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## EC72-421 Guides to Buying Women's Ready Made Dresses

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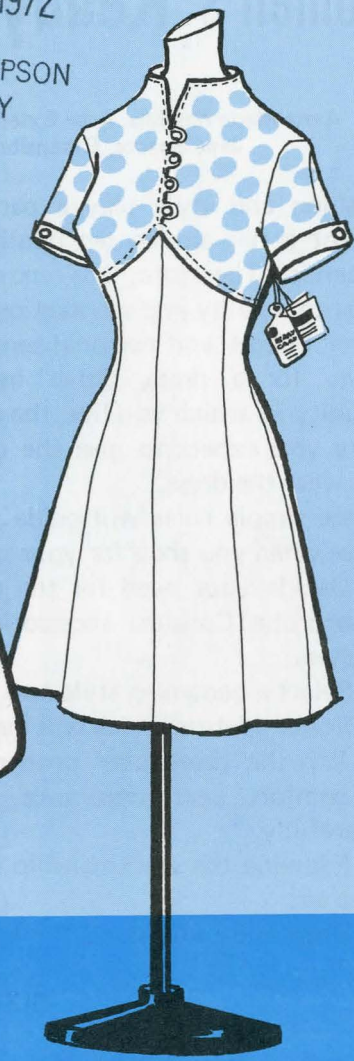
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EC 72-421



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# Guides to Buying Women's Ready Made Dresses

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Fashion and style play a part in every woman's life. Equally important is her aim to get quality and satisfaction for the money she spends. Therefore, the money spent for dresses pays for appearance, quality and satisfaction.

Your budget and personal sense of value determine the amount you pay for a dress. Other influencing factors might be the community in which you live, the activities in which you participate, the care you expect to give the dress, and number of seasons you plan to wear the dress.

These simple rules will guide you toward a wise and satisfying purchase when you shop for your next dress.

1. Decide your need for the dress, its purpose and its place in your wardrobe. Consider accessories you own or those you will need to purchase.
2. Select a becoming style and color.
3. Select a fabric which will meet wear and care requirements.
4. Try the dress over proper foundation garments. Good fit means comfort, neat appearance, and durability. Therefore, fit the dress carefully.
5. Examine the workmanship on both the outside and the inside of the dress.
6. Read and understand the label before you purchase the dress.

## SIZES

The style of the dress can influence the size which fits most satisfactorily. When buying a dress styled with a full skirt and considerable ease in the bodice, the waist measurement might determine the size which fits best. Bust and hip measurements are of major importance when selecting a sheath or fitted style dress.



Manufacturers use various classifications for categories to designate figure types for which dresses are made. Most stores carry dresses in each category, but some stores will not carry the complete size range in each. A list of classifications and possible size ranges in each:

**JUNIOR - PETITE (sizes 5-15).**

These dresses are for the junior size girl or woman who is under 5' 2" tall. She is usually of small build and short waisted.

**JUNIOR (sizes 5-15).** For those 5' 2" to 5' 6" tall, regardless of age, with small or medium build and short waisted.

**PETITE (size 8 to 18).** Also called "diminutive" for short, slim women under 5' 4". The waist may be shorter than the misses sizes.

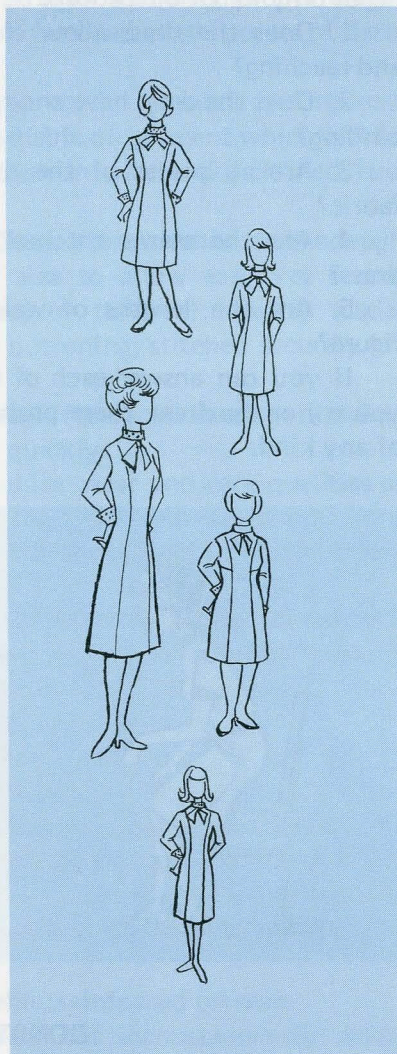
**MISSSES (sizes 8 to 20).** For those 5' 4" to 5' 9" tall with slim to medium full figure and normal waistline.

