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UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Extension Division

THOMAS P. COOPER, Dean and Director

CIRCULAR NO. 201.

**SELECTION AND USE OF COMMERCIAL
PATTERNS**

Lexington, Ky.

September, 1926

Published in connection with the agricultural extension work carried on by cooperation of the College of Agriculture, University of Kentucky, with the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and distributed in furtherance of the work provided for in the Act of Congress of May 8, 1914.

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CIRCULAR NO. 201.

Selection and Use of Commercial Patterns

By ISABELLE M. STORY

Not very many years ago when all women, regardless of size and proportions, wore closely fitted waists and gored skirts, they were interested in learning to draft patterns to individual measures. In this way each could make the pattern which fitted her figure perfectly, and by it cut and make a dress which fitted according to prevailing standards. Materials were cheaper in those pre-war days, and a woman did not consider the loss great if, in her experimenting, she spoiled a garment now and then. The situation is different in many respects today. Materials are expensive, activities outside the home are demanding more of the housewife's time, while ideas as to what constitutes a correctly fitted garment vary more or less from season to season, so that few outside the circle of designers who create the mode can estimate the amount of fullness necessary at one point or another to give the desired effect. A guess by the inexperienced or home dressmaker may result in a dress which "fits" according to her ideas, but which she realizes "doesn't look right." For these reasons commercial patterns have steadily grown in favor until they now are the accepted guide of those doing home sewing. Many women, however, fail to achieve satisfactory results in their use because they do not understand how to select the right patterns, or how to make necessary adaptations to individual needs.

MAKES OF PATTERNS

There are a number of standard makes of patterns on the market. Artists and designers of skill and experience are employed in their production. They are cut to standard measures

and have accurate instruction and guide charts for cutting and assembling their parts. Unreliable makes of patterns also are to be had, but the wise woman will not experiment on good material with such patterns, since results are more apt than not to be unsatisfactory.

THE DESIGNER'S AIM

A pattern is simply a guide to the best way of translating the artist's design into a wearable garment. The artist, or designer, always has in mind the use to which the garment is to be put, the material of which it is to be made, and the particular type of individual for which it is suitable. In selecting a pattern, a woman also should keep these things in mind. A dress for practical wear needs to be simple, easily adjusted and easily cleaned; while the one intended for occasional wear may be more elaborate. Stiff materials like taffeta, and soft, drapy materials like crepe de chine and voile each require designs suited to their especial qualities. The design of a garment selected should be suitable for the size, age and personality of the wearer, and should make the figure appear as nearly as possible of normal proportions.

CHANGES IN WOMEN'S FIGURES

The proportions of the body of the woman of today differ greatly from those of a few years ago. The return to the waist line of normal size allows internal organs to take their proper place within the body and, as a result, chest and shoulders assume natural postures. Pattern companies have taken care of these changes in women's figures by increasing waist measures, changing relative lengths of chest and width of back lines, and making other modifications.

STANDARD OR NORMAL FIGURES

Patterns are made for figures of standard or average proportions, each pattern company using a definite set of measures for a figure of a given type and size. Below are shown some of

the measures of model figures of 38-inch bust measure used by different pattern companies. On comparing them it is seen that no two sets are exactly alike, yet an approximate average figure for all is indicated.*

Make of Pattern	Style	Neck	Bust	Waist	Hip	Length of Shoulder	Width of Back	Chest
"A"	Ladies	14 $\frac{7}{8}$	38	32	40	5 $\frac{1}{8}$	13 $\frac{1}{4}$	14 $\frac{1}{4}$
"A"	Misses	13 $\frac{1}{2}$	38	31	39	4 $\frac{7}{8}$	12 $\frac{3}{4}$	13 $\frac{1}{4}$
"B"	Ladies & Misses	14	38	32	42	4 $\frac{7}{8}$	14	14
"C"	Ladies	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	38	30	41	4 $\frac{3}{4}$	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	15
"D"	Ladies	15	38	31	42	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	15	15
"E"	Ladies	15	38	32	41	5 $\frac{1}{4}$	13 $\frac{5}{8}$	14 $\frac{7}{8}$
"F"	Ladies	14	38	32	41	4 $\frac{7}{8}$	14	14

Figure I shows outlines of upper portions of one-piece dresses traced from patterns of 36-inch bust measures, made by four different pattern companies. Figure II shows outlines of sleeve patterns accompanying these. They serve to illustrate the differences in pattern outlines due to measures used. Since women's figures vary as do the designers' models, one readily understands why one woman will find her best pattern in one make and another in another.

In Figure III are shown three forms, all of which are "perfect 36's." "A" is a developed woman's figure of normal height. "B" is a misses figure. It is straighter than a woman's, more slender through hip and shorter waisted. "C" is a little woman's 36. This figure is shorter everywhere, has comparatively wider hip and larger arm and armseye than "A."

*Patterns provide ease or fullness over these actual body measures to allow for style effects and the comfort of the wearer, the exact amount being quickly determined by comparing actual measure of pattern at a given point, as bust, hip, etc., with the corresponding measure of the form for which it was designed.

TYPES OF PATTERNS

Patterns for "Ladies" and for "Misses" can be found in all makes. Special types of patterns such as "Ladies—Large

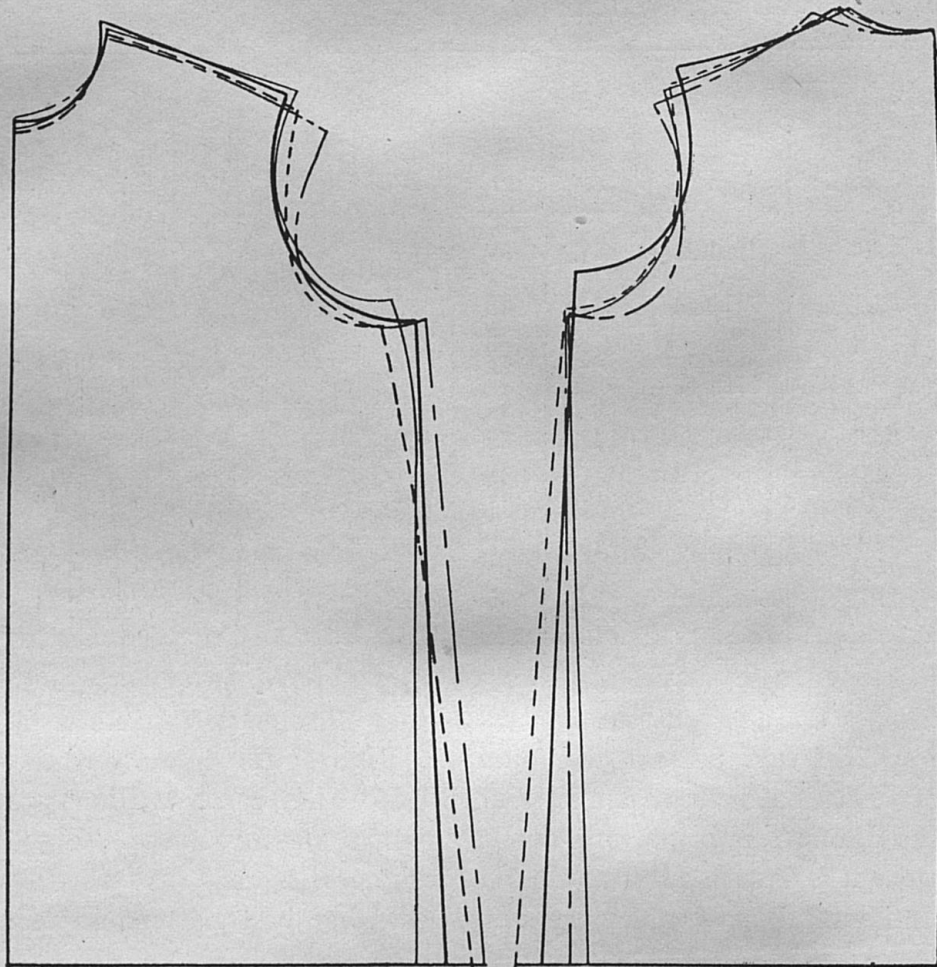


Figure I.—Outline of four one-piece dress patterns of 36-inch bust measure made by four different pattern companies.

