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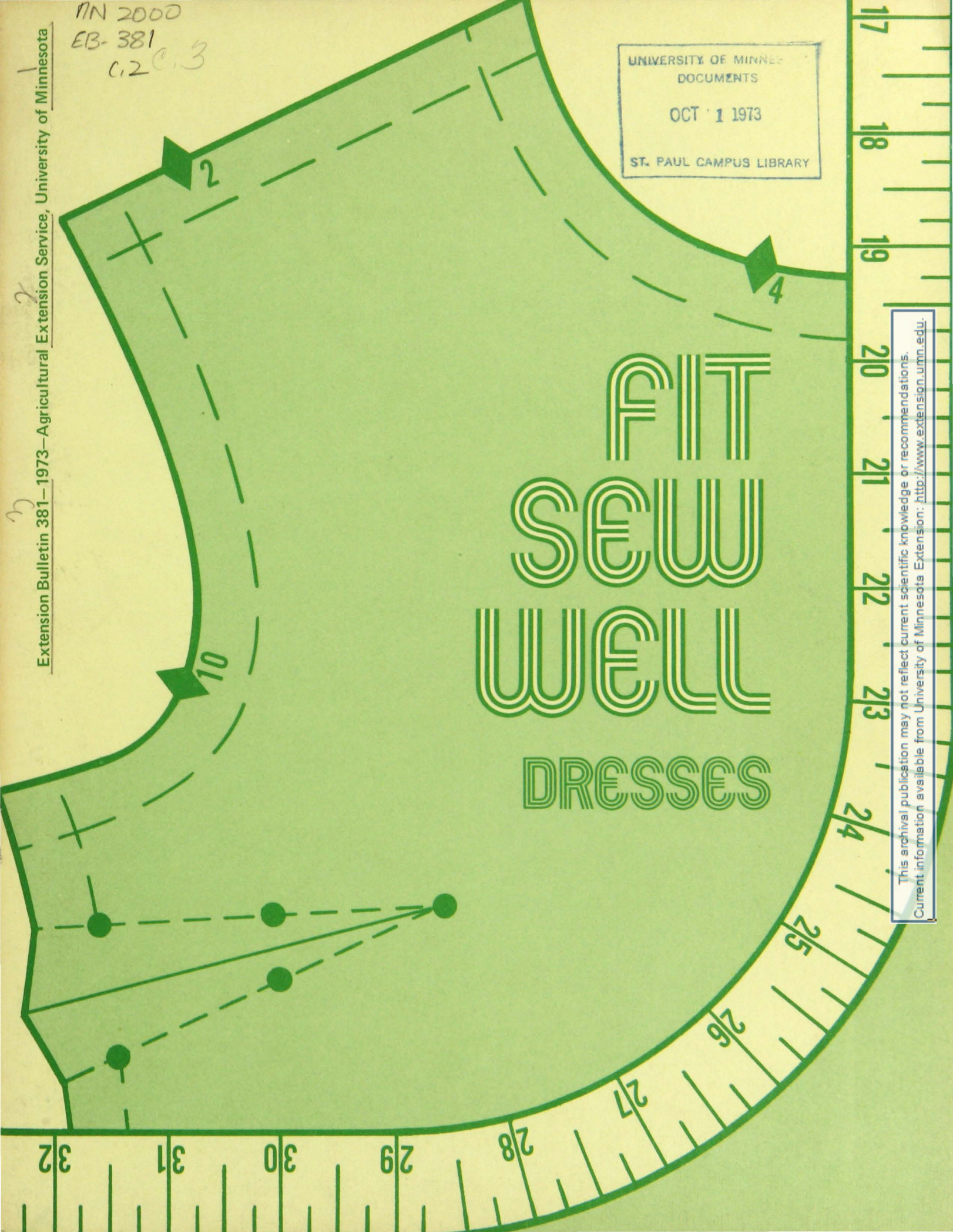
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# FIT SEW WELL DRESSES

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# FIT SEW WELL DRESSES

By

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The author wishes to express her appreciation to Mrs. Jan Minott, clothing instructor, Adult Education, University of California Los Angeles, for her permission to use material from her book Coordinated Pattern Fit. Mrs. Minott also granted permission to use information on pattern coding from mimeographed material being prepared for a new book.

The author also expresses her appreciation to Thelma Baierl, professor and extension specialist in textiles and clothing, University of Minnesota, for her review of the manuscript and helpful suggestions; and to Clemson University extension clothing specialists for materials adapted from their Home Economics Bulletin 195.

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# INTRODUCTION

Fitting is an art that takes time and effort to master. When you have mastered it, every garment you make will look good and feel comfortable.

As you learn to fit well, you will be able to:

- measure figures accurately
- evaluate figure problems
- recognize good fit
- assess poor fit

You will learn how to make all adjustments on straight guidelines so the pattern never loses its original alignment. In turn, garments cut from the pattern will maintain the correct fabric grainlines for the design and shape of the garment. You will begin by applying the principles of fit and pattern adjustment to a simple, basic pattern. You will then have a code that can be used on any commercial pattern you buy.

## Supply List

Materials and tools you will need (listed in the order you will use them):

To take body measurements:

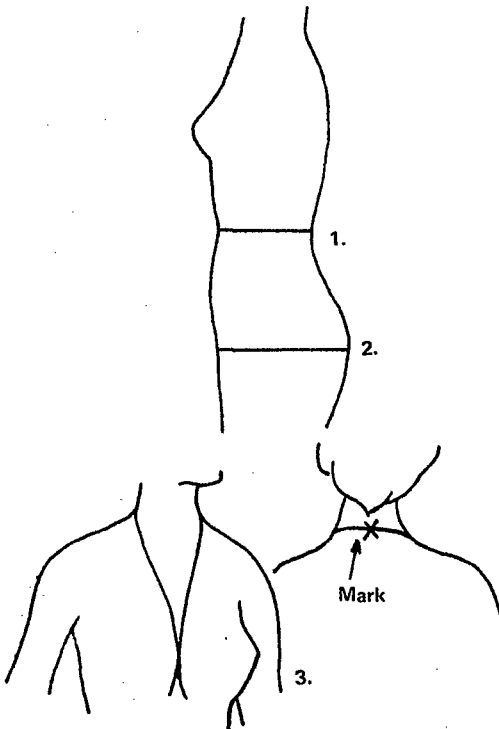
- Cord or string (about 4 yards)
- Wax marking pencil
- Tape measure

To adjust pattern:

- Basic pattern from one of the commercial pattern companies (should have plain round neckline, long set-in sleeves, waistline seam, and slim skirt)
- Unglazed, white shelf paper or wrapping paper (about 3½ yards)
- Tracing wheel and dressmaker's carbon
- Weights (such as paper weights, heavy ashtrays, books, stones)
- Ruler
- Drafting triangle or triangle provided in study kit
- French curve or armhole templates provided in study kit
- Colored pencils
- Transparent tape (be sure you can write on it with a pencil)
- Miscellaneous sewing supplies including pins and shears

To make test garment:

- Plain color, inexpensive, woven fabric in the amount required on pattern envelope for your size and fabric width
- Contrasting thread
- Sewing machine

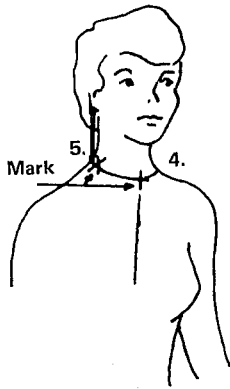


## Keys to accurate body measurements

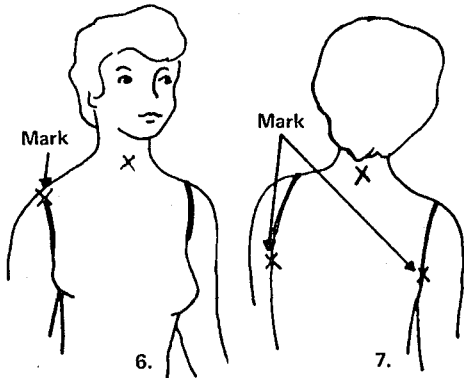
1. Do not take measurements over dress or other outer garment.
2. Wear foundation garments and slip that you will wear with dresses.
3. Have someone else take your measurements.

## Mark key points on the body for measuring

1. Place a narrow belt or cord around the waistline. Mark center front and center back on belt.
2. Tie a cord around the fullest part of the seat, keeping the cord parallel to the floor.
3. Place a cord around the neck and pull the ends gently down between the breasts. Put a horizontal line on the body where the cord rests at the center back at the top of the spine. Cross mark at center back.



4. To mark the center front, throw one end of the cord over the shoulder so that it goes around the base of the neck where the neck joins the chest and shoulders. The other end of the cord will hang down the center front. The cord will fall across the top of the small cavity where the neck changes to become the chest. Make a horizontal and a vertical mark at the center front where the cord lies.



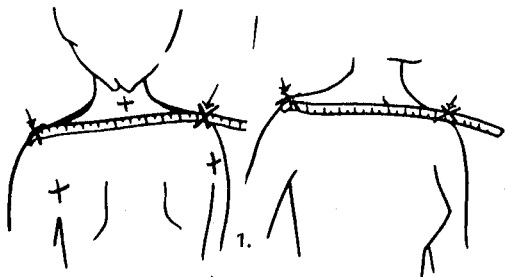
5. While the neck cord is still in place, mark the shoulder at neck point on both sides. Drop a pencil from the back of the ear to the shoulder perpendicular to the floor and crossmark the neckline mark. This is the point that the shoulder seam intersects the neckline.

