

1977

## EC77-499 Replaces EC72-435 A Basic Pattern for you

Jane Speece

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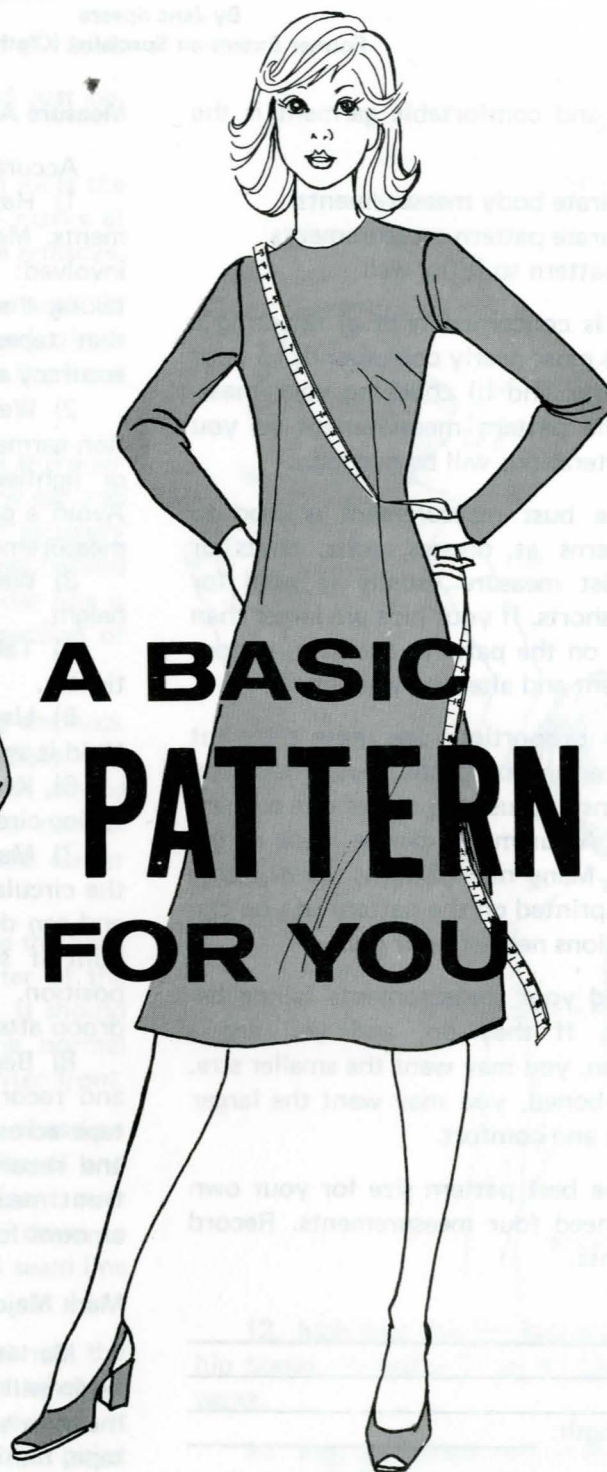
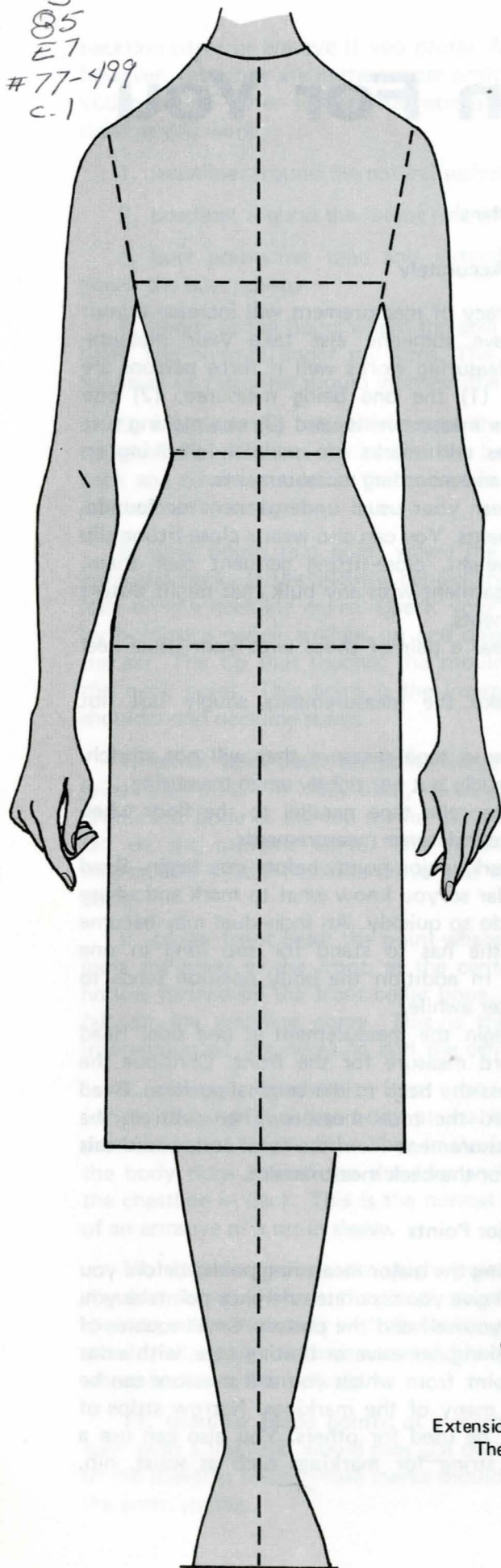
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EC 77-499  
(Replaces EC 72-435)