Hip," "Ladies—Small Hip" and "Misses' and Small Women's" are put out by the occasional pattern company.

"Ladies" patterns range in size from 36 to 48 inches bust measure for average figures; "Misses" from 32 to 38. Generally speaking, a pattern for a miss of fourteen years allows for a bust measure of 32 inches; sixteen years, 34 inches; eighteen years, 36 inches; and 20 years, 38 inches.

Since there is an overlapping in sizes of patterns made for "Ladies" and "Misses," an adult woman sometimes may select a "Misses" pattern, provided she tests it and makes needed

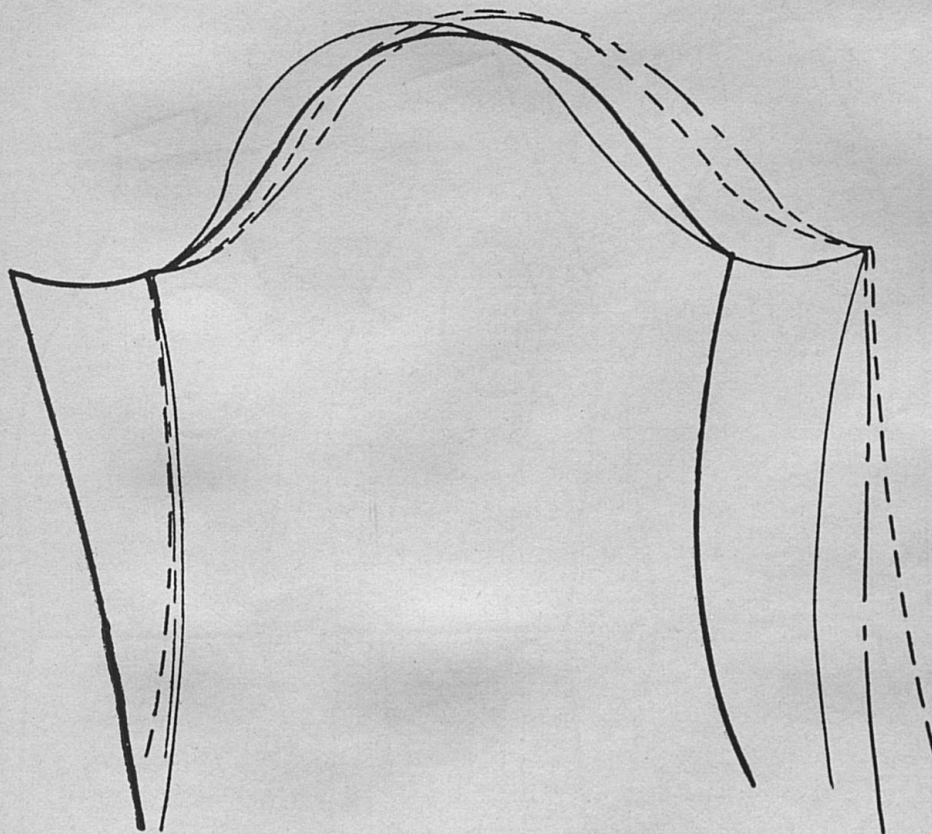


Figure II.—Outlines of sleeve patterns accompanying dresses shown in Fig. I.

corrections for differences in figure development, and also makes sure that the design is suitable to a woman of her years. Conversely, a miss sometimes may use a ladies' pattern.

HOW TO SELECT PATTERNS

Select the right size and type of pattern, thereby avoiding waste of time and labor in unnecessary fitting. Remember, too, that the comfort and style effects of a garment are easily destroyed by overfitting.

The sizes in which patterns are cut usually are considered by experts and it is not wise to try to make for one's self a style of garment for which the pattern cannot be obtained in one's size.

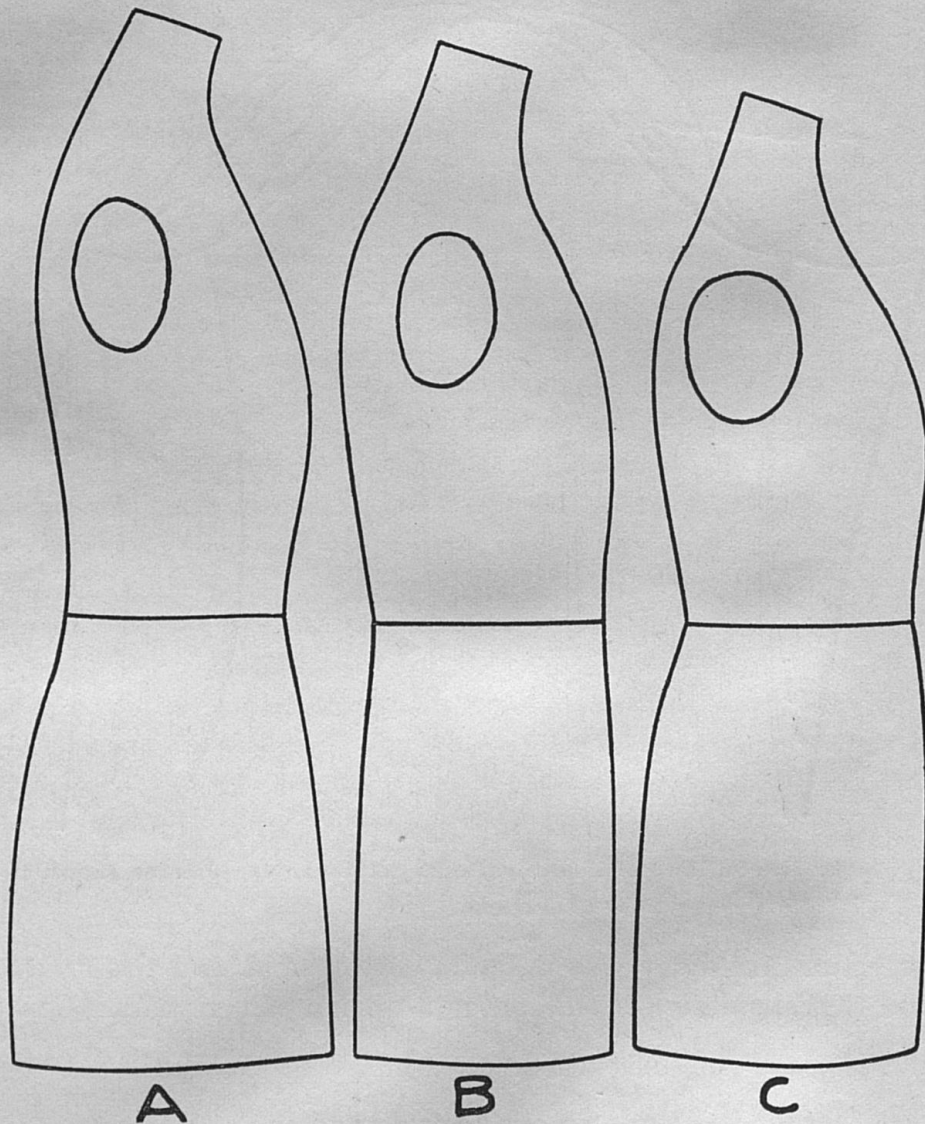


Figure III.—Three perfect figures having common bust measure: A, a developed woman's figure of average proportion; B, a misses' figure; C, a little woman's figure.

On the inside cover of most pattern catalogues which are used as counter books where patterns are sold may be found

helpful information in regard to styles and sizes of patterns made by that particular company.

I.