6. Wrap a cord around each arm so that it falls in a position simulating a seamline of a basic set-in sleeve. The cord crosses the ball of the arm joint in front. Mark along the outer edge of the cord on top of the arm at the shoulder. Crossmark the armhole at the shoulder to divide the arm and body into a front and back. The point should fall at the highest point on the curve of the arm, and complete an imaginary line from the shoulder neck point to the arm.

7. While the cord is in place, mark right and left sides of the armhole along the outer edge of the cord about 5 1/2 inches down from the center back point on the neckline. This marking is needed to take the measurements across the shoulder blades.

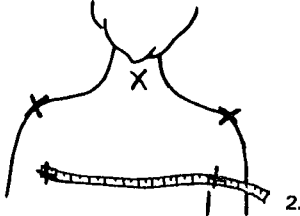
## MEASURING THE BODY

Record the measurements on the chart provided (HC - 68). All measurements should be taken with tape measure held comfortably around or along the body. If the right and left sides of the body appear unequal, record your measurements for each side.

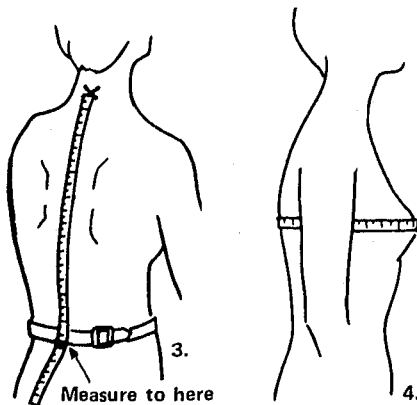


### Bodice Measurements

1. Across shoulders: Measure across the shoulders between the outer shoulder point marks. Let the tape drape comfortably across the shoulders to measure.

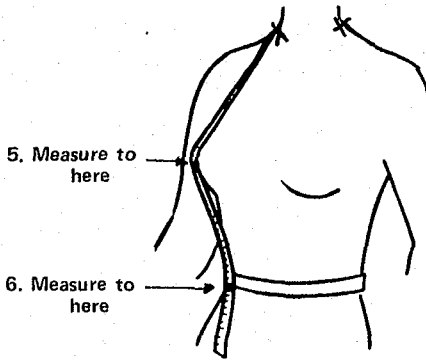


2. Across blades: Person being measured should stand in a relaxed position with hands clasped in front at hip level. Measure across the back between the markings 5 1/2 inches down along center back.

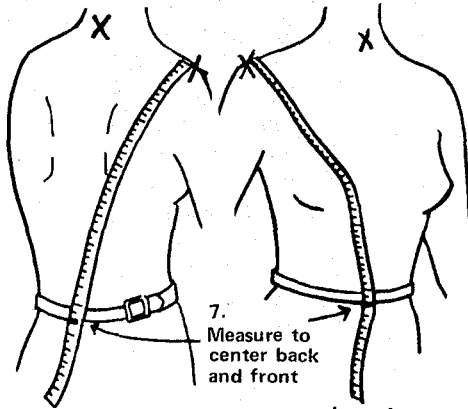


3. Back length at center: Measure at the center back of the figure from the neckline mark to the bottom of belt at waistline. If individual has prominent shoulder blades, allow 1/4 to 3/8-inch extra for length.

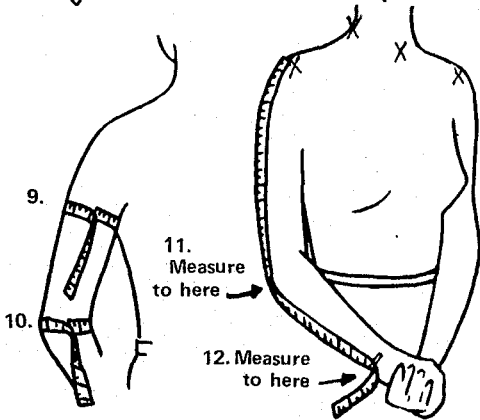
4. Bust circumference: While facing the person being measured place the tape measure around the body at the level of the fullest part of the bust, parallel to the floor, pulled snugly across the back, and relaxed slightly across the front.



5. Bust depth: Measure from the shoulder neck point to the apex of the bust. The apex is the last point seen before the turn of the bust curve as the eye looks downward.
6. Front length: Measure from the shoulder neck point over the apex of the bust to the bottom of the cord at the waistline on both right and left sides of the body.

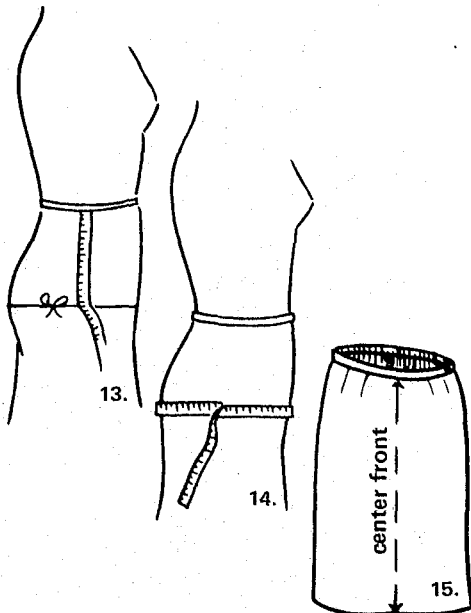


7. Shoulder slope: Measure from the outer shoulder point diagonally across the body to the center markings at the waistline measuring front and back on both right and left sides.
8. Waist circumference: Temporarily shift the belt around the waist out of the way. The person being measured should exhale and stand relaxed while the tape measure is placed around the smallest part of the waist.



#### Arm Measurements

9. Upper arm circumference: Measure around the upper arm approximately 1 inch below the points where the arm and body join front and back. The arm can rest naturally against the body.
10. Elbow circumference: Measure around the elbow while the arm is slightly bent.
11. Shoulder to elbow: While person's hands are clasped in front, measure from the shoulder point to the elbow point.
12. Shoulder to wrist: While person's hands are clasped in front, measure from the shoulder point to wrist with the tape measure covering the elbow point.



#### Skirt Measurements

13. Hip depth: Measure along the side of the figure from the bottom of the waistline belt to the cord around the fullest part of the seat. Take the measurement on both right and left sides of the body.
14. Hip circumference: Measure around the fullest part of the hips at the hip depth. Whenever the figure has fullness below the waist, take the measurement 3 to 4 inches below the waist as well as at seat level. Record the larger of these two measurements as the hip circumference and indicate the appropriate hip depth.
15. Center front finished length may be taken from a garment of the desired length. Measure at center front from the waist to the hemfold.

## Selecting the Correct Pattern Size

Compare your measurements with the pattern company charts to select the size and figure type that is best for you. Select a pattern size that has a bust measurement closest to your own. If your bust measurement is between those on the charts, or if your figure is small boned with a prominent bust, you may select the smaller of two sizes. There is relatively little difference in the bust measurement of a Misses size 14, a Junior size 13, a Junior Petite size 13 and the Half-Size, size 12½ patterns. Therefore, you need to consider the back waist length and your height without shoes to get the pattern proportioned best for you.

**Misses:** a fully developed, well-proportioned figure that is 5'5" to 5'6".

**Miss Petite:** a well proportioned, developed, shorter waisted figure that is 5'2" to 5'3".

**Junior:** a well proportioned, shorter waisted figure with a high bustline, 5'4" to 5'5".

**Junior Petite:** a short but shapely small figure 5'1" to 5'2".

**Half-Size:** a fully developed figure with shorter, fuller waist and narrow shoulders, 5'2" to 5'3".

**Women:** well proportioned, fully developed, larger figure 5'5" to 5'6".

# GENERAL RULES FOR PATTERN ADJUSTMENT

Press the commercial pattern, trace, and cut out an accurate copy on unglazed shelf paper or wrapping paper. This preserves the original pattern for reference. Trace sewing lines, not cutting lines. Dressmaker's carbon and tracing wheel work well for tracing.

## Parallel and squared lines

**Parallel lines:** Measure an equal distance at two points from a straight line and put a dot at each point. Place a ruler at these two points and draw the new line, which will be parallel to the first line.

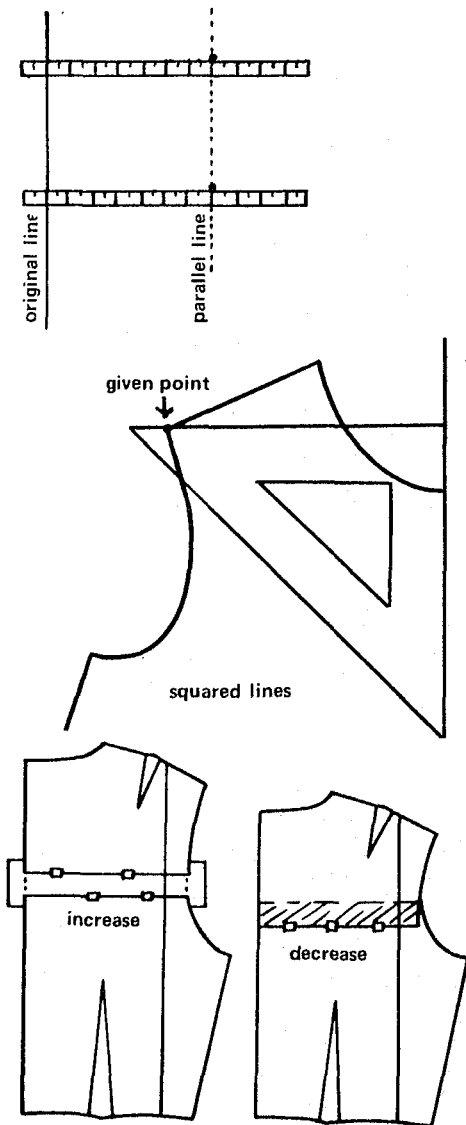
**Squared lines:** Using the triangle provided with the TV study guide, place one of the two short sides evenly and accurately on a straight line, place the other short side so it touches a given point or measurement. Draw a line from the straight line through this new point to form a right angle at the intersection of the two lines. You now have a line squared from another line at a given point. You may need to extend the center front, center back, or grainline on the pattern piece to square a line from it at the required measurement or point.