# A BASIC PATTERN FOR YOU

Extension work in "Agriculture, Home Economics and Subjects relating thereto,"  
The Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Agriculture and Natural  
Resources, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Cooperating with the  
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Leo E. Lucas, Director



# A Basic Pattern For You

By Jane Speece  
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An attractive and comfortable garment is the result of:

1. taking accurate body measurements
2. taking accurate pattern measurements
3. altering a pattern so it fits well

This circular is concerned with a) selecting a basic pattern that most nearly corresponds to your body measurements; and b) checking your measurements with the pattern measurement so you will know what alterations will be needed.

Generally, the bust measurement is used to select such patterns as dresses, suits, coats or blouses. The waist measure usually is used for skirts, pants and shorts. If your hips are larger than the measurement on the pattern, however, choose by hip measurement and alter the waistline.

If your body proportions are quite different from those of a certain size pattern, you may need to get two patterns and use the top of one and the skirt of another. Adjustments can be made at the waist for dresses. Many new patterns are available with several sizes printed on the pattern so you can select the proportions nearest your own.

You may find your measurements falling between two sizes. If they do, and you are a small-boned person, you may want the smaller size. If you are larger-boned, you may want the larger size for more ease and comfort.

To choose the best pattern size for your own figure, you will need four measurements. Record these measurements.

Bust: \_\_\_\_\_  
Waist: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hips: \_\_\_\_\_  
Back waist length: \_\_\_\_\_

Use these measurements to select a pattern with the body measurements that are nearest your own. Once the pattern size is selected, the next step is to take more complete body measurements.

## Measure Accurately

Accuracy of measurement will increase if you:

1) Have someone else take your measurements. Measuring works well if three persons are involved: (1) the one being measured, (2) one taking the measurements and (3) one making sure that tapes and marks are parallel, checking on accuracy and recording measurements.

2) Wear your usual undergarment or foundation garments. You can also wear a close-fitting slip or lightweight, close-fitting garment over them. Avoid a garment with any bulk that might distort measurements.

3) Wear a pair of shoes with your usual heel height.

4) Take the measurements snugly but not tightly.

5) Use a tape measure that will not stretch. Hold it snugly but not tightly when measuring.

6) Keep the tape parallel to the floor when taking circumference measurements.

7) Mark major points before you begin. Read the circular so you know what to mark and where and can do so quickly. An individual may become faint if she has to stand for too long in one position. In addition the body position tends to droop after awhile.

