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# COMMERCIAL PATTERNS

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By WILLIE N. HUNTER,  
*Specialist in Clothing.*

## I. PATTERN STUDY:

Less than a century ago paper patterns were put on the market. At that time they gave very little help except to provide a cutting line. Today there are numbers of patterns in the market. Competition has forced the manufacturer to offer more service with the pattern. Practically every pattern now includes an instruction chart, some of which include pictures of the finished garment, pictures of the parts of the pattern well marked, a cutting chart showing how to place the pattern economically on material of different widths; directions for cutting and making with carefully worked out illustrations to show each step. With a commercial pattern today an amateur may easily make a garment if she will only read, study and follow directions given with her pattern. Experimenting takes times and is often expensive.

## II. SELECTING THE PATTERN—THINGS TO CONSIDER:

1. Effect of the style lines on the height and breadth of individual.
2. Occasion for which garment is needed.
3. Material which will be adaptable to pattern.
4. Age of person.
5. Smartness—Style.
6. Select standard makes such as have clearly marked directions for using.

Commercial patterns have marked on the pattern envelope the measures of the human figure which that particular pattern was made to fit—these are the only ones you need to consider in buying that pattern. These measurements are of the figure—the pattern provides the necessary allowance for the comfort of the wearer and the correct style effect.

## III. PATTERN SIZES:

1. The United States Department of Commerce has issued a set of proper measurements by which pattern manufacturers make their patterns. This Bureau defines the waist as the line 7 inches above the hips.

## Women

Bust	34—36—38—40—42—44	—46—48—50
Waist	28—30—32—34—36—38	—40—42—44
Hips	37—39—41—43—45—47½	—50—53—56

## Misses

Size	14—16—18—20
Bust	32—34—36—38
Waist	27—28—30—32
Hips	35—37—39—41

### 2. Which Size to Buy:

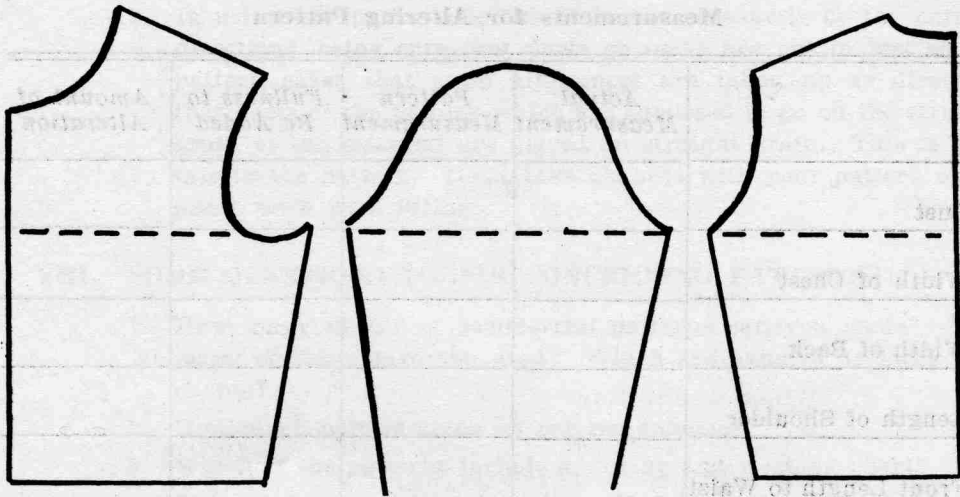
One must know their own measurements. The above figures show that age and size have very little to do with each other. The measurements of ready made garments of different manufacturers vary so that one cannot buy patterns by size of ready made garments they wear.

Waist patterns for women are bought by bust measure. Skirts by hip measure. A study of the charts above will show that the waist is usually 6 inches smaller than the bust; the waist measure is usually 9 inches less than hip measurement. The hip measure is 3 inches larger than bust measure up to size 44, and then the difference is 3½ inches. Many young girls have very slender hips and rather broad shoulders. In a case of this kind a waist pattern of right size and a skirt of smaller size will probably give best fit, while with the older woman the reverse is often true. A 38" bust measure with its corresponding 41" hip measure finds the hip measure too small; a skirt pattern 43" hip measure will probably fit better.

### IV. 1. COMPARISON OF SEVERAL MAKES OF PATTERNS:

A comparison of several makes of patterns in a given size will show that there is a variance in the size and shape of these different patterns. In making a study of this kind each pattern should be of approximately the same date, as pattern companies change their lines from season to season. The seam allowance of each manufacturer must be known—it is the finished seam line that must be kept in mind. If it is not desirable to cut off seam allowance, draw a clear pencil line through it. This will bring out the point that some companies use wide seams on important fitting lines and narrow ones on curved lines. Discard seam allowance in measuring and comparing.