## Increasing or decreasing pattern

Make all adjustments by cutting the pattern apart on the adjustment lines and spread or overlap the pattern sections an equal distance vertically or horizontally.

**To increase:** Cut the pattern apart on the line(s) to be used for one adjustment. Place a strip of paper underneath, securing it with tape. Draw a parallel line on this strip to indicate the desired amount of increase. Tape remaining pattern section in place along this line. True the seamlines.

**To decrease:** Cut the pattern apart on the line(s) to be used for one adjustment. Rule a line from one of the cut edges the amount the pattern is to be decreased. Overlap the pattern sections and tape in place. True the seamlines.



**Pattern Adjustment Lines**

Pattern adjustment lines: Use one of your colored pencils to place the A,B,C, and D lines on the pattern pieces. Label them. The colored lines will make it easier for you to remember which lines will be cutting lines for adjusting the pattern. Number the sections created by the adjustment lines.

Line A – adjusts the pattern widths

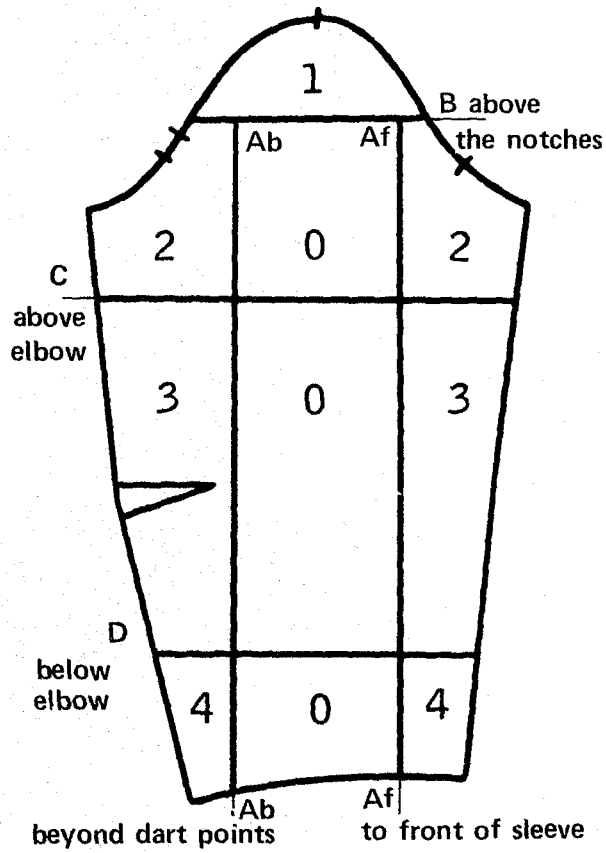
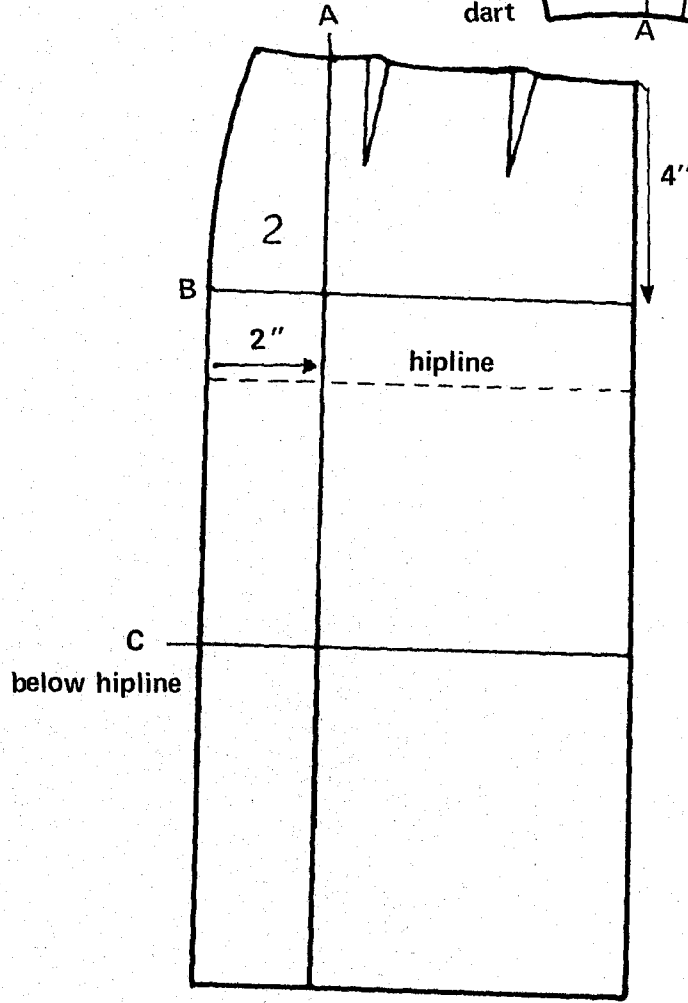
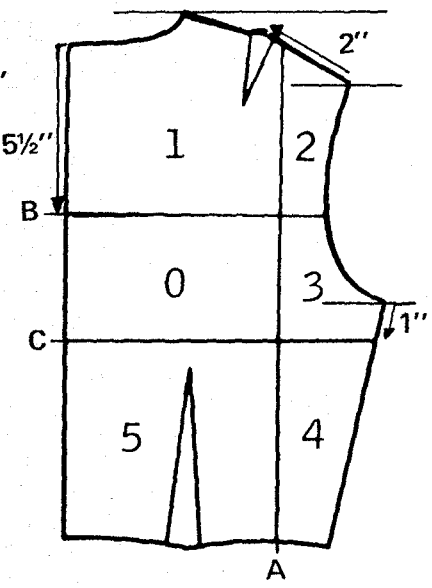
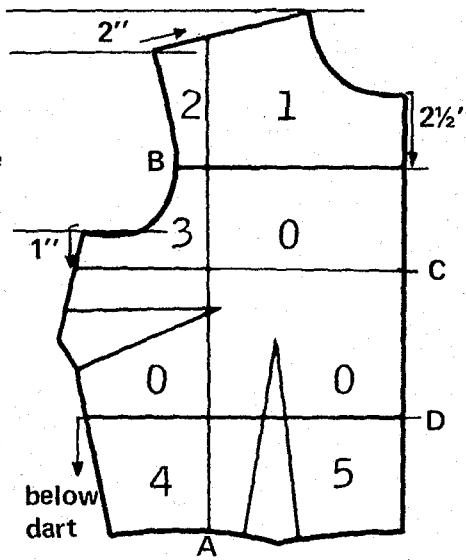
Lines B,C,D – adjust the pattern lengths

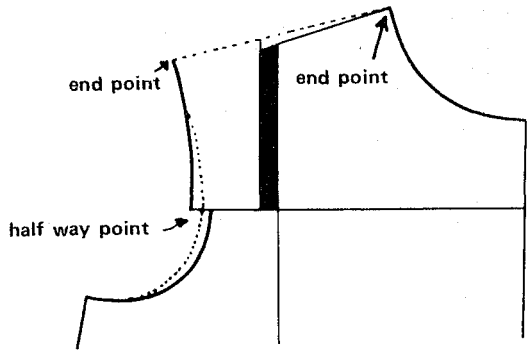
Draw all lines parallel or perpendicular to grainline.

Number the pattern sections for easy reference.

Never move the O sections individually.

Use a different colored pencil to place squaring lines at the neck shoulder point, armhole shoulder point, and lower armhole on the bodice front and back as indicated. These lines serve as guides for measuring the pattern.



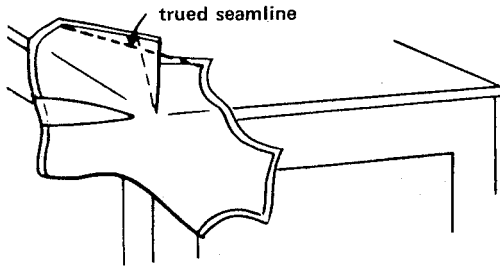


### Truing Seamlines

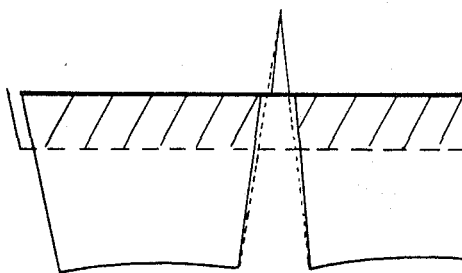
Whenever a change in a pattern piece causes an uneven seamline, you must blend the seamline jog to make it even again. This is called "truing."

**Straight seams:** True in a straight line from beginning point to ending point on the seamline.

**Curved seams:** True from end points to the midpoint of the jog that has been created. Use the curve of the original pattern as a guide.

