

## Preparing your pattern > fitting > sewing it up



### Step 6

On the other handout I've explained this whole process up to this point, now you'll:

- a) Cut out your pattern
- b) tissue fit it & mark changes back to pattern
- c) cut out fabric & pin fabric pieces together as full garment and try on
- d) adjust it - mark fabric and mark changes back to pattern
- e) sew it following the making instructions, trying on as you go

#### a) Cut out your pattern

1. I use a tissue fitting method for fitting the pattern before cutting out in fabric. For this method you only really need to measure one part of the body to tell your pattern size, as all the other adjustments are done with the tissue on the body: Measure your **high bust** for making tops and dresses, **waist** for flared or gathered skirts with a straight waistband and **hips** for trousers and other skirts

**Watch teacher demo of tissue fitting a top to understand concept**

2. Look for the closest body measurement to yours\*\* on the pattern flap, back (or annoyingly inside on the tissue for Burda patterns!). This will give you a guide as to which pattern size to start from – if you are between sizes go down a size, unless you know you like your clothes looser than depicted on the illustration, in which case go up
  - a. \*\* for your high bust measurement, look at the BUST body measure on the pattern envelope – this is because patterns are generally for a B cup and on a 'standard' B cup the high bust and bust are similar i.e. it's like you are choosing the right size for your torso rather than boobs! Then we adjust the rest of it to fit your boobs, belly etc – it means the shoulder areas will fit well, which is the most important thing on a pattern
3. Optional – compare your other body measurements on the chart to see if you are likely to need to go up or down a size on different body parts – as you can graduate between sizes easily in one pattern by blending the side seams (ie just allow more tissue and you can fine tune the fit once it's on you)
4. Which 'view' (style/design option) are you going to make? Using the layout guide, find your view ie A or B, C etc, and see what pattern pieces are needed for the main pieces – don't worry about facings at this point – circle them
5. Now cut these pieces away from the main sheets roughly (in the gaps) – leaving space on the side seams, back seam and underarm seams so we can add an extra 1cm seam allowance next before cutting – don't worry if there isn't enough paper, just leave what you can and we will tape more on if needed

#### b) Tissue fit the pattern to your body & mark changes back to pattern

Next tissue fit the pattern to your body, BEFORE cutting out any fabric – this will ensure the best fit possible, and although won't guarantee perfection first time it will be WAY closer than if you just cut out the nearest size – we recommend using an inexpensive fabric for your first garment (similar to the final fabric you'll use), tweak the fit on that if needed, then the second one should be spot on! Read on for either **Tissue fitting for tops and dresses** or **Trouser Tissue Fitting**

### **Tops and dresses: Tissue fitting order**

1. Choose pattern size closest to high bust on the size guide on the pattern envelope (or inside printed on the pattern for Burda patterns). The general size guide, NOT the finished garment measures
2. Cut out your size – You'll need a total of 1"/2.5cm SA on the sides, centre back and waist – add on an extra 1cm to the 1.5cm that is already on the pattern before cutting tissue if not already on the pattern. If you know you will be a size or two bigger on the hip, graduate out from e.g. size 10 to size 14 THEN add the extra 1cm to your line to make the SA up to 2.5cm – you may or may not need it all once you tissue fit but having the paper there will save time if you do  
*TIP: highlight the cutting line in a bright colour like red or green felt tip before cutting, in case you lose concentration!*
3. Draw in sewing lines with pen on either back or front side seam/shoulder, on CB and on both back and front neck and armholes
4. Put tape just inside sewing line on curves and snip
5. Pin together on sew lines using skinny pins\* – pin heads upwards. I buy **Dritz fine steel pins** on Amazon
6. Put elastic round your waist, bend so it pops to narrowest part. Pin it to garments so it stays in place
7. Put on the tissue and fit back first, then...
8. Shoulders & side seam
9. Bust & check darts. If you need to do a bust adjustment do it now then after doing it do the rest
10. Waist and hip
11. Sway back/mid & high round back
12. Forward shoulder
13. Length of top/top piece of dress
14. Sleeves (should have 2" ease at bicep)
15. Add skirt if a 2 piece dress – check length and height at waist seam with top piece

