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FREE EBOOK

ENGLISH, CAREERS AND VOCATIONAL SKILLS

Body Measurements and Pattern Drafting

Measure correctly and draft basic patterns for kurtis, blouses and more

INSIDE THIS BOOK

- Tools for measuring and drafting
- Taking body measurements
- The measurement chart and ease
- Drafting the basic bodice block
- ...and 6 more chapters, practice questions and a glossary

Beginner to intermediate

Dress design and tailoring students

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Body Measurements and Pattern Drafting

Learn to take accurate body measurements, add the right ease and draft basic patterns step by step: the bodice block, the sleeve block, a simple kurti and a basic blouse, with a guide to salwar drafting. Then lay out and mark fabric along the grain, fix common fitting problems and keep a measurement record card for every client.

WHO IT IS FOR	Dress design and tailoring students
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LEVEL	Beginner to intermediate
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SUBJECT AREA	English, careers and vocational skills
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WHAT IS INSIDE	10 chapters, practice questions with answers, and a glossary
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HOW TO USE IT

Read one chapter at a time and try the examples as you go: on a computer, at your workbench or in your notebook. The boxes give tips, safety points and short activities. When you finish, test yourself with the practice questions and check your answers at the end. Words you may not know are explained in the glossary.



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Tools for measuring and drafting

Pattern drafting means drawing the shape of each garment piece on paper from a person's measurements. The paper shape is the **pattern**. You lay it on fabric, cut round it, and sew the pieces together. A good pattern makes a garment that fits the first time.

The basic toolkit

Tool	What it is for
Measuring tape	A soft tape, usually 150 cm long, marked in centimetres on one side and inches on the other. For body measurements and curves
L-scale	An L-shaped ruler, also called a tailor's square. It draws straight lines and right angles
French curve	A flat ruler with curved edges, for drawing armholes and necklines smoothly
Long ruler or metre scale	For long straight lines such as kurti length and side seams
Pattern paper	Brown paper or plain drafting sheets. Newspaper works for practice, but its ink can rub onto fabric
Tailor's chalk	A flat piece of chalk for marking fabric. Keep its edge sharp
Pencil and eraser	A sharp pencil for drafting; draw lightly first, then go over the final lines
Paper scissors	Keep a separate pair. Cutting paper blunts fabric shears
Tracing wheel	A small toothed wheel that transfers lines from pattern to fabric
Pins and tape	For holding patterns on fabric and joining sheets of paper

Centimetres and inches

Many tailors in India measure in inches, while most textbooks use centimetres. One inch is 2.54 cm. This book uses centimetres. Choose one system and use it for the whole garment: mixing them is a common cause of mistakes.

Two words you will use often

- **Squaring a line** means drawing a second line at exactly 90° to the first. Lay one arm of the L-scale along the first line and draw along the other arm.
- **Centre front** and **centre back** are the lines that run down the middle of the body. Most patterns are drafted as half the body, with the centre line placed on a fold of the fabric, so the two halves come out identical.

TIP

Store your tape rolled loosely, not folded tight or stretched. An old cloth tape stretches with use, so check it against your metal L-scale now and then.

REMEMBER

Draw every pattern with a grain line, a label (front, back, sleeve), the name of the person and how many pieces to cut. An unlabelled pattern piece is soon a useless piece of paper.

CHAPTER 2

Taking body measurements

Every pattern is only as good as the measurements behind it. Take them carefully and in a fixed order.

Before you start

1. The person should wear light, close-fitting clothes, and stand straight and relaxed, looking ahead, with weight on both feet.

2. Tie a narrow string or elastic round the natural waist, the narrowest part of the body. It marks the waist level for several measurements.
3. Hold the tape snug but not tight. You should just be able to slide one finger under it.
4. Keep the tape level for every round measurement. Check it in a mirror or ask a helper.
5. Write each number down at once. Do not trust your memory.

Round measurements

Measurement	How to take it
Bust	Round the fullest part of the bust, with the tape level across the back and under the arms
Under-bust	Round the body just below the bust, where a blouse ends
Waist	Round the natural waist, over the string
Hip	Round the fullest part of the hips and seat, usually about 18 to 23 cm below the waist
Neck round	Round the base of the neck
Armhole round	Round the arm where it joins the body: under the armpit and over the shoulder tip. Keep it a little loose
Upper arm	Round the fullest part of the upper arm
Wrist	Round the wrist bone

Length measurements

Measurement	How to take it
Shoulder	Across the back, from the tip of one shoulder bone to the other
Back length	From the nape , the knobby bone at the back of the neck, down to the waist string

Measurement	How to take it
Front length	From the shoulder-neck point , where shoulder and neck meet, over the bust to the waist
Shoulder to apex	From the shoulder-neck point to the apex , the fullest point of the bust
Apex to apex	Straight across, from one bust point to the other
Sleeve length	From the shoulder tip down to where the sleeve should end, with the arm slightly bent
Garment length	From the shoulder-neck point down the front to where the kurti or blouse should end
Waist to hip	Down the side, from the waist string to the hip line
Salwar length	Down the side, from the waist to the ankle

EXAMPLE

Here are Neha's measurements, which this book uses for every draft: bust 86, under-bust 72, waist 70, hip 94, neck round 34, armhole round 40, upper arm 27, wrist 15, shoulder 36, back length 38, front length 41, shoulder to apex 24, apex to apex 18, waist to hip 20, kurti length 100 and salwar length 98, all in cm.