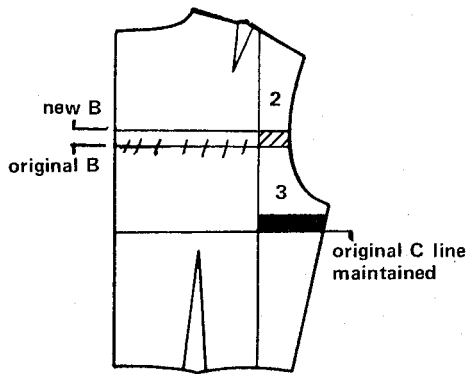


**Darted seams:** Fold the dart closed in the pattern as it would lie in the finished garment. Place the point of the closed dart on the corner of a table, allowing the seamline to lie flat and true according to the rules for straight or curved seams.



**Truing darts:** When you change dart stitching lines because of an adjustment you must true the dart stitching lines following the same techniques as for seams. True a straight dart from the point of the dart to the end point at the seamline.

True a shaped dart from the dart end points to the midpoint of any jog that has been created. Use a French curve or the dart curve on the original pattern.



### Redrawing adjustment lines

When the seamline must be cut for several different adjustments, draw a new line each time adjacent and parallel to the original.

## ADJUSTING THE PATTERN

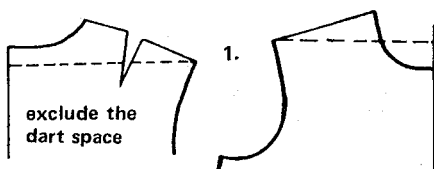
You are now ready to compare your personal measurements with the pattern measurements. Use the Personal and Pattern Measurement Chart. Record all pattern measurements listed on the chart as you take them in the sequence of performing adjustments. The difference between your measurements, plus needed ease, and the pattern measurement will be the adjustment needed.

Adjust pattern widths first, then lengths. **Measure the pattern before and after each adjustment to insure accuracy.** When a measurement crosses a dart, omit the dart space in the measurement. Perform the necessary adjustments on the traced copy of the pattern. Do not true seamlines until you have completed all the adjustments.

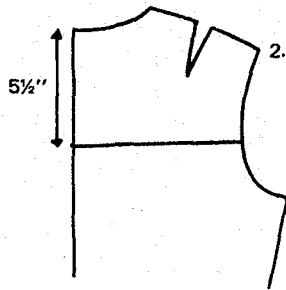
### Bodice Pattern

#### Adjustment one: Across shoulders

Measure the pattern along the squaring line from outer shoulder point to center lines. Add 1/2-inch ease to personal measurement for the across **BACK** shoulders only. Adjust in or out using section 2.

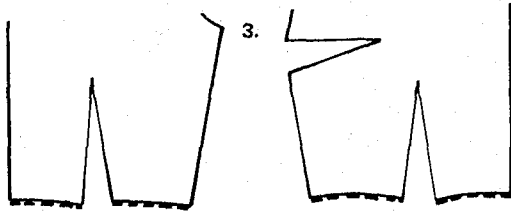






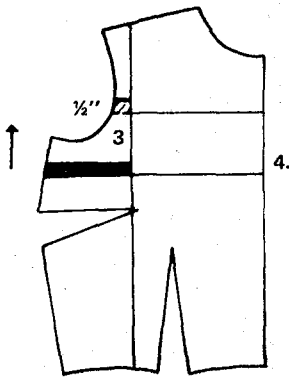
**Adjustment two: Across blades**

Measure along the **BACK B** line. Add 1/2-inch ease to personal measurement. Persons with rounded shoulders or a dowager's hump should add more than minimum ease. Adjust in or out using section 3. This section should never move in or out more than 1 inch. If so, the wrong size pattern is being used.



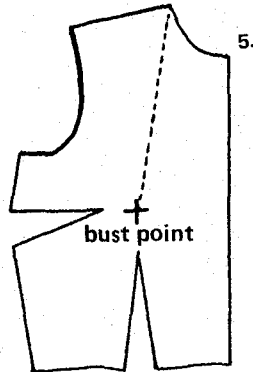
**Adjustment three: Waist circumference**

Add 1-inch ease to personal measurement. Measure pattern along waist curve, omitting dart space. Adjust section 4 equally in or out on the bodice front and bodice back until the measurements correspond.



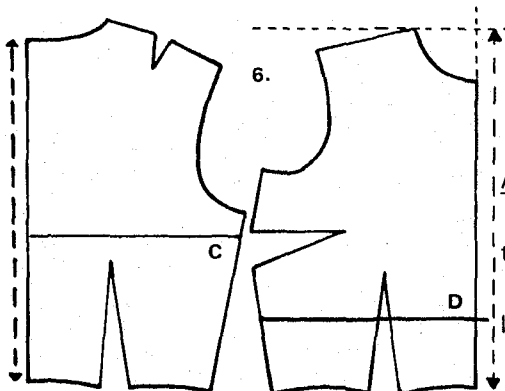
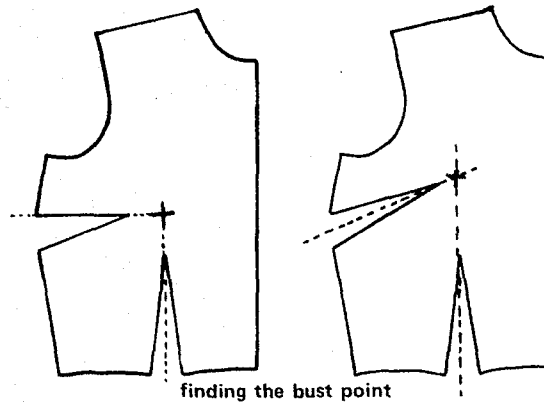
**Adjustment four: Armhole depth**

You have no measurement for armhole depth. However, many women find the armhole depth is too long. A common adjustment moves section 3 up 1/2 inch on the bodice **FRONT**. Those with a very prominent bust may need to move section 3 up 1 inch. Additional adjustment on the front or back can be made after a fitting.



**Adjustment five: Bust depth**

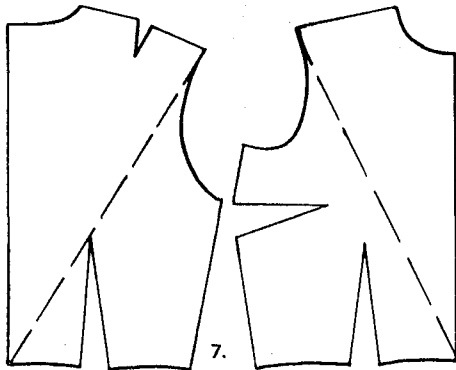
Measure from shoulder neck point to the bust point. Adjust up or down along the C line. The bust point is found by extending the top line of the underarm dart if it is squared to the center front and extending the center line of the waistline dart. The intersection point of the lines is the bust point. If the underarm dart is not squared, extend its center line.



**Adjustment six: Center lengths**

**Back:** Measure from the base of the neck curve to the waistline. Adjust along the C line.

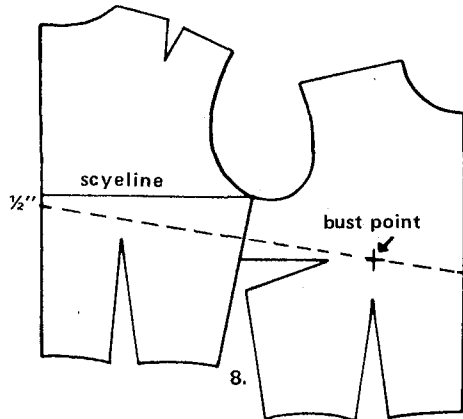
**Front:** Measure from the squaring line at the shoulder neck point to the waistline. Adjust along the D line.



**Adjustment seven: Shoulder slope**

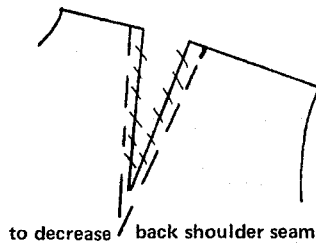
Measure diagonally across the pattern from the armhole shoulder point to the center waistline. Increase or decrease the measurement by moving sections 2 and 3, as a unit, up or down.

The back and front might not move the same. As the sections move upward, the seam becomes shorter and more squared. As the sections move downward, the seam becomes longer and more sloped.



**Adjustment eight: Bust circumference**

Place the patterns together along the sideseam matching the lower armhole points. Measure the pattern diagonally from 1/2 inch below the scyeline, through the bust point to the center front. Draw the scyeline by squaring a line from the lower armhole point to the center back. Add 3 1/2 to 4 1/2-inch ease to personal measurement and compare. When all other adjustments are correct the bust circumference should not require any further adjustment. Most bust fitting problems occur in the bodice back, so wait to make any additional adjustment until after a fitting.

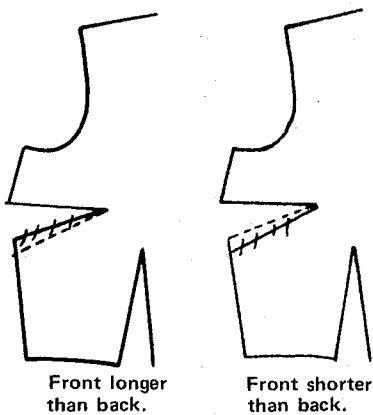


**Truing Bodice Seamlines**

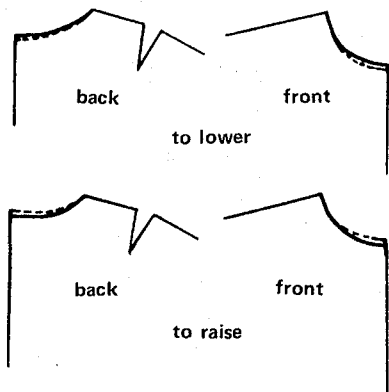
True the seamlines according to the general rules (page 8). Compare all seams that join, and adjust the darting to match lengths.

