

MILES MODELS, LLC

How to Be a Fashion Model in Paris

There are few things more exciting for a model than working in the most beautiful and romantic city in the world, the city of light, Paris, France.

Known for the most glamorous and iconic fashion houses such as Chanel, Yves Saint Laurent, Louis Vuitton, Christian Dior, Hermes, Lanvin, and Christian Louboutin, modeling in Paris is the ultimate and most prestigious destination for all professional models.

Stats for Fashion Models

Stats (measurements) for female models in Paris should be 5' 9" to 6' tall (5'10-5'10 ½ is even better) with bust, waist and hip measurements of 34-23-33. Male models should be at least 6' to 6' 2" and wear a 38 to 40 Regular jacket. Designers make their garments in one size or what is called a sample size. Models must fit the clothes that the designers make each season rather than the other way around. With the number of items a designer produces for each collection, it would be impossible for a designer to make each garment to fit every individual model.

Age Requirements

The minimum legal age to work any kind of job in France is 16 years. Most top model agencies in France will have a special license for minors, but people under the age of 16 have incredibly strict working hours, therefore most agencies will not take child models who originate from countries outside of France.

Learn Style, Class, and Sophistication

Paris is not a market for brand new models who need to get experience or build their books. Models should have already worked a bit in the Asian markets such as Tokyo, Singapore or Taipei before attempting the sophisticated market of Paris. Other good markets before heading to Paris would be Germany, Milan, London, and even Australia. Once a model has learned the basics of the industry they are now ready for the ultimate destination of Paris where they will work for the most glamorous and sophisticated clients.

Employment Status

Unlike every other modeling market, models in Paris are considered employees rather than independent contractors. Models are paid every month (like a salary) and if the client doesn't pay the model is still paid.

Because France is a socialist country, there's a lot of tax. Models net about 33% of their gross earnings. For example, if the model books a job for \$1000, the model will receive \$300. 20% is deducted for agency commissions and the rest is tax! Part of the tax money is put towards unemployment, health insurance, and a pension.

High taxes and agency commissions are another reason why models should not go to Paris to learn the business as it can be an expensive lesson. Models should only travel to Paris knowing they have real potential for booking runway, editorial or high-end advertising because that's where the prestige and money are. Most experienced models only travel to Paris to work the "Collections" and then leave for other markets when the Collections are over.

Arriving in Paris

Don't expect the agency to be picking you up in a fancy limousine or meeting you at the airport. Agencies in Paris expect models to have some experience and be professional, thus they expect models to get themselves from the airport to the agency or apartment on their own.

Travel and Accommodation Expenses

Some agencies may offer to advance the cost of a model's airline ticket and apartment, however, the model will be expected to pay this back once they start working. Models should expect to pay for their own airline ticket and accommodation expenses upfront as well as have money for food, subways, taxis, and tests.

Work Visa Requirements

Models who are citizens of Canada, the United States, and most European countries don't need a special visa or work papers for France. The agency will have to file government forms for international models but it does not impact the model in any way.

Signing to an Agency

If you have what it takes to be a fashion model in Paris you really should have an entire career plan and work with a manager or a good "mother agency". A mother agent will know what the best agencies are for your particular look and how to plan and manage your career for the long-term. If you'd like to find out if you have what it takes to be a model in Paris, or you need a mother agent a great place to start is ModelScouts.com.