**TALL (sizes 8 to 20).** For those 5' 9" or taller. These dresses are for women who are of slim to medium build, usually with long waists.

**HALF-SIZE (sizes 12 1/2 to 26 1/2).** For fuller, short-waisted figures 5' 3" or less.

**WOMEN'S (sizes 18 to 44)**  
**OUT-SIZES (sizes 46 to 52).** For those 5' 5" to 5' 9" with large proportions. More ease is allowed through shoulders, back and waist than in the large misses' sizes.

These classifications are based on size only. Age does not determine the classification which will fit you best. Try various sizes in several classifications before you make the final purchase. This may in many cases eliminate the need for even minor alterations.



## FIT

A dress that fits well is comfortable to wear, helps you achieve a smart look and is more durable. Choose a size that fits properly or needs only minor alterations.

1. Does the dress allow comfortable sitting, walking, stooping and reaching?

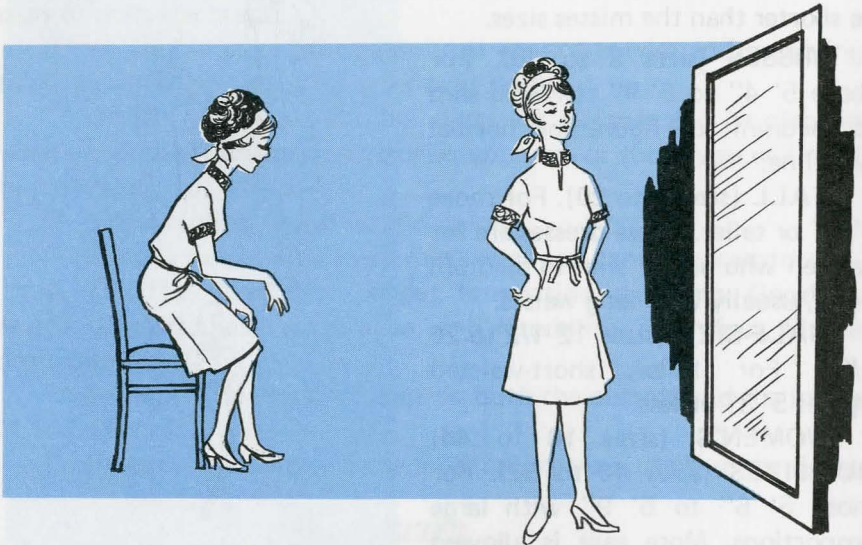
2. Does the dress have enough ease to prevent wrinkles, bulges or binding?

3. Are all pieces of the dress cut on the proper grain of the fabric?

4. Are the seams stitched straight for proper balance of the dress?

5. Are the lengths of waist, skirt and sleeves right for your figure?

If you can answer each of these questions with a firm "yes" as you try on the dress, there probably will be little need for alterations of any kind.



## CONSTRUCTION

Every part of the dress must be constructed neatly and correctly to insure fit, durability and pleasing appearance. Examine the workmanship on both the inside and the outside of the dress. Check the following construction points:



**Cut**—On straight of grain; matched stripes, plaids, etc.

**Seams**—At least 1/2 inch wide; entire length of seam even in width; durable seam finish to prevent excessive raveling.

**Stitching**—Well matched thread; straight stitching; proper length stitch (12 per inch minimum); threads fastened at the points of darts and ends of seams.

**Fasteners**—Suited in size and type to the garment and its use; sewed on firmly and individually; washable on garment which will be laundered; dry cleanable on garment which will be dry cleaned; rust proof.

**Buttonholes**—(Machine made): Close, even stitches, deep enough to keep from pulling out; proper size to allow easy yet secure buttoning; matching thread. (Bound or tailored): Neatly made; proper size to allow easy yet secure buttoning; stitched securely for durability.

**Plackets**—Fit smoothly; long enough for convenience in dressing; inconspicuous; strong; easy to fasten quickly.

**Trimming**—Fiber content with similar wear and care qualities as that of dress fabric; appropriate for the type of dress; easy to iron; durable; detachable trim if cleaning will be required more often than the entire dress.

**Belts and Buckles**—Washable if dress is to be laundered; dry cleanable if dress is to be dry cleaned; well made; colorfast backing and interfacing; rustproof buckle.

## Finishing and Special Details

*Topstitching*—Neat, proper color thread, short even stitches.

*Hems*—Even width (at least 2 inches on straight cut skirts; a narrower hem on circular cut skirts); inconspicuous and durable stitching. Seam tape (if used) should be of durable quality and suitable color.

*Pockets*—Neat construction; durable; reinforced corners.