The back shoulder seam should be longer than the front. One half inch of ease is recommended. More than that can be added to the dart equally along each side. Maximum dart size is 1 1/4 inch. For each additional 1/4 inch in width, add 1/8 inch in length.

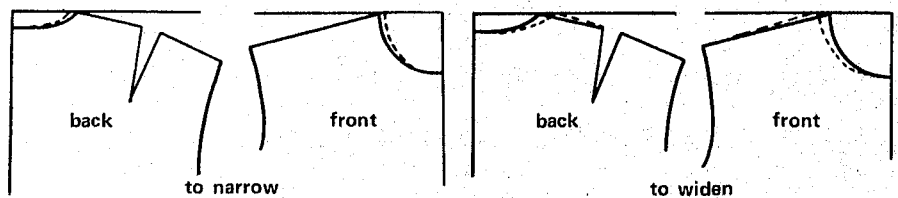
If the front shoulder seam is longer, move section 2 out on the back until they match. Check length in a fitting and make necessary adjustments. Never decrease the size of shoulder dart below 5/8 inch.



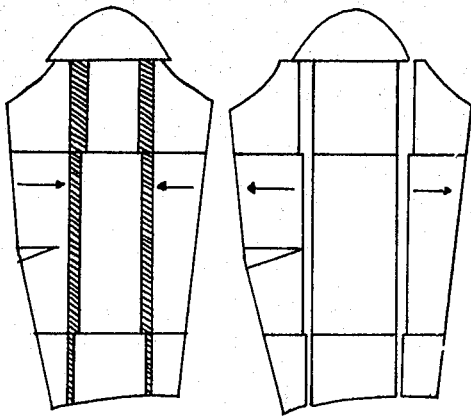
True the sideseams. Measure back sideseam and compare to front. If the front measures shorter than the back, decrease the size of the underarm dart along the lower line. If the front measures longer than the back, increase the size of the dart along the lower line. Do not question the dart size until you have tested the fit.



**Neckline Adjustments**

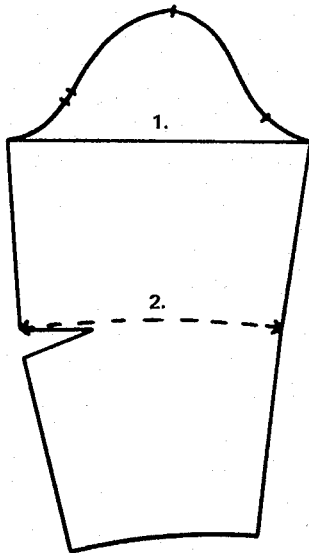


If, after the garment has been adjusted and seamlines, darts, and grainline appear to be in position, the neckline is either cutting, too small, or too large it can be redrawn without distorting the shoulder slopes that have been corrected. Any change that it requires should be drawn to the squaring lines across the neck shoulder point or the center lines.



### Sleeve Pattern

The sleeve pattern may be adjusted in three gradations: upper arm, elbow, and lower arm. Move sections 2, 3, and 4 either increasing or decreasing amounts to preserve the shape of the sleeve.



#### Adjustment one: Upper arm circumference

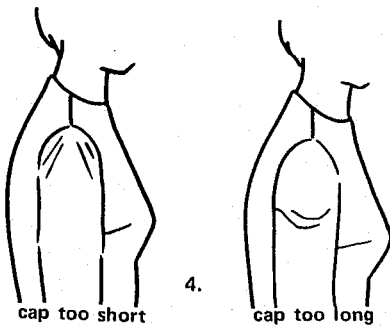
Measure pattern along the capline. Add 1 1/4 to 2 inches to personal measurement. Use smaller arm measurement if arms measure differently. Adjust in or out using section 2. Analyze elbow circumference before adjusting.

#### Adjustment two: Elbow circumference

Measure pattern from side to side through the elbow point. Add 1 1/2 to 2-inch ease to personal measurement and compare to pattern. Keeping in mind any adjustment necessary for the upper arm, adjust section 3 in or out as necessary. Do not distort the shape of the front underarm seam.

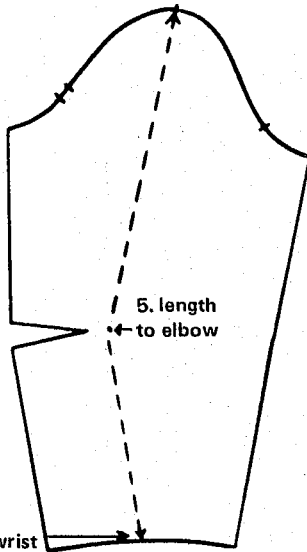
#### Adjustment three: Lower arm and wrist circumference

Adjust section 4 in or out according to the needs of sections 2 and 3. Section 4 must move any distance necessary to prevent the front seam from jogging outward at the elbow.



#### Adjustment four: Cap height

Make this adjustment after a fitting. If the crosswise grainline in the sleeve cap dips, the cap is too long. If the crosswise grainline raises, the sleeve cap is too short. Adjust along the B line.

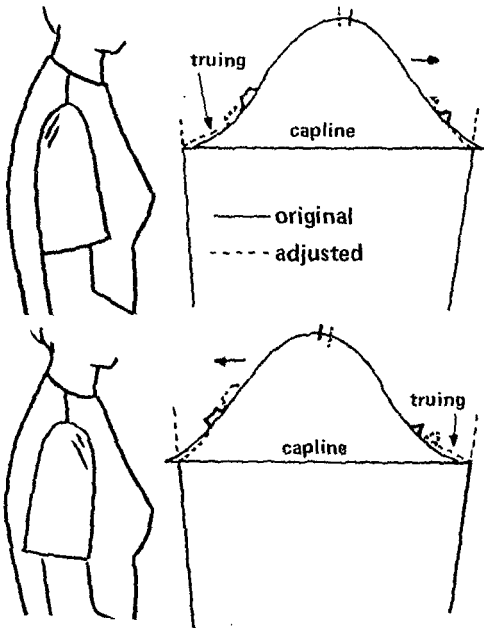


#### Adjustment five: Length to elbow

Measure from the shoulder point to the elbow point. Adjust up or down along the C line. The elbow point is located 1 inch from the tip of the elbow dart (if 3 darts, 1 inch from tip of middle dart; if 2 darts, 1 inch from middle of the two darts).

#### Adjustment six: Full sleeve length

Measure pattern from shoulder to elbow, continuing tape to wristline parallel to back sleeve seamline. Adjust along the D line.



**Adjustment seven: Hang of the sleeve**

This adjustment should be made if, during the fitting, the crosswise grainline is dipping either to the front or back of the sleeve. The adjustment has the same effect as rotating the sleeve in armhole and mismatching the underarm seams.

If the grainline dips to the back, cut the pattern along the capline and shift sleeve cap to the front.

If the grainline dips to the front, shift sleeve cap to the back.

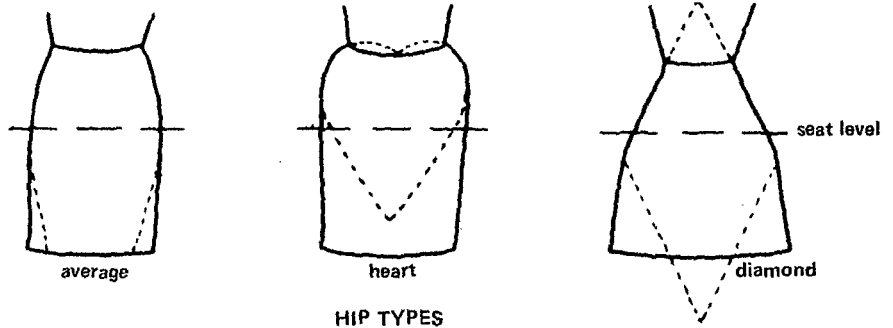
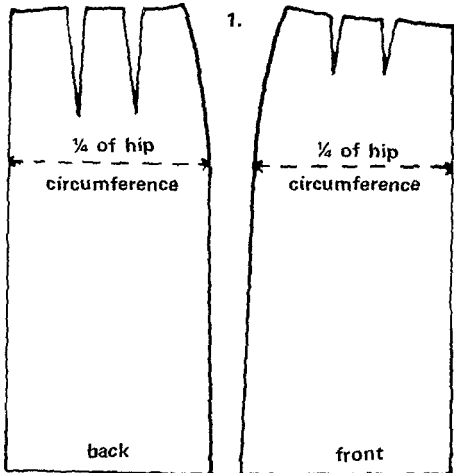
The sleeve cap generally will not shift more than 1/2 inch. To true the seamlines, maintain the same underarm seamlines and change the sleeve cap seamline. Reposition the notches and shoulder point the same amount to the front or back as the cap shifted.

With the sleeve adjusted and the seamlines trued, construct the test sleeves and set into the bodice. It is important to set both sleeves into the bodice so it is balanced on the body. This will give the most accurate picture of the fit.