Suppose you take a size 38 in four makes; draw a horizontal line at right angles to center front and back at bust line of each—let this line come at base of armseye. Draw a horizontal line at base of sleeve cap which corresponds to horizontal bust line in blouse. (Be sure that each pattern is marked with name of manufacturer and size.)



The next step is to draw an outline of each pattern used in this study on the same piece of paper, one right over the other. Use different colored pencil for each pattern as No. 1, blue; No. 2, red. Let the center front lines come together and let horizontal bust lines fall one right on other. When this is done, it is easy to see the difference in shape of neck, slant and width of shoulder, shape and depth of armscye, the amount of ease allowed, width of back, chest, bust.

Places that need extra width in pattern for ease and comfort in wearing: Bust, back, both width of back and back shoulder seams, sleeve cap, hip. The above comparison shows that there is a difference in the lines and size of the various patterns, and that one make of pattern will fit one person better than another. Even after one has found the pattern which has lines conforming nearest to those of her figure it is necessary to know how to alter a pattern.

#### V. CHECKING OWN MEASUREMENTS WITH PATTERN:

<i>Width</i>	<i>Length</i>
Bust	Front length to waist
Chest	Back length to waist
Width of back	Under arm length
Length of shoulder	Skirt length
Hip	Length to hip from waist
Sleeve cap	Sleeve—
Waist	Under arm and top

### Measurements for Altering Pattern

	<i>Actual Measurement</i>	<i>Pattern Measurement</i>	<i>Fullness to Be Added</i>	<i>Amount of Alteration</i>
Bust				
Width of Chest				
Width of Back				
Length of Shoulder				
Front Length to Waist				
Back Length to Waist				
Waist				
Hips				
Sleeve Cap				
Sleeve Length.				

#### VI. PATTERN ALTERATION:

For various ways to alter patterns see separate sheet on pattern alteration. Note directions in instruction chart of each pattern company for alteration.

**VII.** The purpose of this discussion is to help one to better understand patterns and to assist in finding the make of pattern which will fit with least trouble. Many women do not enjoy clothes they make themselves because they have trouble with fitting; while other women say they have so much trouble in getting ready made garments that fit. Starting with the right pattern is the first step in getting a well fitted garment. Patterns and ready made garments are made for standard sizes—very few people are of standard measurements—we have the short or extremely tall figure; the woman with large bust; the fat upper arm; the round back; the square shoulder; the sloping shoulder; the large abdomen—all of these variances make it necessary for one to know how to alter the pattern without destroying the correct lines.

1. Try several makes of patterns and find the one whose lines conform nearest to those of your figure.



2. In using any pattern for the first time go exactly by the pattern directions, being sure that darts or tucks are put in just as the pattern says; that seam allowances are taken up as directed; that parts of the pattern which are supposed to go on the straight grain of the material are placed on straight grain. This is only fair to the pattern. Don't take chances with your pattern or do guess work with fitting.

#### **VIII. SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK CONCERNING PATTERNS:**

1. How many makes of commercial patterns can you name? How many of these have you used? Which are handled by local merchants?
2. How much help is given on pattern envelope?
3. Which of the patterns include a cutting and working chart?
4. How are seam allowances indicated?
5. How do the various companies indicate placing pattern on true grain of cloth?
6. Do any or all of them have each piece marked with size, name of piece, such as back and front?
7. Which have notches well placed for putting together?
8. What makes seem to run large? Small?
9. What differences are there in width of chest, back, bust, hip, in the various makes?
10. Is there a general rule for the location of dart in blouse, sleeve, hip?
11. Are there directions for the alteration of pattern?
12. What directions are given for fitting?

#### **PATTERN NOTES:**

1. Discard patterns as they become out of date and style.
2. Have a definite place for patterns and keep them there. A pattern bag with numbers of large pockets tacked to the back of sewing room door is excellent for keeping patterns.
3. If a pattern does not have the name, size, and manufacturer on each piece of the pattern be sure that it is put on before returning the pattern to envelope.
4. In using a pattern take out the pieces that will be needed, fold others and return to envelope. It is well to separate lining from top, skirt from waist.
5. Before opening pattern, see that the correct size has been sold to you. Read the directions, and look at illustrations carefully.
6. A manila envelope, about 9x12, is an excellent thing to keep patterns in. Cut all illustrations and directions from the commercial envelope and paste on the manilla one. This larger envelope does not split or tear as the commercial envelope does and keeps pattern in much better condition as it allows larger folds.