1. Be measured carefully each time a pattern is purchased and use the measures as a guide.
2. In general, garments covering the bust should be selected by the bust measure.
3. The same bust measure is used in purchasing coat or undergarment patterns as for dresses. The pattern itself provides for the proper allowance in size for different types of garments.
4. Select bloomers, skirts and similar garments by the hip measure rather than by the waist. Size usually can be more successfully corrected in the waist than in the hip.
5. If one's measure is between sizes of patterns, it usually is best to select the larger and make necessary corrections when testing or fitting.
6. Misses' and children's patterns are selected by age, but as different misses and children of the same age vary greatly in size, the bust measure should be taken and compared with the list of corresponding ages and bust measures given on the pattern envelope. Selection should then be made by bust measure rather than by age, if there is a difference.
7. For one whose hip measure is large in proportion to bust, (two to four inches being considered a normal difference), it is best to select the correct hip size and give an easy fit, but not too loose, to the upper part of the garment. This will make the size of the hips less noticeable. Where there is extreme difference between bust and hip measures, the figure can more easily be fitted with attached skirts or with fullness introduced in some way at the hip.
8. Persons with broad shoulders and undeveloped chest should select a pattern larger than actual bust size, in order to have sufficient width through shoulders and abundant fullness over chest.

9. Never select a pattern by the size of a ready-to-wear garment which has fitted satisfactorily. Except in expensive garments they are apt to be incorrectly sized, or skimped, in order to get them out of the smallest amount possible of material.
10. Notice the number of the pattern. Patterns are numbered serially, each new one taking the next higher number. Subtle changes take place in the lines of the costume silhouette from season to season, all leading toward definite and decided changes. These seasonal changes, though small, are earmarks by which patterns of the present season can be distinguished from those of the past.

II.

A pattern can be selected with a greater degree of accuracy if a number of the measures of one's body are compared with identical measures of the forms of the same bust size which different pattern companies use as their models, and that pattern selected which is made for the form whose measures most nearly approximate one's own.* For example, the measure of Miss X., who is a developed adult woman of average proportions, are: Neck $14\frac{1}{2}$, bust 38, waist 30, hip 40, length of shoulder $5\frac{1}{4}$, width of back 14, width of chest 14. Comparing these with the groups of measures shown on page 3, no great variation from any one of them is found. Both patterns "B" and "F" would require little altering to suit her figure. Selecting pattern "F" for a one-piece dress, the chief alteration would be to lengthen the shoulder line three-eighths of an inch. The neck would need to be trimmed a little larger, but the extra inch in hip size could be taken care of in fitting. The difference of two inches in waist measures need not be considered, since the garment would hang in a straight line from bust to hip.

*A fairly complete chart of measures used by pattern companies (H. E. 37), is available for use of club members. It is not included here because it must be revised from time to time to accord with the changes pattern companies are obliged to make in their model forms as women change through force of fashion.

Miss Z., an adult woman of unusual proportions, whose measures are: Neck $13\frac{1}{2}$, bust 39, waist 35, hip 46, width of back 14, chest 14, and shoulder 5, would find her best pattern in a "Ladies—Large Hip" of the following measures: Neck $16\frac{1}{4}$, bust 41, waist 33, hip 46, back 15, chest 16 and shoulder $5\frac{3}{4}$. To alter this to an easy fit through the upper portion, the chest would have to be reduced an inch or more in width, the back something like half an inch, the shoulder made somewhat shorter and the neck built in considerably. The exact amount of change necessary at each point would, of course, be determined by pinning the pattern together and testing it on the individual.

Another advantage to be gained by the use of the Chart of Measures is that of knowing the amount of alteration needed at one point or another to make a pattern fit without destroying the style effects.

Such measures as length of shoulder, sleeve, waist or skirt, and the size of the neck, arm and armhole need not necessarily be considered in selecting a pattern, but must be checked up on when the pattern is tested and altered, as described on page 16 et seq. of this circular.

HOW TO TAKE MEASURES

Measures should be taken over nicely-fitted undergarments, correctly fitted and adjusted corsets, and a dress or waist that fits smoothly. Bulky underwear and improper corsets may increase one's hip measure two or more inches. Accurate measures cannot be taken over a middy, kimono, or other bulky outer garments; neither can a woman take her own measures with any degree of accuracy. Figure IV shows just how the tape should be placed for taking each measure.

Before taking measures, pin a tape line around the body at the normal waist line.

Be sure that the tape used in taking measures is of standard length. Cheap tapes used as advertising mediums often are found to vary an inch or more to the yard from standard measures, as also are yard sticks.

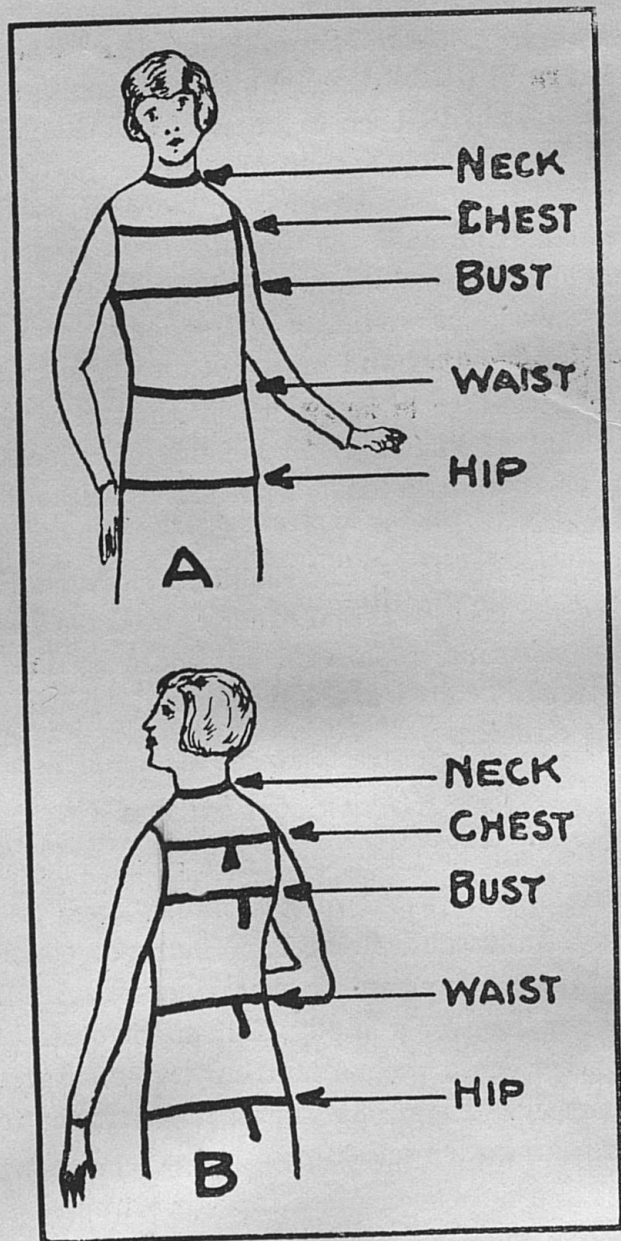


Figure IV.—Illustrating correct placing of tape line in taking measures.

The one having measures taken should stand naturally, with arms hanging at sides. The one taking measures should stand

behind the figure when taking such measures as bust, waist, hip, neck.

Neck measure: Pass the tape around the base of the neck with its lower edge following the seam line which would join the collar to the neck of a fitted waist, and take a close measure.

Bust measure: Pass the tape around the body over the fullest part of the bust, close up under the arms and straight across the back, take an easy measure.

Waist measure: Pass the tape straight around the body at the top of the hip bone, which is the natural waist line, and take a comfortably snug measure.

Hip measure: Take an easy measure straight around the body, measuring down seven inches from waist line over point of hip.*¹

Width of back: Measure across the broadest part of back, from armhole line to armhole line. This line will be about one-fourth way down from neck line to waist in center of back.