8) Begin the measurement at one side. Read and record measure for the *front*. Continue the tape across the back to the original position. Read and record the *total* measure. Then subtract the front measurement from the total and record this amount for the back measurement.

## Mark Major Points

Marking the major measuring points before you begin will give you accurate reference points as you measure yourself and the pattern. Small squares of tape, masking, adhesive or basting tape, with a dot at the point from which you will measure can be used for many of the markings. Narrow strips of tape can be used for others. You also can use a cord or string for markings such as waist, hip,



neckline curve or armhole if you prefer. Make sure however, that they are in the proper position when you measure. Refer to the illustrations and directions as you work.

1. **waistline:** around the natural waistline.
2. **bustline:** around the fullest part of the bust.
3. **bust points:** use tape and extend just between the bust points.

4. **chest:** at the point where the arm joins the body and directly under the arms. The marks at the level of the chest should intersect the armhole.

5. **neckline:** the natural curve of the neck. It usually falls just above the bone at the back of the neck and curves around to the hollow in the front just below the neck.

6. **neck point:** that point where the shoulder joins the neck. It lies slightly behind the ear and falls on the neckline curve. Check your accuracy by holding a pencil straight up and down behind the ear. The tip that touches the shoulder line is the neck point. This point is the intersection of shoulder and neckline seams.

7. **center back base:** the point where the neck joins the body in the back, just above the prominent bone at the top of the spine. It should fall on the neckline curve. This is the normal intersection of the neckline curve and the center back.

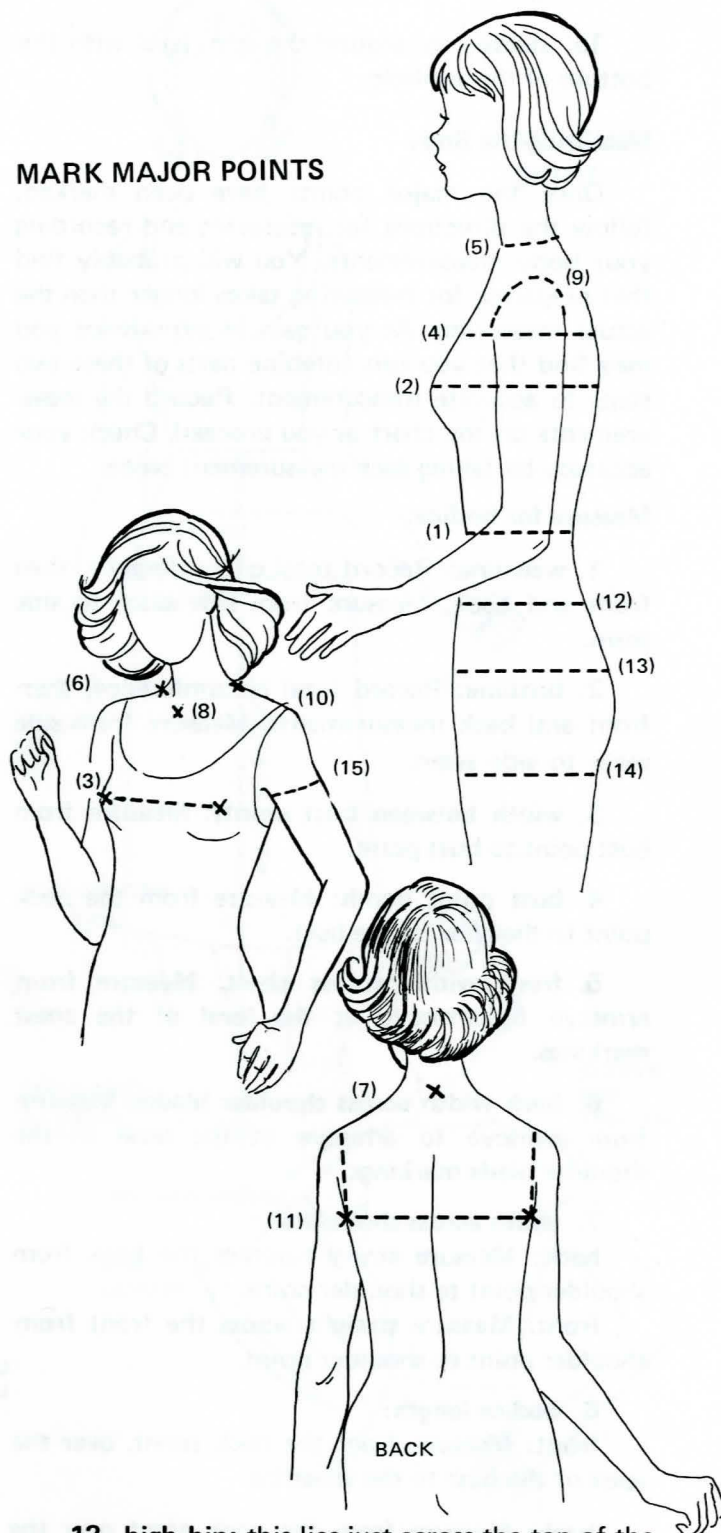
8. **center front base:** the point where the neck joins the body in the front, at the center of the hollow formed by the front collar bone. It should fall on the neckline curve. This is the normal intersection of the neckline and the center front.