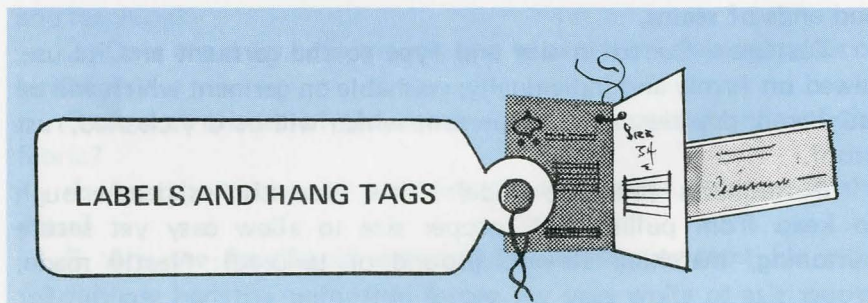
*Facings*—Tacked in place securely but inconspicuously; edges finished.

*Stay-tape*—At the waistline seam to prevent stretching; at the shoulder seam if it continues into the sleeve.

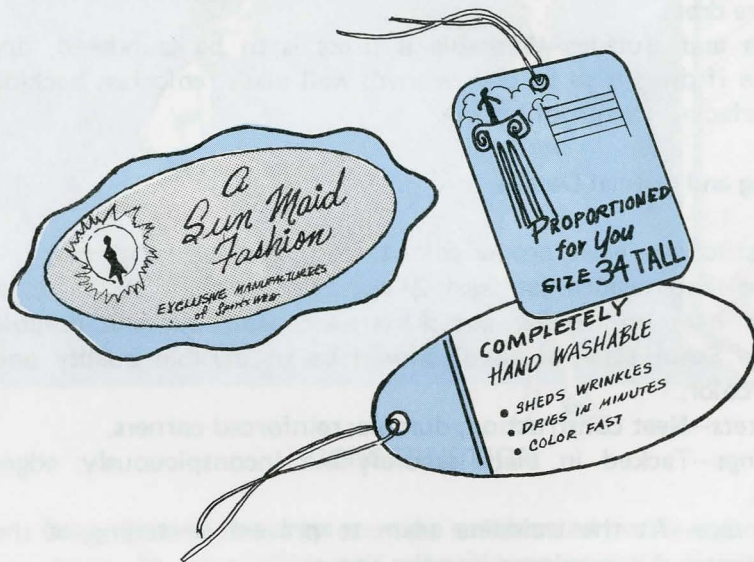
*Interfacing*—Used in parts of the dress which need body, firmness or reinforcement; has care and wear qualities the same as those of the

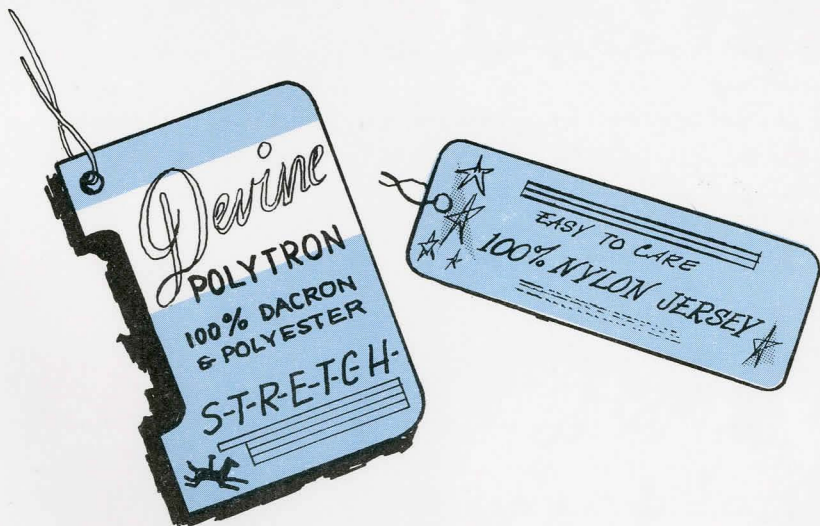
dress itself; fastened securely to avoid slippage during laundering or dry-cleaning.

**Lining**—Cleanable in same manner as dress fabric; will not stretch, sag or shrink; light weight but firm; cut on straight of grain; colorfast.



Labels and hang tags speak for the fabric and the garment. Informative labels are the most reliable guides to fiber content, special fabric finishes and care instructions. They do not necessarily tell about fabric quality and construction techniques. A good label answers the following questions:





1. *What is it made of?* This is now required by law. Fiber content.

2. *What size is it?* Figure type such as tall, petite, etc.

3. *What special benefits can you expect?* Preshrunk, water repellent; crease resistant; colorfast, etc.

4. *What care will it require?* Washing or dry cleaning instructions; bleaching precautions; ironing temperatures.

5. *Who makes or sells it?* Brand; manufacturer; store.

It is important that you read and understand the information given on the label and hang tag. For successful care, follow the directions.