Width of chest: The chest line is a continuation of the *width of back* line and may be located by passing the tape placed for taking *width of back* measure entirely around the body in a straight line. It usually is about two and one-half inches below hollow of neck. Measure from armhole line to armhole line.*²

Length of shoulder: Measure along top of shoulder the distance from normal seam line at neck to normal armhole line at point of shoulder.

TEST PATTERN BEFORE USING

In order to avoid making mistakes which cannot be corrected in the fitting of a garment, a pattern should be tested before cutting one's material by it. This is done by pinning the pattern together and slipping it on, then checking over at each point,

*¹Altho the depth of hip varies with the height of individuals, seven inches is uniformly used by most pattern companies for adult women's figures.

*²The natural armhole line which determines the **width of back** and **chest** measures may be located by placing the thumb under the arm and the tip of fore finger at point of shoulder bone, with hand resting on upper arm. The inner curve of the forefinger will then lie along the armhole line. Or, another method is to place a narrow tape around each armhole, fitting it well up around the arm and pinning it to the waist at the point of the shoulder.

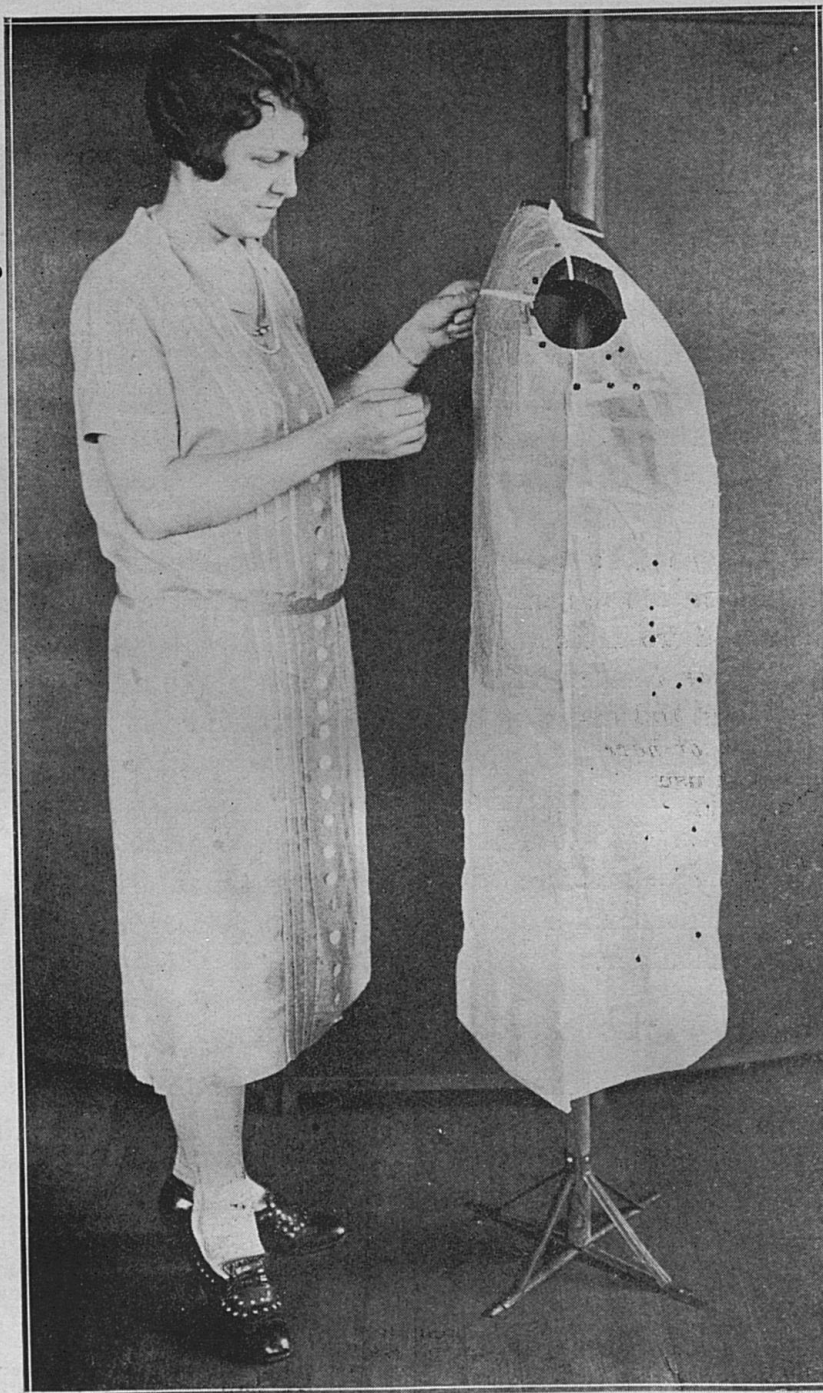


Figure V.—Illustrating use of dress form in testing and altering patterns.

as described below. Patterns should not be tested by comparing their measures with the measures of individuals, except in case of lengths, or of foundation patterns. Ease of fullness over actual body measures is allowed at various points in patterns, the amount depending upon the type of garment and the effects desired. For example, in the snugly fitted hip, which is a distinctive feature of this season's dresses having fullness introduced in some way in the skirt, sufficient ease only is allowed to permit the garment to hang in an unbroken line from bust to hem; while in the belted straight-line dresses of last season, six or more inches were allowed at the hip.

If the correct size and type of pattern of reliable make is selected, only slight alterations will be necessary except for the occasional woman whose figure varies greatly from the average. For the abnormal figure it is safest to try out the pattern in muslin before cutting into expensive material. After fitting the muslin garment and making needed changes, it, rather than the pattern, should be used in cutting the dress. A few pattern companies draft patterns to special measures for the unusual type of figure.

In testing a pattern as well as in fitting a garment cut by it, it is essential that one wear correct undergarments and shoes with heels of the height that will be worn with the garment when completed. The posture of the body and the hang of a dress differ with the height of heels worn.

The homemade paper dress form can be used with entire satisfaction in testing patterns (See Fig. V), and in fitting garments, thereby making the woman who does her own sewing independent of help. To be absolutely reliable it must be an exact duplicate in size, shape and posture of the body of the one for whom made; be smoothly covered with strong, light-weight material on which are marked essential guide lines for fitting; and be mounted on a standard adjusted to the exact height of the individual. A sleeve form made on the right arm can be used with equal success in testing and fitting sleeves.

HOW TO TEST AND ALTER PATTERN

With few exceptions, alterations in a pattern are best made within the pattern by folding plaits to make it smaller, or by slashing and spreading to make it larger. Altering by changing the outline of a pattern makes it difficult to get its parts together satisfactorily, and also may destroy desired effects. When a pattern is slashed and spread to increase size, a piece of paper should be pinned or pasted underneath to hold the edges in position.

1. Pin pattern together as directed on instruction sheet accompanying it, being careful to take up in the seams the amount allowed.
2. Remove dress and pin tape around body at normal waist line.
3. Slip the pattern on and adjust correctly, noting particularly the position of center front, center back and shoulder lines, and pin to underwear in a few places to hold it firmly.
4. Stand well away from figure being fitted and observe the general effect, and whether or not the proportions are good. Occasionally a pattern is found which does not correspond in size with the size given on the pattern envelope.
5. Fit where needed and mark the amount of change to be made.
 - (a) A high chest or full bust will cause dress to kick out in front. To correct, lengthen front along chest line, as shown in Fig. VI, A or B, depending upon the need; or shorten the back, as shown in VI C. If one's chest is very high or full and their back is unusually straight, it may be necessary to make alterations in both front and back. (Dotted lines indicate new outline of pattern.)
 - (b) Round or stooped shoulders will cause the dress to kick out in the back. To correct, slash pattern across back to within a short distance of the armhole line and spread. See Fig. VI D, or, across entire width and