9. **armhole (armhole):** from the chestline (where the arm joins the body at the front) and over the tip of the shoulder bone in the front, over the body ridge behind the shoulder and down to the chestline in back. This is the normal seam line of an armhole of a set-in sleeve.

10. **shoulder point:** the high point of the shoulder bone. This is the usual place where a shoulder seam intersects with the armhole seam. It should fall on the armhole seam and be that point where back and front divide.

11. **shoulder blade points:** at a point that lies level with a line that would pass just over the apex of the shoulder blade. These marks should intersect the armhole line.

## MARK MAJOR POINTS



12. **high hip:** this lies just across the top of the hip bones, generally 2" to 4" (5-10 cm) below the waist.

13. **hip:** the fullest part of the hip, generally 7" to 9" (18-23 cm) below the waist.

14. **thigh:** around the fullest part of the thigh area. Needed if thigh circumference is larger than the hip circumference or if there is muscle development at the front of thigh.



**15. sleeve cap:** around the arm, level with the bottom of the armhole.

## Measuring the Body

Once the major points have been marked, follow the directions for measuring and recording your body measurements. You will probably find that preparing for measuring takes longer than the actual measuring. As you gain in experience you may find that you can combine parts of these two steps to accurate measurement. Record the measurements on the chart as you proceed. Check your accuracy by taking each measurement twice.