TRY THIS

Measure a friend twice, a day apart, without looking at the first set of numbers. Compare them. Any measurement that differs by more than 1 cm needs more care.

The measurement chart and ease

The measurement chart is where you record a person's figures. Ease is what you add to them so the garment can be worn comfortably.

Body measurement or garment measurement?

A **body measurement** is the size of the body. A **garment measurement** is the size of the finished garment. The difference is **ease**: extra room for breathing, sitting, moving the arms and for the style itself. A blouse drafted to the exact bust measurement could not be put on, let alone worn.

How much ease?

Ease depends on the style, the fabric and the wearer's taste. These are typical starting points used by many tailors:

Measurement	Fitted blouse	Semi-fitted kurti	Loose kurta
Bust	4 cm	8 to 10 cm	12 to 16 cm
Waist	2 to 4 cm	8 to 10 cm	12 cm or more
Hip	not needed	8 to 10 cm	12 cm or more
Upper arm	3 to 4 cm	5 to 6 cm	6 to 8 cm

Stretchy fabrics need less ease; stiff fabrics such as brocade need a little more. Ask what the wearer likes: some prefer a close fit, others a relaxed one.

Quarter measurements

Most drafts are drawn as a quarter of the body: half the front or half the back. So a round measurement plus its ease is divided by four.

EXAMPLE

For a semi-fitted kurti, Neha's bust with ease is $86 + 8 = 94$ cm. Each quarter is $94 \div 4 = 23.5$ cm. The front and back half-patterns are both 23.5 cm wide at the bust line, from the centre line to the side seam.

Seam allowance

The draft shows the **stitching lines**. Before cutting, add **seam allowance** outside them. Common amounts are 1 cm at necklines and armholes, 1.5 cm at shoulders, 2 to 2.5 cm at side seams (so the garment can be let out later) and 3 to 4 cm at hems. Write the allowance on every pattern piece.

REMEMBER

Ease is inside the stitching line and makes the garment roomier. Seam allowance is outside it and disappears into the seam. Mixing the two up is how garments come out too tight.

CHAPTER 4

Drafting the basic bodice block

A **block** is a basic, close-fitting pattern made from one person's measurements, with no style added. Once you have a good block, you can trace it and change it to make many styles. The bodice block covers the body from shoulders to waist.

This chapter uses one common method, drafted on Neha's measurements with 8 cm bust ease and 4 cm waist ease. Your teacher's method may use slightly different figures. All methods aim at the same thing: a smooth, balanced fit.

The back

1. Near the left edge of the paper, draw a vertical line: the centre back. Mark A at the top. Square a line out to the right from A.
2. Mark B, 2 cm below A. This is the nape, and A to B is the back neck depth.

3. Mark C, 38 cm (back length) below B. This is the waist. Square out from C.
4. Mark D, 20 cm below A. This is the **armhole depth**, half the armhole round ($40 \div 2$). Square out: this is the bust line.
5. Back neck width: on the top line, mark E, 6 cm from A ($\text{neck round} \div 6$, about 5.7, rounded to 6). Draw a gentle curve from B to E.
6. Shoulder: on the top line, mark F, 18 cm from A (half the shoulder). Mark G, 2 cm below F. G is the shoulder tip. Join E to G.
7. Bust width: on the bust line, mark H, 23.5 cm from D ($(86 + 8) \div 4$).
8. Draw the armhole from G to H with the French curve: fairly straight at the top, curving more sharply into H.
9. Waist width: on the waist line, mark I, 21 cm from C. This is $(70 + 4) \div 4 = 18.5$ cm, plus 2.5 cm for a dart. Join H to I: the side seam.
10. Back dart: halfway between C and I, draw a dart 2.5 cm wide at the waist and about 15 cm high, so its point is about 5 cm below the bust line.