**Skirt adjustments**

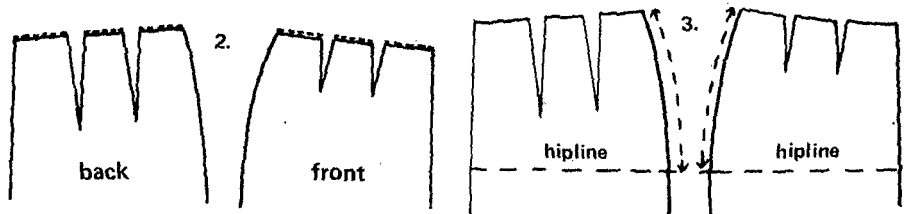
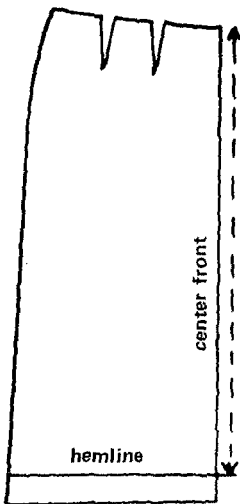
**Adjustment one: Hip circumference**

Add ease to personal hip measurement according to your hip type: Average add 1 1/2 inches, hearts add 2 inches, diamonds add 1 inch. Divide the total hip measurement plus ease by 4; one fourth is applied to the back skirt pattern, and one fourth to the front skirt pattern, across the hipline. Mark any difference inside or outside of the side seamline as it may fall. The patterns should be spread or overlapped the same amount on the back and front on the A line the full length of the pattern.



**Adjustment two: Waist circumference**

Measure the adjusted bodice waistline. Measure the skirt waistline. Adjust sections 2 in or out until the skirt waistline matches the bodice.



**Adjustment three: Hip depth**

Compare personal hip depth to pattern along sideseam. Adjust along the B line.

**Adjustment four: Skirt length**

Measure a favorite garment from the waistline to the hemline. Compare to pattern and adjust along the C line.

True any seamlines which have changed. Cut out and construct the test skirt and attach to bodice to test the fit.

# HOW TO CONSTRUCT A TEST GARMENT AFTER PATTERN ADJUSTMENT

1. Use a plain color, firmly woven, inexpensive fabric such as muslin, broadcloth, Indianhead, denim.
2. Preshrink and straighten fabric.
3. Cut 5/8-inch seam allowances on neckline, armholes, waistline, and all sleeve seams.
4. Cut 1-inch seam allowances at sideseams, center back, and center front in both the bodice and skirt.
5. Mark all seamlines, darts, and special markings such as bust point, scyeline across bodice back, and hipline.
6. Staystitch armhole, neckline, and waistline exactly along seamline.
7. Transfer scyeline, bust point, waist mark, and hipline to outer side of garment with machine stitching.
8. Using a long machine stitch, construct garment a section at a time and test the fit. Construct bodice and skirt with a seam down the center back leaving the center front seam open to allow an opening to get into the garment for test fittings.
9. Leave approximately 4 inches of underarm seam unstitched at wrist of sleeve to allow room for hand to slip through.
10. Set both sleeves into bodice to evaluate proper fit.

## ANALYZE THE FIT

A good fitting garment reveals these fitting standards:

### Neckline

A jewel neckline is positioned at the base of the neck and hugs the body in a flattering manner without gapping or appearing too snug. Lower necklines should also lie smoothly against the body and remain near the body when you move.

A back or front neckline that gaps or stands away from the body may be caused by:

- incorrect back and front neckline widths in the pattern.
- narrower or wider back shoulder width than the front shoulder width.
- an incorrect shoulder slope in the pattern.
- inadequate back shoulder darting.
- a difference in length measurements between right and left sides of the figure.

### Shoulder Seam

The standard position for the shoulder seam is directly on top of the shoulder. It should be inconspicuous from front or back when viewed at eye level. Often on suit jackets and coats, this seam slants slightly to the back as it approaches the armhole.

### Armhole Line

The armhole seamline usually runs directly over the little bony knob on the back of the shoulder. The front armhole seamline should not cut into the arms when they move forward. There should be enough width across the shoulders and chest for comfort and an attractive line when standing straight, but not so much that the fabric droops down on the arm or causes a fold in the fabric in the chest area.

### Sleeveless Armholes

Sleeveless armholes must not bind, cut, or gap to expose the undergarment. The underarm seam position is 1/2 inch below the armpit in a sleeveless garment.

### Darts

The bodice front darts should point toward the bust and end about 1 inch from the apex of the bust. The exception to this guide is with tightly fitted clothing,

especially evening wear, where the darts may come to the apex of the bust. A very full bust may require the dart to end further away from the bust point.

Other fitting darts should be directed toward the fullest part of the body but stop short of the fullest part of the curve. For low full bust, dart tucks at the waistline are more figure flattering than darts.

The depth of darts needs to be considered since darts are designed to allow fabric to cover curves in the body smoothly. The larger the bust or curved area, the deeper the dart should be to release enough fabric for a smooth fit. The smaller the curved area, the narrower the dart should be. The size of the base of the dart determines the amount of curve in the garment. For example, a flat buttock requires small darts.

### Waistline

The waistline falls at the natural waist of the person and fits the body snugly enough to stay in place but not tightly enough to bind or wrinkle. The waistline usually comes where the circumference of the body is the smallest. It should appear level from the side. Waistlines change with the whim of fashion. Find your most becoming line that is consistent with the prevailing style. Allow enough ease in the waistline to allow the bodice to move up and down on the body when the arms are raised and lowered. If the waistline rises in the front, it will look better to drop the waistline seam in the front so that the seam is straight around the body. If the seamline dips in the back, raise the seam to be level with the front waist seamline.

### Sleeve

The sleeve seam should follow the natural curve of the body, where the arm joins the body, and lie on top of the armhole in a position that is attractive to the figure. It may be on the shoulder socket bone or slightly lower. For a standard set-in sleeve, the underarm seam position should be 1 to 1 1/2 inches below the arm-pit.

The sleeve hang should be smooth with no wrinkles or pulls when the arm is by the side. For this to be accomplished, the crosswise grainline must be parallel to the floor. The lengthwise grain should hang straight and about halfway between front and back of arm. If the sleeve does not hang straight, the sleeve needs shifting. If the crosswise grain dips in the center the cap needs shortening. If the grain pulls up the cap needs lengthening.

### Sideseams

Sideseams hang perfectly straight from armhole to hemline. This means they are at right angles to the floor. They swing neither forward nor backward.

The skirt should have a balanced hang — that is, it should hang the same distance from the front as from the back of the leg at the hemline and the same distance at the left and right sides of the legs.

### Hem

The hem should be straight and even (parallel to the floor).

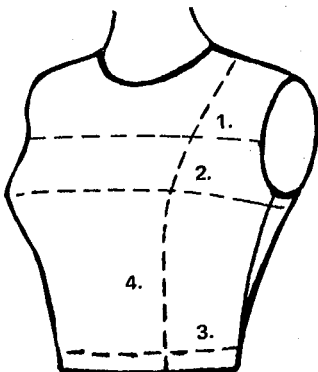
For a garment to fit correctly, both the lengthwise and crosswise grainlines of the fabric must be in correct relationship to the structural line of the body. (The exception is when a garment is cut on the bias of the fabric.) The lengthwise grain of the fabric generally runs up-and-down the body, at right angles (perpendicular) to the floor at certain points on the body. The crosswise grain of the fabric generally runs around the body and is parallel to the floor at certain points on the body. This is shown in the next section on key grainlines. When a right or left side appears higher or larger than the other side first alter the dress to the higher or larger side. After the fitting you can decide if it is necessary to make left and right patterns.

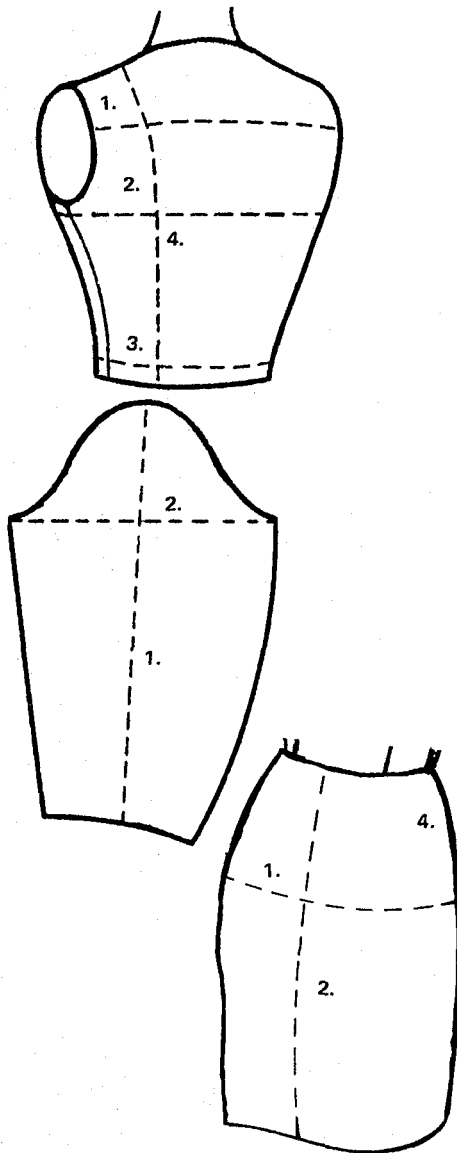
### Key Grain Lines for Checking a Good Fit

#### Bodice Front

There are four key grainlines on the bodice front:

1. Chest: about 4 1/2 inches below the shoulder line on the crosswise grain.
2. Bust: across the apex of the bust on the crosswise grain.





3. Waist: about 1 1/2 inches above the waistline on the crosswise grain.
4. Lengthwise key grainline: about halfway between the center front and sideseam, from shoulder line to waistline, over the apex of the bust on the lengthwise grain. Draw this lengthwise line parallel with center front line.