### Measure for bodice:

**1. waistline:** Record total circumference, then front and back. Measure from side seam to side seam.

**2. bustline:** Record total circumference, then front and back measurements. Measure from side seam to side seam.

**3. width between bust points:** Measure from bust point to bust point.

**4. bust point depth:** Measure from the neck point to the apex of the bust.

**5. front width across chest:** Measure from armhole to armhole at the level of the chest markings.

**6. back width across shoulder blades:** Measure from armhole to armhole at the level of the shoulder blade markings.

### 7. width across shoulders:

**back:** Measure straight across the back from shoulder point to shoulder point.

**front:** Measure straight across the front from shoulder point to shoulder point.

### 8. bodice length:

**front:** Measure from the neck point, over the apex of the bust to the waistline.

**back:** Measure from the neck point over the shoulder blade to the waist.

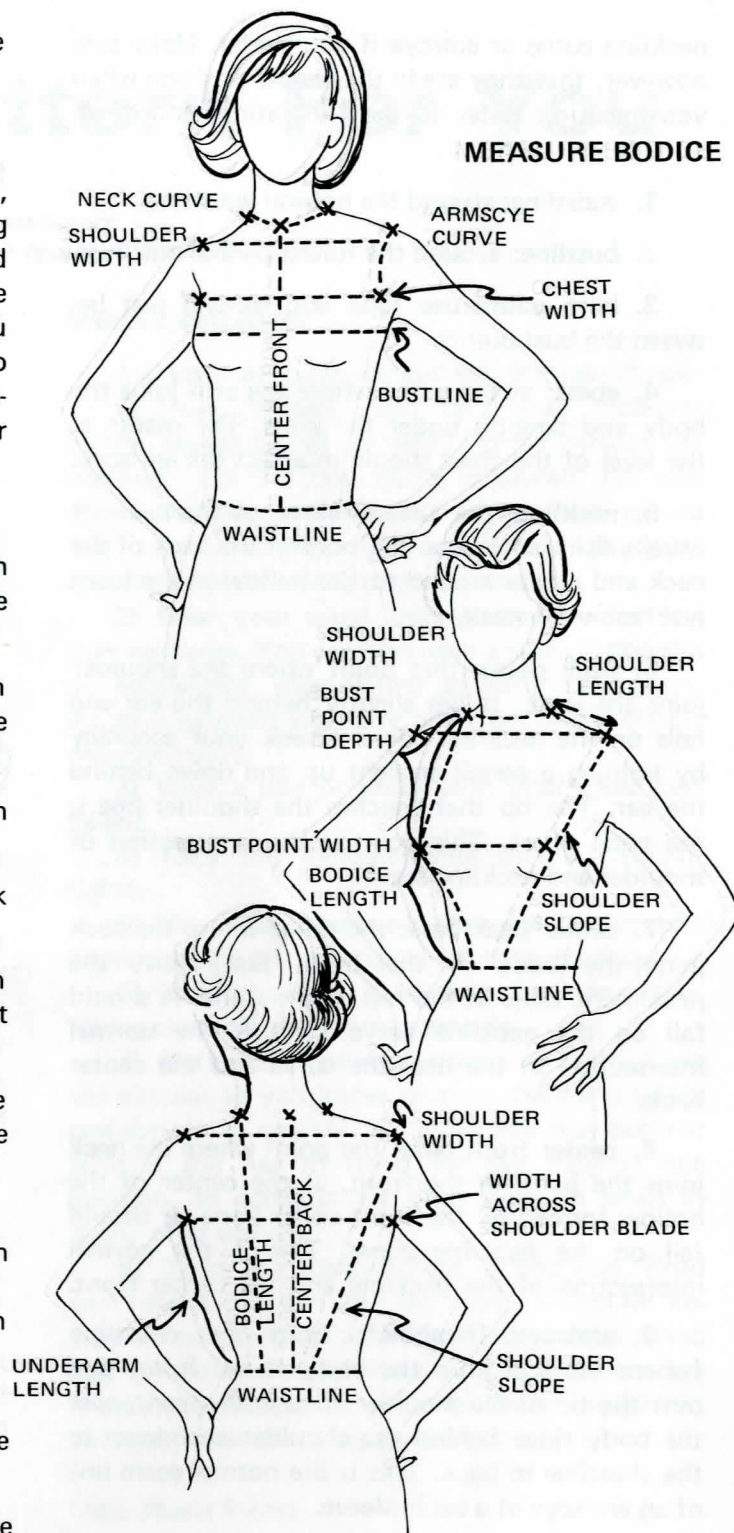
### 9. center length:

**front:** Measure from the center front base to the waistline.

**back:** Measure from the center back base to the waistline.

**10. armhole curve:** Record total, then front and back measurement. Place tape on edge for

## MEASURE BODICE



greater accuracy. The measurement begins at the chest level.

**11. shoulder length:** Measure from the neck point to the shoulder point.

**12. neck curve:** Stand the tape on its edge to measure. Record total, then front and back measurement.



**13. shoulder slope or height:**

**front:** Measure from the shoulder point to the bust point then from shoulder point to center front at waist.

**back:** Measure from the shoulder point over the shoulder blade to the center back at waistline.

**14. underarm length:** Measure from the chest marking under the arm to the waist.

**Measure for skirt:**

**15. high hip:** Record the distance below the waist (depth). Record total measurement, then front and back. Measure from side seam to side seam.

**16. full hip:** Record distance below the waistline (depth). Record total measure, then break down into front and back. Measure from side seam to side seam.

**17. waist to floor:** Record side front and back measurements. You will need both sides if one hip is higher than the other.