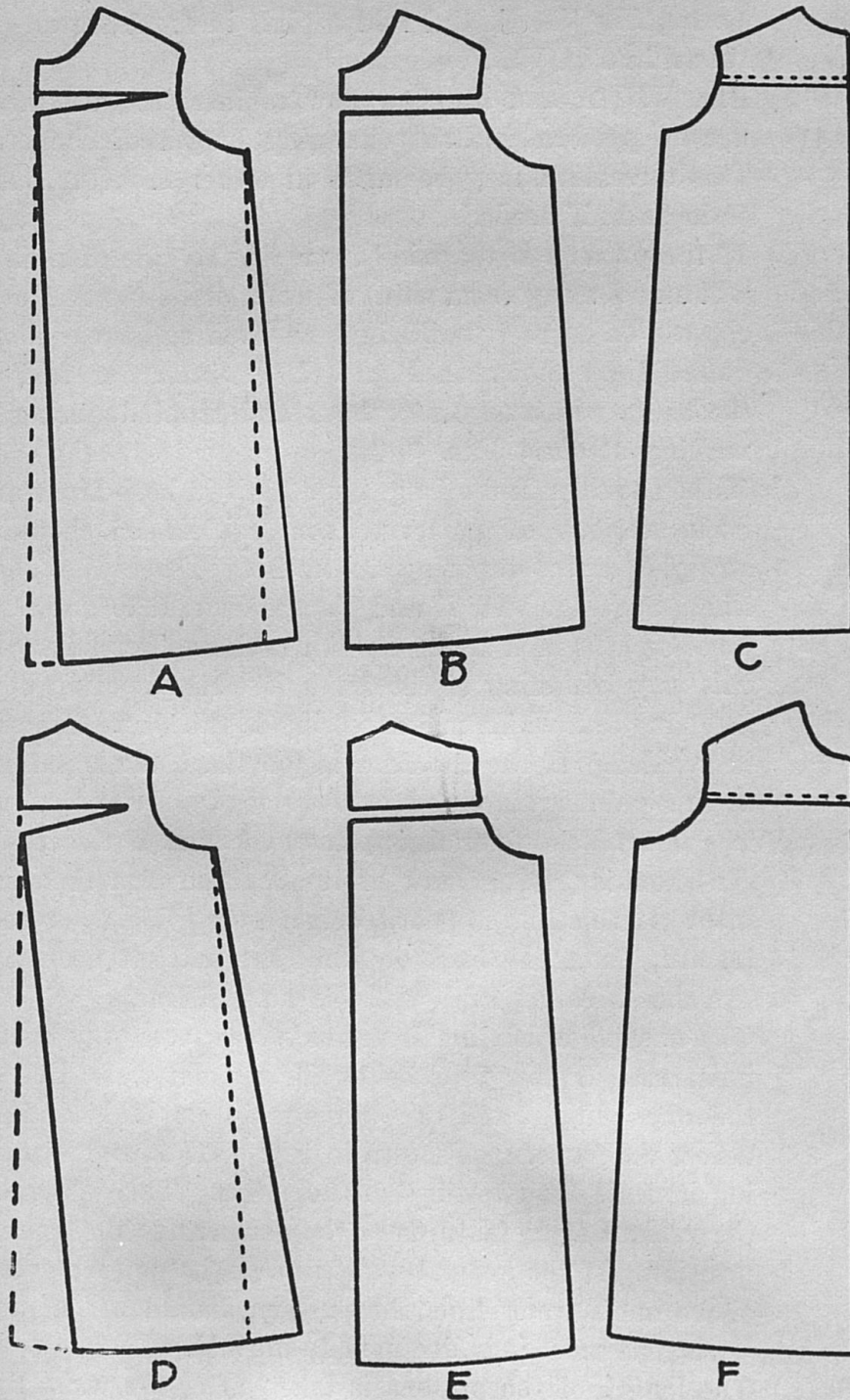


Figure VI.—A, B and C, illustrating how to alter pattern for high chest or full bust; D, E and F, how to alter for round or stooped shoulders.

separate, Fig VI, E, and fold a plait in front section, as shown in Fig. VI, F.

- (c) Fig. VII, A and B, show how to increase bust measure of pattern without changing length of shoulder. This alteration may be made in either front or back, or in both, if needed.
- (d) If the pattern is too wide from side to side of neck it will stand away from sides of neck, or be too full over chest. To correct, build in both back and front along dotted lines shown in Fig. VII, C and D, or fold off the extra width at center back and front, tapering to nothing at chest line.
- (e) If the shoulder is too long, lay a plait in both front and back sections of pattern, from middle of shoulder straight down, tapering to nothing above the chest line. See Fig. VII, E and F. Be careful to allow for three-eighths inch seams at both neck and armhole. In this way trimming of the armhole which is often done in fitting and which makes setting in the sleeve difficult, is avoided. If the shoulder is too short, slash pattern at this point and spread.
- (f) The normal shoulder line follows the line of the top of the shoulder, lying back of it about one-fourth of an inch. If this line is poor, correct by adding to or subtracting from the back or front the amount necessary to make it correspond with the normal line.
- (g) The normal waist line is indicated in some way on all patterns. If this falls below the normal waist line of the one being fitted, a plait should be laid straight across the pattern, as shown in Fig. VIII A and B, raising it until the two lines are together. This will raise the various style features of the garment to the correct position. If the normal waist line of the pattern comes above one's waist line, the pattern should be cut and separated until it is dropped to normal.
- (h) The length of the pattern is taken after the waist line is adjusted. Usually about four inches difference in