#### Bodice Back

There are four key grain lines on the bodice back:

1. Shoulder: about 4 1/2 inches below the shoulder line on crosswise grain.
2. Underarm: about 1 1/2 inches below the armhole, across the shoulder blades, and on crosswise grain. This corresponds with the bust key line in bodice front.
3. Waist: about 1 1/2 inches above the waistline on crosswise grain.
4. Lengthwise key grainline: about halfway between center back and sideseam, from the shoulder line to the waistline on lengthwise grain. Draw lengthwise line parallel to the center back.

#### Sleeve

There are two key grainlines in the sleeve:

1. Halfway mark: from shoulder line to side of hand at wrist bone on lengthwise grain. (This line is parallel with the grainline on the pattern).
2. Capline: A line straight across sleeve connecting the underarm points.

**Note:** All lengthwise grainlines in bodice and skirt are parallel to the center front and center back lines. All crosswise lines are at right angles to the center front and center back.

#### Skirt

There are four key grainlines in the skirt:

1. Hipline: about 7 to 9 inches below the waistline. It is parallel to the floor. If your hipline measures lower or higher than the pattern, then mark the hip according to your hip location.
2. Center front seam.
3. Center back seam.
4. Sideseams.

## HOW TO CODE PERSONAL BASIC PATTERN\*

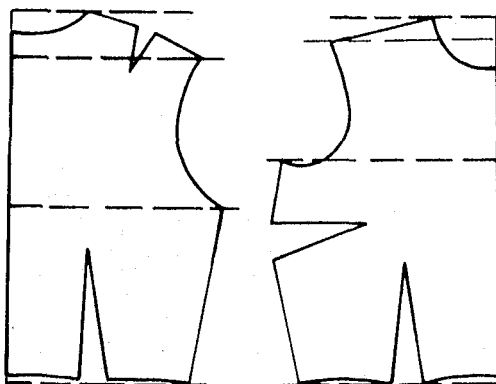
After you have completed all test fittings of your basic garment and are satisfied with the fit you can code all of the adjustments made on the pattern. The code will tell you where you have adjusted the pattern, by how much, and in which direction. Following your code to adjust future patterns will save you many hours of frustrating fitting. If you sew with patterns from different companies, you may wish to develop a code for each brand of pattern. Length and width differences existing in each brand of pattern will require a slight modification of the adjustment you need.

Trace a smooth copy of each piece of the final adjusted basic patterns on heavy paper or tagboard. Mark the grainlines, armhole notches, darts, bust point, sleeve capline, hipline, scyeline, and any other pertinent markings on the pattern.

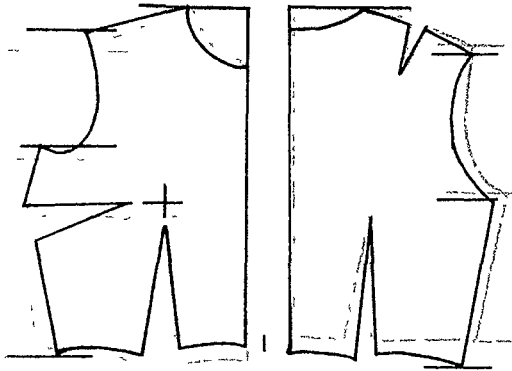
Use the sheet provided to record your code. Record width changes as "in" or "out." Record vertical movement of a section as ↑ or ↓. Record a line change as + or -. If there is no change record 0.

#### **Coding the Adjusted Bodice Pattern**

Place squaring lines at the shoulder neck point, the outer shoulder point, the lower armhole point, and the side waist point on both the original and the final adjusted bodice front and back patterns.

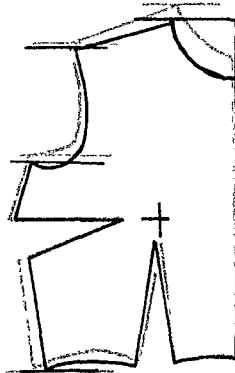
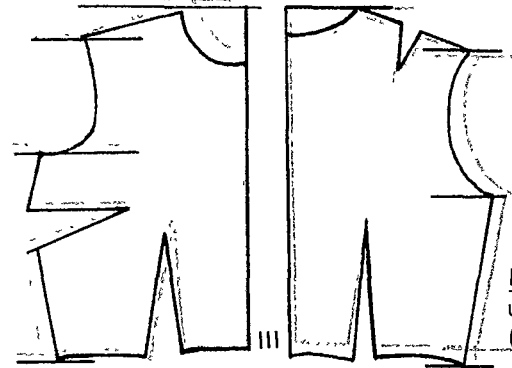


\*Material on coding has been reproduced with permission of Mrs. Jan Minott. It is copyrighted and may not be reproduced without her permission.



For both the bodice front and back, place the final adjusted pattern over the original pattern according to the positions described below. Measure any changes in length between the squaring lines. Measure any changes in width along the squaring lines.

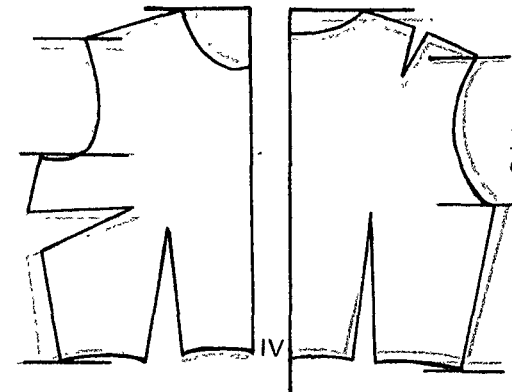
**Position I:** Match center lines and neck shoulder points. Measure and record any change in neck width or depth, shoulder slope, back length, and bust depth.



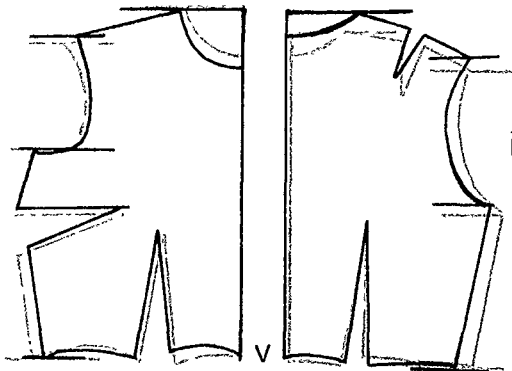
II

**Position II:** Match the bust point level on the front patterns with center lines together and measure any change in the length to waist. (D line.)

**Position III:** Match the squaring lines through the outer shoulder point and measure the difference in armhole depth (section 3 up or down) and shoulder width (section 2 in or out).



**Position IV:** Match the squaring lines at the lower armhole and measure any changes across the back and in bust circumference (section 3 in or out).



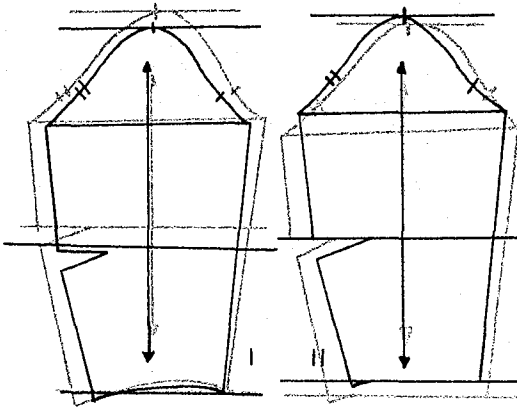
**Position V:** Match the center lines and the squaring lines at the side waist point. Measure any change in waist circumference (section 4 in or out).

**Coding the Adjusted Sleeve Pattern**

Place the following squaring lines on both the original sleeve pattern and the final adjusted sleeve pattern:

Shoulder	(at the top of cap)
Capline	(at the scye points)
Elbow	(top line of dart)
Wrist	(at front seam)





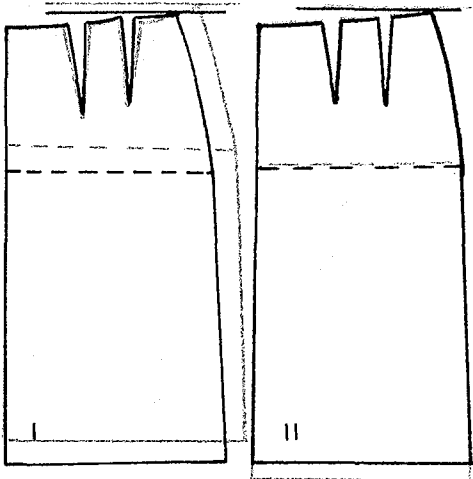
Place the adjusted pattern over the original pattern in the following positions:

**Position I:** Match caplines together with grainlines parallel. Measure any amount of difference in:

1. Cap height (B line spread or overlapped)
2. Width at capline (section 2 in or out)
3. Length to elbow (C line spread or overlapped)
4. Amount of cap rotation (move pattern until front caplines match)

**Position II:** Match elbow lines together with grainlines parallel. Measure any amount of difference in:

5. Width at elbow (adjust section 3 in or out)
6. Length to wrist (D line spread or overlapped)
7. Width at wrist (section 4 in or out)



### Coding the Adjusted Skirt Pattern

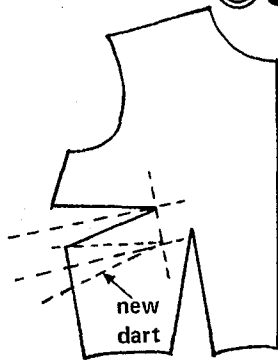
Place a squaring line through the side waist point of the back and front patterns. Place the adjusted pattern over the original pattern in the following positions:

**Position I:** Match the center lines and the squaring lines for the side waist points. Measure any amount of difference in:

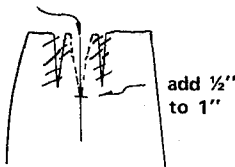
1. Hip depth (B line spread or overlapped)
2. Waist circumference (section 2 in or out)
3. Hip circumference (A line, or sections 3 and 4 in or out)

**Position II:** Match hiplines and measure any amount of difference in the full skirt length (C line).

## USE BASIC PATTERN TO CREATE AND ADJUST



center of new dart

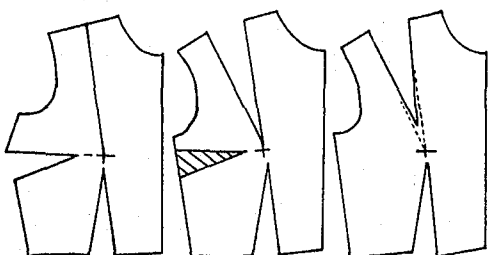


Your hours of fitting the basic pattern pay off in its actual use. You can use the adjusted basic to fit other patterns or to create minor changes in the basic pattern to save you time and money.