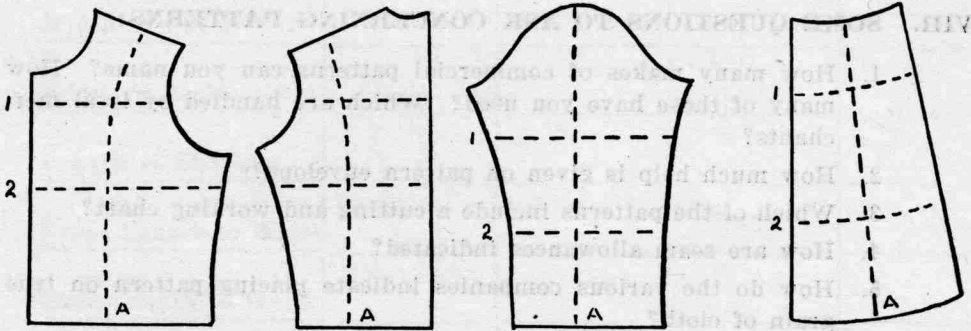
**References:**

Eddy and Wiley: Pattern and Dress Design.

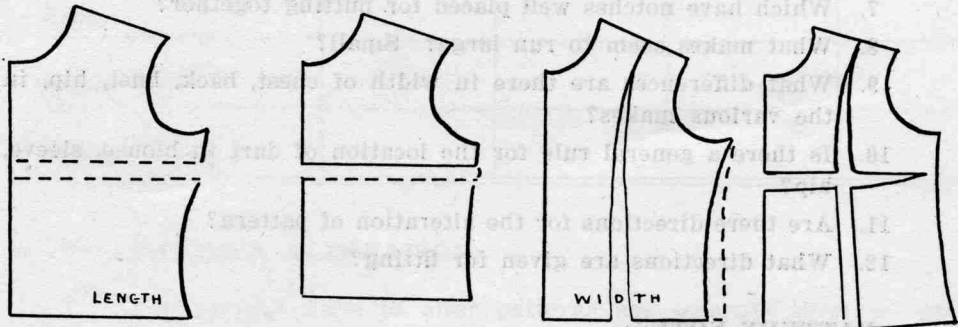
Erwin: Practical Dress Design.

**PATTERN ALTERATION**

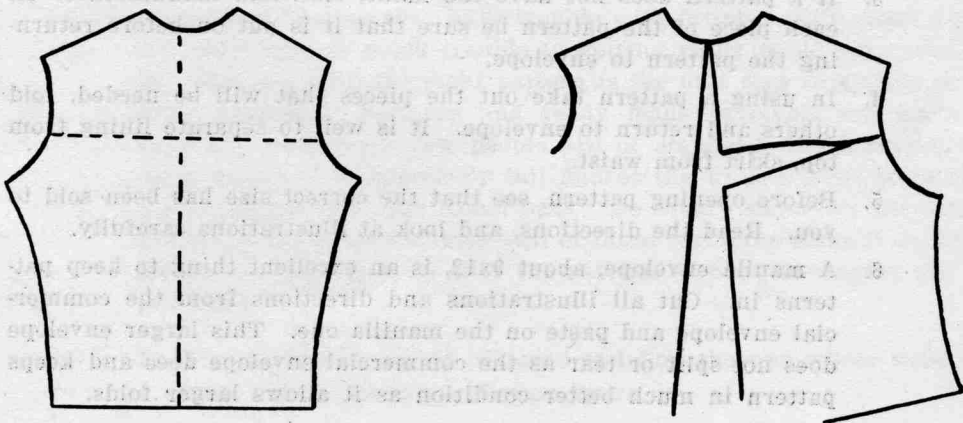
Lines on which to alter patterns:



Alter the patterns on lines 1, 2, for length. For width on line A.



To increase length slash on lines 1 and 2 and spread. It is only in very exceptional cases that the front and back have to be slashed at No. 1, the chest line. To decrease length slash and lap. For width slash on line A—spread to increase and lap to decrease.



**Back:** The back is altered for length or width just as the front. Round shoulders give a good deal of trouble in fitting. Most patterns measure  $\frac{1}{2}$ " or more in length of shoulder on back than front. This is to be eased in before joining to front shoulder. Extra fullness is always needed for the very round or humped shouldered person. Tucks or darts center back at neck are other means of adding width. If the figure is very stooped and these methods do not allow enough fullness, try altering pattern as suggested above.