### **Trousers: Tissue Fitting Order**

1. Find the size that is closest to your hip on the pattern envelope size guide (the 'Body measurements', not the 'finished garment measures')
2. Your pattern needs 1"/2.5cm SA on the sides, inseam and waist – add on an extra 1cm to the 1.5cm that is already on there before cutting tissue if not already on the pattern. If you know you will be a size or two bigger on the hip, graduate out from eg size 10 to size 14 THEN add the extra 1cm to your line – you may or may not need it all once you tissue fit but having the paper there will save time if you do
3. *TIP: highlight the cutting line in a bright colour like red or green felt tip before cutting, in case you lose concentration!*
4. Draw in sewing line, put magic tape inside seam allowance line on curves and snip
5. Put 1" wide elastic in the position you will have the waistband. Pin to pants to stop it moving!

6. Pin pattern pieces together (use fine pins with small heads if possible) as half trouser ready to try on
7. Slide onto the correct leg.
8. Get **CB and CF** into place, make sure crotch is touching your crotch.
9. **Darts:** If CF and CB not reaching you can remove darts, let out SS, straighten CF seam. Or you can increase or reduce darts to improve fit on waist
10. **Crotch depth options:** crotch seam should touch body. Use lengthen/shorten lines and scoop out back crotch to a deeper line if needed
11. **Back: any bagginess?** Options:
  - a. Pull up at waist,
  - b. Pinch the excess (allowing for sitting down!) take a vertical tuck that size all the way down the back from waist to hem, then let hip and waist back out where needed to meet front side seam
  - c. inseam – see next point
12. **Inseam** – if it's too tight or baggy in leg/crotch you can take inseam in or out and front and/or back (can adjust F & B different amounts). If it starts 'smiling' at front let inseam out
13. **Calves? Knock knees?** See Palmer Pletsch handouts for fitting these areas
14. **Draw in waist seam at** bottom of elastic as the bottom of elastic represents the bottom seam of the waistband where it joins the trouser
15. **Length** - adjust

### Steps c-e:

**c) cut out fabric & pin fabric pieces together as full garment and try on**

**d) adjust it - mark fabric and mark changes back to pattern**

**e) sew it following the making instructions, trying on as you go**

### Tops and Dresses: fabric fitting & sewing:

1. Now cut out the fabric pieces, still keeping your 1" seams as on the tissue,
2. Place pieces of masking tape on the inside of each fabric piece stating what the pattern pieces is and little arrows pointing to top, cb, cf etc if useful – this will stop you getting pieces mixed up/back to front etc
3. pin the whole garment together with fabric right side out and the seams & darts sticking outwards so you can adjust them.
4. **Put elastic on** waist as above
5. Once adjustments are made, mark the final sew line (ie where you pinned adjustments) with chalk,
6. unpin, mark these changes back to pattern to reference next time,
7. pin and sew following the order/method in the making instructions on your pattern, considering overlocking or zigzagging the raw edges as you go or just before sewing each seam, as this is not always mentioned in the sewing instructions

### Trouser fabric fitting order – pin cut pieces before sewing and try on:

1. **Cut out your pattern in fabric**
2. Place pieces of masking tape on the inside of each fabric piece stating what the pattern piece is and little arrows pointing to top, cb, cf etc if useful – this will stop you getting pieces mixed up/back to front etc
3. **Put elastic on** as above
4. **Pin right sides out**, SA and darts sticking outwards so easy to adjust. Needs to be right side out in case wearer is not symmetrical
5. **Is the top of the trouser in the right place** on the waistband i.e. sewing line at bottom of elastic. Pull up if needed (will need to remark waist on trouser if you pulled up higher)
6. Adjust side seams on hip to fit nicely
7. **Adjust waist** at side seam and increase/reduce/remove darts if too big or small
8. **Check can sit down** – or can raise leg in front of you (knee at right angle) and see if any more fabric needs pinching out at the back
9. **It's worth taking a photo** as can show up more adjustments that are needed
10. **Waistband** – pin on to sewing line at bottom of elastic (cut it longer than pattern) and chalk mark the main points ie CF, SS, CB, pockets. Note which is left and right side for sewing (eg pop piece of masking tape on)
11. **Mark all changes back to pattern and sew up trousers** following the order/method in the making instructions on your pattern, considering overlocking or zigzagging the raw edges as you go or just before sewing each seam, as this is not always mentioned in the sewing instructions