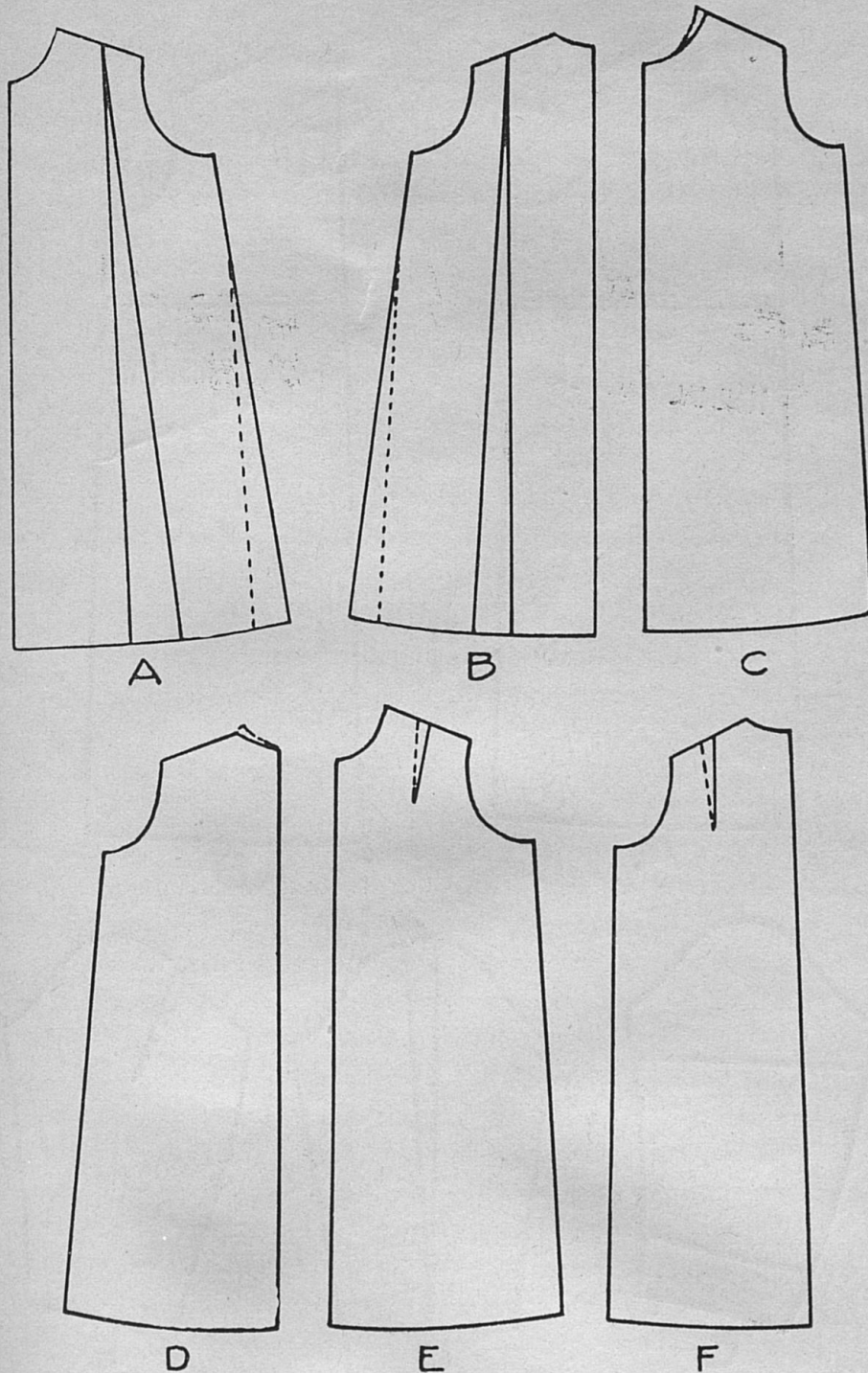


Figure VII.—A and B, illustrating how to increase bust measure without changing length of shoulder; C and D, to correct an overwide neck; E and F, to decrease length of shoulder.

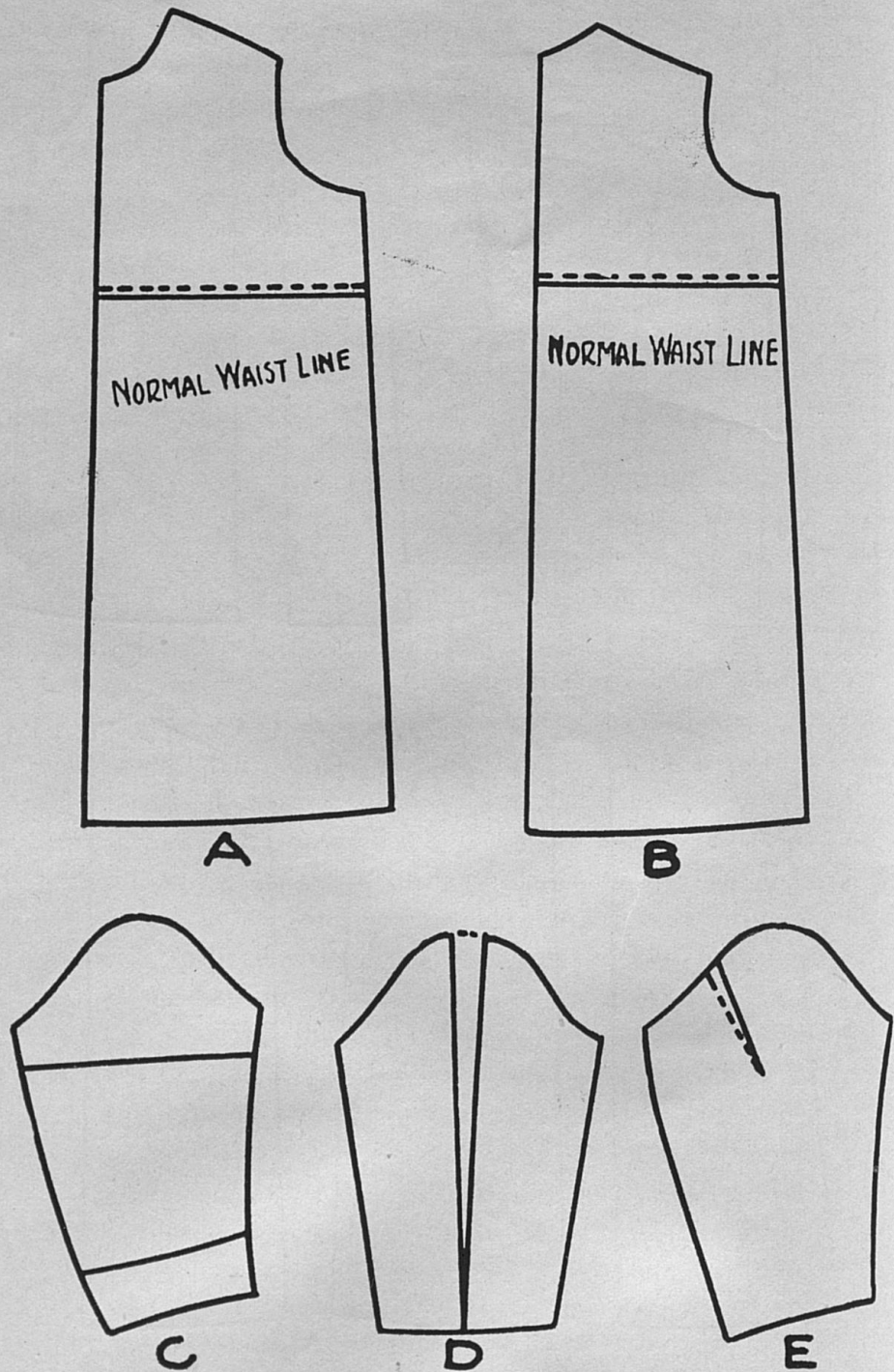


Figure VIII.—A and B, illustrating how to shorten waist of dress; C, to shorten fitted sleeve; D, to alter sleeve to fit fleshy upper arm; E, to decrease size of sleeve at armhole.

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length can be made at bottom of dress without destroying proportions, but if an added amount is needed it should be made below the hip line. Adjust length of panels or flounces to correspond with new dress length.

- (i) Don't forget that any change made in the size of one section of a pattern must be accompanied by a corresponding change in the section to be joined to it. For example, the size of a collar must be changed to correspond with the size of neck of garment, the sleeve to armhole, and the cuff to lower edge of sleeve.

The sleeve also should be pinned together and slipped on the arm to be sure that it is the correct size and length, and that the position of the elbow is right. Overlap the upper edge of the sleeve and the armhole twice the width of the armhole seam allowed, and pin.

- (a) If the elbow curve or elbow fullness in the sleeve comes too low on the arm, raise to the correct position by laying a plait around the pattern a little above the elbow. Fig. VIII, C. To shorten from elbow to wrist, lay a plait below the elbow, allowing for any length that may be intended to form a drapery, and also the amount needed for finish at the lower edge. If it is necessary to lengthen the sleeve either above or below the elbow, cut at the points mentioned and separate the sections.
- (b) A one-seam loose sleeve which has no elbow may be shortened or lengthened at one point only, that is at the elbow line.
- (c) A pattern may be altered to fit a fleshy upper arm without interfering with the size at hand, by slashing and separating as shown in Fig. VIII D.