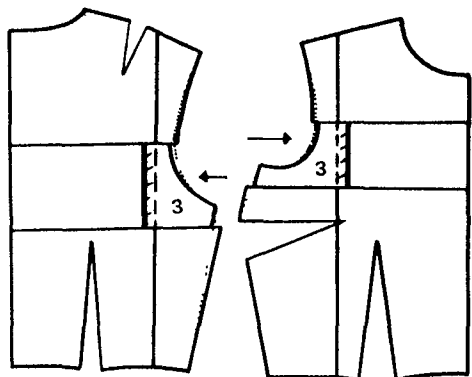
### Changing Dart Positions

**Redrawing darts:** To raise or lower a dart by redrawing, draw a line through the center of the original dart. Draw a line parallel to this in the location for the new dart. Mark the length for the new dart along this line the same as the original dart. Measure equal distance either side of the new line to mark the width for the new dart. The new dart will be exactly as the old dart, but in a new position.

**Combining darts:** Two darts may be combined by drawing the center line at the new location for the dart. Measure an equal distance either side of center line so total dart width will equal the combined dart width. Add 1/2 to 1 inch of length to dart and draw new stitching lines.

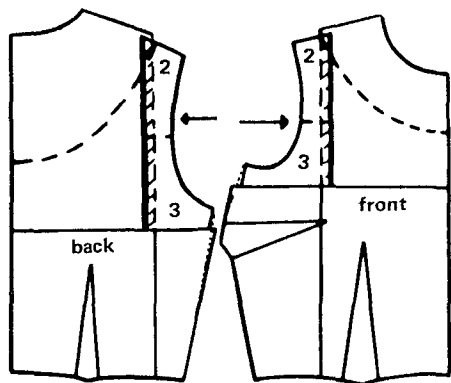


**Transferring darts:** Darts may also be transferred to a new location on the pattern. Mark the position for the new dart on the seamline. Draw a line from this point to the bust point, or corresponding pivot point for a different dart. Cut along this new line to the bust point and cut along the center line in the existing dart to the bust point. Leave the bust point intact as a pivot point. As you close the existing dart a new dart space opens along the line of cut. Mark the end point for the new dart in the middle of the opening at the desired length and draw in new stitching lines. True the seamline.



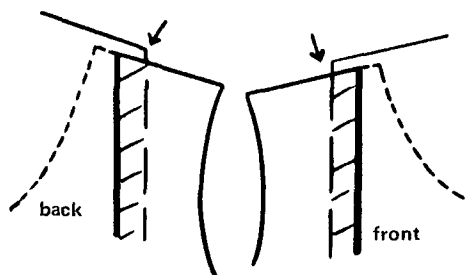
### Sleeveless design

For a sleeveless design you can remove about 1 inch of ease from the upper back and chest areas. You can move section 3 on the front and back pattern pieces in 1/4 inch. The adjusted armhole depth is usually appropriate for the sleeveless design. However, if you want a change you can move section 3 up on front and back an equal amount.



### Neckline changes

To change the scoop of a neckline you will have to remove some length and width from the pattern to prevent gapping of the neckline. These changes should be made for both sleeveless garments and garments with sleeves. Sections 2 and 3 can move in as a unit both front and back in amounts varying from 1/4 to 1/2 inch. The lower the neckline the more ease you must remove. In medium to low necklines the back shoulder dart should be completely eliminated. To true the shoulder seamlines simply extend the line of section 2 to desired shoulder seam width on the back and measure up the same distance on the bodice front.



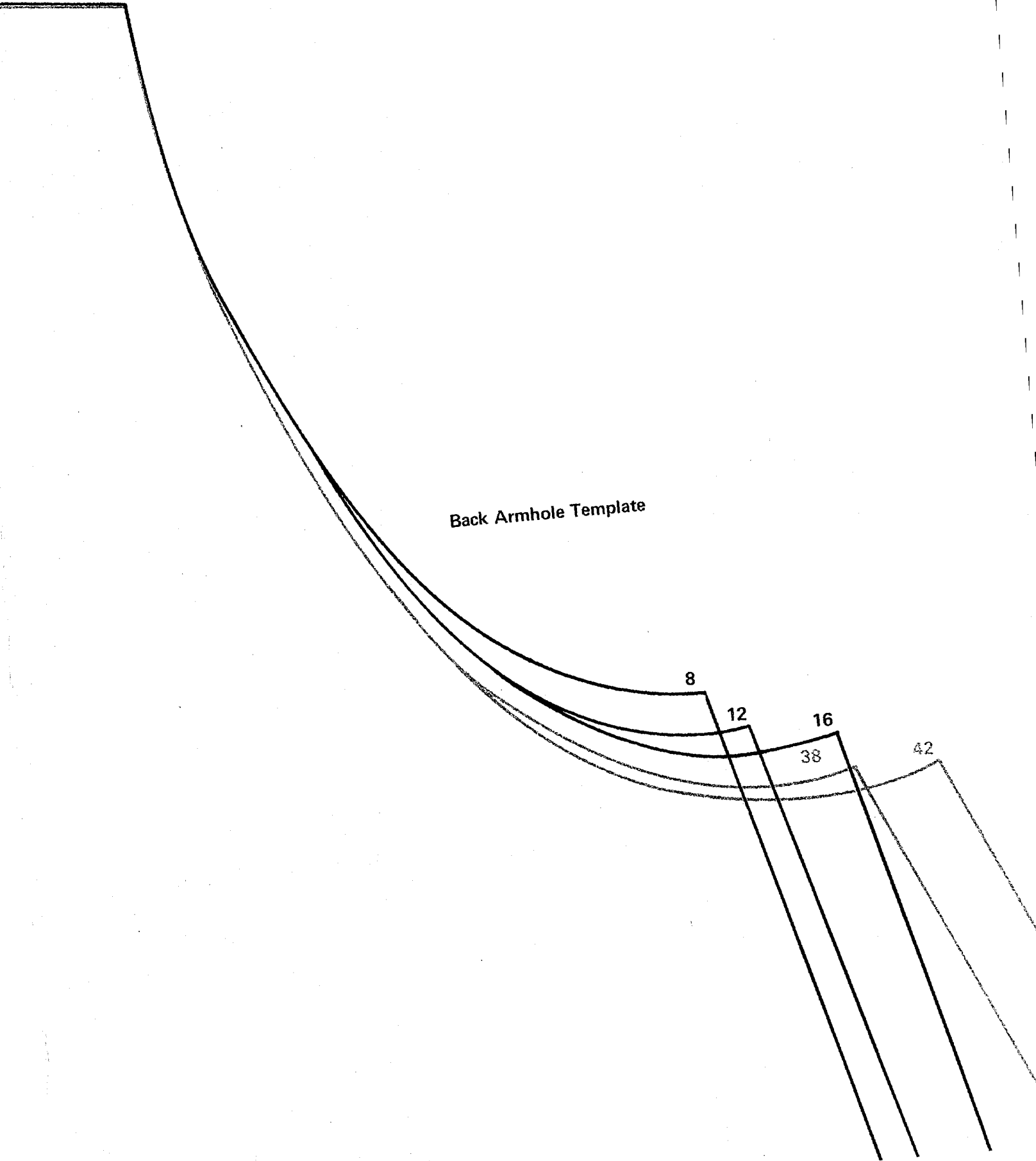
## USE BASIC PERSONAL PATTERN TO ADJUST COMMERCIAL STYLE PATTERNS

Until you become experienced at adjusting patterns it is advisable to choose simple designs with few pattern pieces that have the same dart position as the basic pattern. Trace copies of the major pattern pieces of a commercial stylized pattern to use to make any necessary adjustments.

1. Place the stylized pattern on top of the original **unadjusted** basic pattern with center lines and waistline markings matched. Trace the pattern bust point onto the stylized pattern. Also trace the basic neckline onto the stylized pattern if the neckline style is different. Place squaring lines on the stylized pattern.
2. Compare the stylized pattern and the original basic pattern to determine any style changes that may be present in the stylized pattern. Look for changed dart positions, added seamlines, added ease or fullness, changed necklines, waist positions, shoulder slopes, and armhole depths.
3. Keeping any changes in mind, adjust the stylized pattern according to your code. Incorporate any length and width differences into the adjustment that may be necessary to make the lengths and widths of the adjusted pattern and the stylized pattern coincide.

If dart positions in stylized pattern are different than in the basic pattern it will be easier if you first transfer the darts to the same position as the basic fitting darts. After the adjustments have been made, seamlines trued, and dart width adjusted so seamlines match, the darts can then be transferred back to the position of the original stylized pattern. It is very important to adjust dart widths to your personal needs.

Back Armhole Template



Front Armhole Template