**18. hem length:** Record measurement from waistline to desired hem length of skirt.

**Measure for sleeve:**

**19. arm length:** With arm slightly bent, measure from the shoulder point to the wrist. Record total measure, then shoulder to elbow and elbow to wrist.

**20. sleeve cap length:** Measure from the shoulder point to the tape or cord around the arm at the level of the armhole.

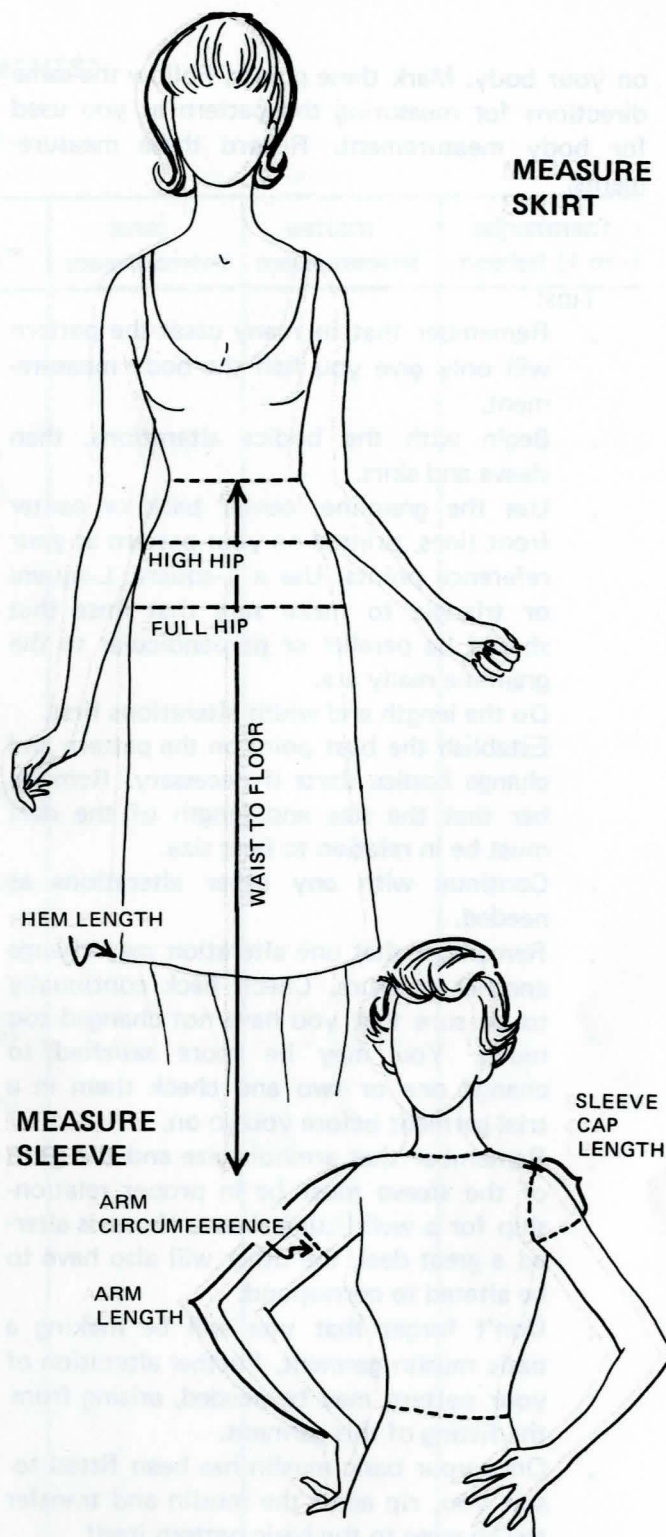
**21. arm circumference:** Measure around the fullest part of the arm, the bent elbow and the wrist. Record all measurements.

**Checking Measurements with the Pattern**

Wearing ease has been built into the pattern. When you measure the pattern, you will find that it is larger than the body measurement given in the pattern tables. This ease makes it possible for you to be comfortable and to move when wearing a garment. Your personal preference will help you decide how much ease you prefer in your garments. Add the ease on the chart to your personal measurement. Then alter the pattern where needed to correspond to the total of your measurements plus the ease.