ALTERING A PATTERN SYMMETRICALLY

It sometimes is necessary to increase or decrease the size of a pattern regularly, as for example to increase a size thirty-six

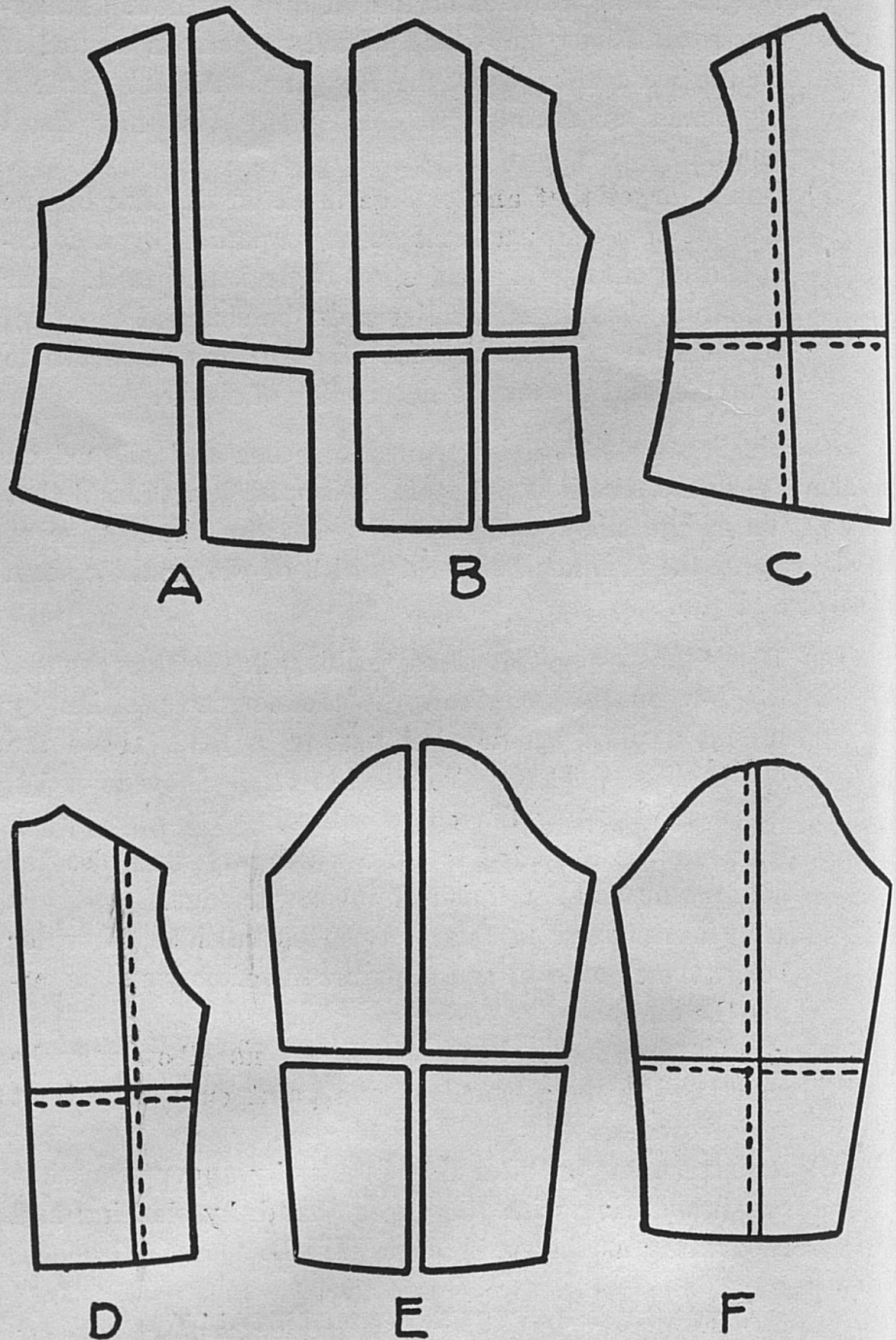


Figure IX.—Illustrating how to alter patterns symmetrically: A and B, to increase bust measure and length of waist; C and D, to decrease these measures; E and F, to increase or decrease size of sleeve.

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to forty, or the reverse; or to alter patterns to suit children of different ages. Illustrations in Fig. IX show the correct way of doing this.

When a pattern is to be increased in size, one-fourth of the needed width must be added to both front and back sections. For example, if four inches are to be added, the edges of the pattern, after it is slashed, must be separated one inch in both front and back. If the pattern is to be decreased four inches in width, a plait one-half inch wide must be taken in each.

USE OF THE PATTERN

Study—Before opening pattern study carefully the instructions and guide charts given on the pattern envelope. Decide which of the possible variations in the design you will use, and identify the pieces you will need for that purpose.

Open the pattern and study each section as it is taken from the pattern envelope, reading carefully the explanation given on it.

Note the marks or perforations indicating correct placing of pattern, such as thread direction and fold of material, the seam allowance, and the marks for placing trimming or for laying plaits or tucks. This is especially important, since each of the various pattern companies employs its own method of marking its patterns.

Select the pieces you will use and fold and replace the others in the envelope.

Study instruction sheet found inside of pattern envelope.

CUTTING, FITTING AND MAKING GARMENT—THE MATERIAL

Quality—A table showing quantities of material for various widths needed to make the garment in different sizes is shown on the pattern envelope. This can safely be used as a guide when purchasing plain material, but an added amount should be gotten if the material has a large design which must be matched at seams.

Preparation—Woolen material which will shrink or spot should be sponged and pressed carefully before cutting garment. Wash material which will shrink or fade when laundered should be shrunk and have color set.

Straighten the ends of the material along the filling thread, and if it has been twisted in pressing, stretch and pull diagonally until cut ends lie exactly together when the cloth is folded lengthwise for cutting.

Look for imperfections in weave by holding up to light, or for irregularities in design, and if any are found lay pattern on so as to avoid them, or so that they will come at inconspicuous places in garment, or where there will be little strain.

Fold the material in the way that will allow most economical cutting and pin the selvages together at intervals, matching cross lines in plaids or checks, and keeping both thicknesses of the material free from wrinkles.

If the material has designs in it, be careful to see that the center of a definite design is used for centers of front, back and collar; and if the designs are large, they should match when the material is folded for cutting sleeves, so that the two sides of the finished garment will be alike.

PLACING THE PATTERN

Smooth pattern out with hands before placing on material, but avoid rubbing hands over it while placing and pinning to cloth, since this is apt to twist it out of shape and spoil the outline of the pieces cut, resulting in a poorly fitted garment.

If the width of the material and its design will permit, use the guide chart for placing which accompanies the pattern. It not only shows an economical arrangement of the pieces, but gives the position in which each must be laid on the material to make the grain of the fabric right in the finished garment. Consider the up and down of the nap in pile fabrics, and of the design in printed ones.

See that the markings which indicate the straight of the material are directly over lengthwise threads, and that all edges intended to be placed on lengthwise folds are so arranged.

Lay all pieces of pattern before pinning. Place pins not more than five inches apart around neck, shoulder and armhole where careful fitting is necessary, farther apart on long, straight seams.

CUTTING AND MARKING

Good sewing depends upon accurate cutting. Accurate cutting cannot be done if material is spread on a bed or any other uneven or cloth-covered surface. The cutting table should, if possible, be large enough to allow the full length of material to be spread at one time.

Cut with a long, clean stroke, keeping eye on point of scissors, and progress from right to left around pattern, resting left hand on pattern and material to keep them from slipping. Do not lift material while cutting, but allow scissors to slide along under it on the table.

Before removing pattern, trace or mark all seams along lines indicated on pattern, and **mark** notches denoting joinings. Also mark with tailor tacks, or with small pencil dots, position of pockets, panels, tucks or other trimming features.

PINNING AND BASTING

Learn to use a sewing table—one of the low ones which can be drawn over the lap to hold materials while pinning, basting or hand sewing them. Seams can be gotten together more quickly and more evenly if the pieces to be joined are laid together on the table and pinned before being basted. Materials, too, are kept in better condition and will require less pressing—a thing which destroys the crisp freshness of many materials.*

If French seams are to be used on a garment, join with seams to the right side; otherwise, join with seams to wrong side.

In joining a straight and bias edge, the straight edge should be placed on the table first, and the bias edge laid over it and pinned, care being taken not to stretch it. The bias edge also

*If the material of which a dress is made stretches badly, it is well to place a row of machine stitching around neck and armhole curves before basting is begun.

should be held uppermost, or toward one, while basting. When stitching on the sewing machine, however, the straight edge should be next to the presser foot, as it has a tendency to stretch the material next to it, while the teeth of the feed take up fullness. For the same reason a short edge (one to which fullness is eased in), should be uppermost when stitching.

Pin first at notches indicating seam joinings and then toward ends of seams on each side, letting any unevenness in length come out there.

