams, mentoring designers, and creating consumer-driven products that blend functional performance with refined aesthetic detail.

Work Experience

Footwear Design Director, Basketball/Innovation

Anta Sports-Xiamen

April 2019 to May 2025

- Led a team of footwear designers in the creation and execution of performance product for NBA players and China's growing basketball market.
- Worked cross-functionally with product marketing and development to create a product architecture and corresponding design language that communicates the brand's principle and performance benefits.
- Participated in marketing campaigns to enrich the storytelling of product details from functional benefits to material innovation.
- Collaborated with outside vendors and suppliers to discover and develop new materials, processes and constructions for various categories including kids, performance and lifestyle.
- Learned Mandarin to better communicate with colleagues and interpret messaging for brand ambassadors.

Design Director

TESH Sports-Oakland, CA

November 2015 to January 2017

- Owned the creative roadmap for basketball, training, and cleated footwear categories, setting vision and driving product direction to ensure market relevance, innovation, and profitability.
- Cultivated high-performing relationships with overseas manufacturing leadership, aligning global teams around quality standards, cost targets, and speed-to-market objectives.
- Influenced cross-functional decision-making through strategic presentations, clear communication, and disciplined deadline leadership across complex development cycles.

Creative Director

Drive Nation-Portland, OR

June 2011 to October 2013

- Designed and launched a full footwear product line from concept to production, leveraging trend analysis and time management to meet market expectations and secure approval from factory partners in China.

- Led end-to-end brand creation—including naming, logo development, packaging, and apparel design—applying creative direction and cross-functional coordination to establish a cohesive and recognizable identity.
- Managed international manufacturing communication to ensure on-time delivery and quality execution, utilizing clear project management and cultural fluency throughout China-based development travel.
- Directed a team of designers and content creators to produce promotional reels, sales presentations, and web assets, strengthening brand presence and refining leadership and presentation skills in high-stakes sales meetings.

Footwear Designer

Adidas-Portland, OR

March 2010 to May 2011

- Designed signature product for marquee athletes including Dwight Howard, Tim Duncan, and Chauncey Billups, strengthening brand-athlete relationships through tailored storytelling and professionalism.
- Drove commercial success within Adidas Basketball's price-point category by strategically elevating lower-tier product aesthetics without compromising cost targets.
- Quickly mastered new design systems and development processes, leveraging adaptability and pricing knowledge to improve cross-team efficiency from season one

Footwear Designer

Li Ning USA-Portland, OR

January 2009 to March 2010

- Generated design concepts across basketball, running, and training categories, using advanced 2D sketching and rendering skills to communicate innovation with clarity and impact.
- Delivered compelling product narratives for both premium and price-point lines, elevating perceived value while aligning with commercial goals.
- Strengthened athlete-brand relationships through professional collaboration and design execution tailored to individual performance needs and personal identities.

Footwear Designer

Converse-Beaverton, OR

July 2004 to December 2008

- Conceptualized basketball and sports lifestyle footwear, translating product stories into high-impact designs for both premium and price-point offerings using advanced 2D sketching and rendering.
- Collaborated closely with professional athletes, including Dwyane Wade, to develop signature lines that elevated brand relevance and drove consumer engagement.
- Delivered record-breaking product launches, including the Wade 1 line (1M+ pairs sold) and Showtime/099 lines (500K+ pairs sold), reinforcing Converse's presence in both performance and accessible markets.

Education

Industrial Design (Bachelor of Fine Arts)

College for Creative Studies-Detroit, MI

2000 to 2004

Industrial Design

Design and Architecture Sr. High-Miami, FL

1996 to 2000

Skills

- Adobe Illustrator
- Adobe Photoshop
- Vizcom AI
- Mandarin (Intermediate-HSK4)
- Technical drawing
- Attention to detail
- 2D Sketching and Rendering
- Microsoft Excel

Links

<https://duanealawrence.com/portfolio>

Awards

Red Dot 2025 Best of the Best

October 2025

2025 Best of the Best Design Award: Children & Babies

<https://www.red-dot.org/de/project/juicyflex-83524>

DASH Taste of Design Award

2009

Presented by Miami's prestigious design community for outstanding excellence in the design profession.

Publications

Cool Careers: Duane Lawrence

<https://youtu.be/maLk6vPVL6U?si=4hFEKh6cvqDD4Ya2>

June 2024

In a series of videos designed to teach and inform students about nontraditional career paths, Duane Lawrence speaks on how footwear design is related to science, technology, engineering, art and math.

CNN Philippines

<https://youtu.be/rDC0c-x-Zws?si=-3Rlc4uuqv29aSL2>

August 2023

Duane Lawrence, Design Director for Anta Basketball joins CNN Philippines in Manila to discuss the upcoming signature shoe for Klay Thompson of the Golden State Warriors.

ESPN The Magazine

2006

A story on desirable professions within the sports industry that are not athletes.