Pattern companies use the same standardized

**MEASURE  
SKIRT**



**MEASURE  
SLEEVE**

body measurements but one company may vary from another in the amount of ease allowed, the slant of the shoulder and the length and shape of the armhole. This is why you may find that one pattern brand may fit you better than another and require less alteration.

Measure the pattern pieces as carefully as you did your body. Find the reference points on the pattern that correspond to the points you marked

on your body. Mark these points. Follow the same directions for measuring the pattern as you used for body measurement. Record these measurements.

**Tips:**

- . Remember that in many cases the pattern will only give you half the body measurement.
- . Begin with the bodice alterations, then sleeve and skirt.
- . Use the grainline, center back or center front lines, printed on your pattern as your reference points. Use a T-square, L-square or triangle to make sure that lines that should be parallel or perpendicular to the grainline really are.
- . Do the length and width alterations first.
- . Establish the bust point on the pattern and change bodice darts if necessary. Remember that the size and length of the dart must be in relation to bust size.
- . Continue with any other alterations as needed.
- . Remember that one alteration may change another measure. Check back continually to be sure that you have not changed too much. You may be more satisfied to change one or two and check them in a trial garment before you go on.
- . Remember that armhole size and the girth of the sleeve must be in proper relationship for a well-fitting sleeve. If one is altered a great deal, the other will also have to be altered to correspond.
- . Don't forget that you will be making a basic muslin garment. Further alteration of your pattern may be needed, arising from the fitting of this garment.
- . Once your basic muslin has been fitted to suit you, rip apart the muslin and transfer the changes to the basic pattern itself.
- . Use the adjusted basic pattern to measure your fashion patterns or for your own design additions.

Fitting a garment is both an art and a skill. There are various methods of altering the pattern itself. Use the method that works best for you.

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# MEASUREMENTS\*

Bodice					
	your measurement <sup>+</sup>	ease allowance =	total measurement	pattern measurement	adjustment needed (+ or -)
1. waistline	total: _____ front: _____ back: _____	1" - 2" total (2.5 - 5 cm)			
2. bustline	total: _____ front: _____ back: _____	3" - 4" total (7.5 - 10 cm)			
3. width between bust points					
4. bust point depth					
5. front width across chest (____ down from neck point)		½" - 1" (1.3 - 2.5 cm)			
6. back width across shoulder blades (____ down from neck point)		½" - 1" (1.3 - 2.5 cm)			
7. width across shoulders	front: _____ back: _____	½" - 1" (1.3 - 2.5 cm) ½" - 1" (1.3 - 2.5 cm)			
8. bodice length	front: _____ back: _____	½" (1.3 cm) ½" (1.3 cm)			
9. center length	front: _____ back: _____	½" (1.3 cm) ½" (1.3 cm)			
10. armscye curve	total: _____ front: _____ back: _____				
11. shoulder length					
12. neck curve	total: _____ front: _____ back: _____				
13. shoulder slope	front: _____ back: _____				
14. underarm length					



### Skirt

	your measurement <sup>+</sup>	ease allowance =	total measurement	pattern measurement	adjustment needed (+ or -)
15. high hip ( _____ below waist)	total: _____ front: _____ back: _____	1" - 2" total (2.5 - 5 cm)			
16. full hip ( _____ below waist)	total: _____ front: _____	1" - 2" total (2.5 - 5 cm)			
17. waist to floor	center back: _____ center front: _____ left side: _____ right side: _____				
18. hem length from waist					

### Sleeve

	your measurement <sup>+</sup>	ease allowance =	total measurement	pattern measurement	adjustment needed (+ or -)
19. arm length	total: _____ shoulder to elbow: _____ elbow to wrist: _____				
20. sleeve cap length					
21. arm circumference	fullest part: _____ elbow: _____ wrist: _____	1" - 2" (2.5 - 5 cm) 2" - 2½" (5 - 6.3 cm) 1" (2.5 cm)			

\*Where no ease measurement is entered in the chart, the amount of ease will be in proportion to other alterations.