The shoulder seam of the back section of a pattern always is at least one-fourth of an inch longer than that of the front section. This difference in length is made because of the roundness of the shoulder. In joining this seam, therefore, the back always should be placed uppermost, or held toward one, when pinning and basting. Pin at marked notches, then pin at neck and armhole lines, taking care to match seam line of neck and seam line of armhole, each to each, exactly on the shoulder seam line. Place other pins between these, distributing the fullness evenly.

Be careful to take up correct seam allowance, pinning and basting exactly along the finished seam line.

Use small basting stitches so that the garment will not stretch in the fitting and then be too small after stitching.

Pin up the sleeve seams, and before basting them test to see that the sleeve lies flat on the table. If not, correct, else the sleeve will twist when finished.

FITTING

A garment cut by a carefully selected and tested pattern will require little, if any, alteration in the fitting.

Always fit a dress over the correct underwear foundation, that is undergarments suitable in texture and design to the dress, and the confiner with which it is to be worn.

Keep the illustration shown on the pattern envelope before you, study its style features and endeavor to embody them in the garment you are making.

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A correctly fitted garment fits easily and comfortably without unnecessary wrinkles or the appearance of being too large. It permits the wearer to sit down, get in and out of cars, or engage in any necessary activity without putting undue strain on any part of it. The thread of the material of which it is made runs parallel with the hip and bust lines, and its vertical seams hang perpendicular to the floor.

The first fitting is made before the sleeves are set in or the collar attached to the neck of the garment.

Put dress on, seams outside, and adjust properly.

Tie a tape around the body along the line in which belt will be worn, and adjust fullness under it.

Fit one side of garment only, altering other side to correspond with it after dress is taken off.*

Stand well away from the figure and study effect as a whole. If dress fits poorly at any point, try to find the cause, then decide upon the best way to remedy it.

SOME FAULTS THAT MAY BE FOUND AND HOW TO REMEDY THEM

The Shoulder—The amount of slope of the shoulders of different individuals may vary greatly from that of the average or standard figure.

Square shoulders cause wrinkles across front and back of waist, from shoulder to shoulder. To correct, take a deeper seam at neck, sloping to nothing at armhole. The neck will have to be made larger to allow for amount taken out at the shoulder seam.

Sloping shoulders cause wrinkles in waist extending from neck to armhole. To correct, take a deeper seam at armhole, sloping to nothing at the neck. Make armhole larger to allow for amount taken out at shoulder seam.

A too-long front shoulder will cause wrinkles at right angles to shoulder seam in front. To correct, open seam and stretch front on back, removing fullness at armhole.

*If the two sides of one's body differ greatly in size or contour it is best to fit each separately, but to fit separately for minor differences makes them more apparent.

If the shoulder is too long and the bust too large, lay pattern on, moving in the armhole edge of pattern as much as is necessary at shoulder, arm and underarm, sloping to nothing at the hip line, and cut away the extra width.

The Neck—If *too loose*, take up shoulder seam. Correct armhole by making it correspondingly larger.

If *too tight*, clip at intervals until it fits comfortably. Trim after removing dress, first folding both front and back sections each through center lengthwise and laying on pattern.

The Armhole should be large enough for comfort, but not so large as to allow the seam to drop underneath. Coats should be from one-half to one and one-half inch larger in the armhole than dresses.

With the perfectly fitted shoulder line that we are having right now, the armhole line comes exactly at the "natural armhole line" described on page 13, note 2, of this Circular.

If the *armhole is too tight or too high under the arm*, clip until easy. Trim after taking off, first laying on pattern. Mark new notches in front and back for joining sleeve.

If *too loose*, take up a deeper shoulder seam, and if necessary correct size of neck.

If *armhole line is not good*, mark with pins the correct shoulder seam length and correct width of back and front. Trim to an even line after removing dress.

Underarm Seam—A large bust or abdomen will cause dress to kick out in front. To remedy, open underarm seam and lift front until its center line and seam at side hang straight to the floor. Take up the fullness created at side front in a dart, placing it on bust line for large bust, and on hip line for large abdomen. On soft material the fullness may be taken up in gathers at the bust line.

In lifting back or front of pattern to correct for full back or chest the underarm seam may be thrown out of line. Test by fastening scissors to end of tape and swinging it from end of seam at armhole. To correct, open seam and fold sufficient width off of the section that has been lifted in fitting to allow the seam to hang as it should.

Skirt Length—Mark skirt length with a row of pins, measuring a definite number of inches from the floor all around. A better line can be gotten if pins are not placed too close together—usually centers of front and back, side seams, and half way between these being sufficient.

Trimming—Pin pockets, panels and other trims to position, making necessary adjustment to suit individual needs.*

The Sleeve—Fit right arm, since it usually is larger. Slip sleeve on, seams outside, and draw up over arm until it overlaps armhole of dress twice the width of armhole seam. Pin first at the notches indicating joinings, then at shoulder line and under arm.

Note *length from underarm to tip of shoulder*. If too short, the sleeve will draw over shoulder, causing it to form in wrinkles from point of shoulder to underarm. To correct, clip edge of underarm of sleeve and lift until wrinkles are removed. Trim by pattern, after removing sleeve, and mark new notches for joining.

Mark *length of sleeve* with arm bended, and allow for finish at lower edge.

A fitted sleeve must be sufficiently wide for comfort. It should be at least an inch and one-half larger through upper arm than the arm at that point; should not bind at elbow, but may fit snugly below.

MAKING ALTERATIONS

Before removing pins indicating alterations, make notches for seam joinings wherever edges have been slipped one on the other in fitting. Also trace along new seam lines.

Open seams where alterations have been made. Fold front and back each through center lengthwise. Lay one sleeve upon other. With altered sections uppermost, trace along new seam lines, or trim by pattern, as at neck and armhole.

*Set-in or bound pockets can be put on more easily and with less handling of material before dress is assembled. In that event their position should be located at the first fitting, then the side and shoulder seams of dress should be opened and the pockets placed before basting for second fitting.

Rebaste seams according to new notches and tracings.

Join collar to neck of dress.

Join sleeves to armhole, matching notches. If exact seam allowance has been taken in both sleeve and armhole of dress there should be no fullness in either of them under the arm between the notches.* The top of the sleeves always is larger by at least an inch and a half than the armhole to which it must be joined, and somewhat longer than the distance from tip of shoulder to underarm line. This is provided to give room over the roundness of the upper arm and shoulder. It should never be trimmed off, as often is done, but eased into the armhole. The sleeve, since it has the longer edge of the two, can be gotten in more easily if it is held toward one while pinning and basting. Place pins exactly on the seam line and perpendicular to it. They should not be farther than an inch apart. If there is much fullness to be eased in, place a row of machine stitching along seam line and adjust fullness to the armhole length evenly along this.

Turn hem at bottom of skirt and baste.

Baste pockets or other trimming to place.

SECOND FITTING

Put dress on right side out and adjust to figure.

Notice if alterations have been made satisfactorily, and make any further needed changes.

Notice the sleeve at armhole. If it does not set well, remove bastings and adjust to armhole on the person. Pin longest point of cap at the highest point of shoulder, and adjust fullness smoothly over upper arm. See that length of sleeve is correct.

Notice the arrangement of collar, pockets, etc., and readjust them, if necessary. Adjust belt and pin at underarm seams so that it can be tacked at these points. See that the skirt is of correct length and an even distance from the floor at all points.

*In fitting a sleeve to a very fleshy arm, a plait sometimes is laid in the underarm of sleeve to take up some of the fullness set in to give width over upper arm.

Observe the general effect of the dress and see whether or not any minor changes, such as lifting or lowering belt, changing position of pockets, and so on, might be made to improve it.

With each detail of the dress now adjusted satisfactorily one should be able to finish it without further fitting. The woman with an exceptional figure however may find additional fitting necessary.

FINISHING THE DRESS

Many a promising dress is spoiled in the finishing. If it is to look as it should, seams must be of the right kind and finish, hems and facings put in correctly, thread tensions slack enough to insure against puckering, and so on, extreme care being taken at each point in its construction.