The front

1. Draw a vertical centre front line. Mark J at the top and square out.
2. Front neck depth: mark K, 8 cm below J.
3. Bust line: mark L, 20 cm below J, the same armhole depth as the back. Square out.
4. Front neck width: mark N on the top line, 6 cm from J, the same as the back so the shoulders match. Draw a deeper, rounder curve from K to N.
5. Shoulder: mark O, 18 cm from J, and P, 2 cm below O. Join N to P.
6. Bust width: mark Q on the bust line, 23.5 cm from L. Draw the armhole from P to Q, scooped a little deeper than the back.
7. Waist: the front waist sits lower at the centre, to give room over the bust. Mark M on the centre front, 42 cm below J (2 cm lower than the back waist). Mark the side waist point R level with the back waist (40 cm below the top line), 21.5 cm from the centre front: 18.5 cm plus a 3 cm dart. Join Q to R, and draw the waist line from R curving down to M.

8. Apex: mark X, 9 cm from the centre front (half the apex-to-apex measurement), and 24 cm from N (shoulder to apex).
9. Front dart: directly below X, draw a dart 3 cm wide at the waist, ending 2.5 cm below X.

Check before you trust it

- The front and back shoulder lines should be the same length.
- The front and back side seams should be the same length.
- Measure both armhole curves with the tape standing on its edge. Together they should come to about the armhole round, or 1 to 2 cm more.

TIP

Darts always point towards the fullest part of the body, but they stop short of it. A dart that runs right up to the bust point makes a sharp, pointed bulge.

CHAPTER 5

Drafting the sleeve block

A **sleeve block** is a basic set-in sleeve that fits the armhole of the bodice block. The rounded top is the **sleeve cap**.

Drafting on the fold

Fold the paper in half lengthwise. The fold is the centre line of the sleeve, running from the top of the cap down to the hem.

1. Mark S at the top of the fold. Square a line out from S.
2. **Cap height:** mark T on the fold, 12 cm below S. This is $\text{armhole round} \div 4 + 2$ cm ($40 \div 4 + 2 = 12$). Square a line out from T: this is the cap line.
3. Put the end of the tape at S and swing it down to the cap line until it reads **20 cm**, half the armhole round. Mark that point U. For Neha, U falls 16 cm

from T, so the sleeve is 32 cm wide at the cap line. Her upper arm is 27 cm, so this gives 5 cm of ease.

4. Join S to U with a light straight line. Divide it into four equal parts.
5. Draw the cap curve: about 1.5 cm **above** the line at the first quarter from S, crossing the line at the middle, and about 1 cm **below** it at the third quarter, then curving smoothly into U.
6. **Sleeve length:** mark V on the fold at the length you want from S: 15 cm for a short sleeve, 32 cm for elbow length, or 56 cm for a full sleeve.
7. **Hem width:** square out from V. Mark half the hem width: (arm round at that point + ease) $\div$ 2. For Neha's full sleeve, the wrist is 15 cm, and the hem must pass over the hand, so about 23 cm in all, or 11.5 cm on the fold.
8. Join U to the hem point with a straight or gently curved line: the underarm seam.

When you cut the paper and open it out, the curve is the same on both halves. Cut the **front** half of the cap about 0.5 to 1 cm deeper near the underarm, so it follows the front armhole, which is scooped more than the back.

Sleeve cap ease

The curved cap is slightly longer than the armhole it fits, often by 1 to 3 cm. This extra, called **cap ease**, is gently eased in when the sleeve is sewn, so the top of the sleeve sits smoothly over the round of the shoulder.

REMEMBER

The sleeve is drafted to fit the armhole, not just the arm. If you change the armhole, measure it again and redraft the sleeve.

TRY THIS

Draft a sleeve for a friend with a 44 cm armhole. Cap height = $44 \div 4 + 2 = 13$ cm, and the slant line = 22 cm. Check your drawing: the half-width at the cap line should come out at about 17.7 cm.

Drafting a simple kurti

A simple kurti is a straight, semi-fitted garment with side slits and set-in sleeves. In this method the front and back are drafted together on one folded sheet, because they are the same except at the neck and the armhole.

Measurements and ease

For Neha: kurti length 100, bust 86, waist 70, hip 94, shoulder 36, armhole 40, waist to hip 20. Ease: 8 cm at the bust and 10 cm at the waist and hip.

Line	Distance from the top	Width from the fold
Shoulder tip	2 cm	18 cm (half the shoulder)
Bust line	20 cm	23.5 cm $((86 + 8) \div 4)$
Waist line	40 cm	20 cm $((70 + 10) \div 4)$
Hip line	60 cm (20 cm below the waist)	26 cm $((94 + 10) \div 4)$
Hem	100 cm	28.5 cm (hip plus 2.5 cm flare)

Steps

1. Fold the paper lengthwise. The fold is the centre front and centre back. Mark the top at the fold.
2. Measure down the fold and square out each line in the table. Mark each width.
3. Neck width: 6 cm from the fold on the top line. Join it to the shoulder tip.
4. Draw the armhole from the shoulder tip to the bust line with the French curve.
5. Draw the side seam through the bust, waist, hip and hem points in one smooth curve, using a long ruler below the hip.
6. Mark the slit, starting at the hip line or a little below it.

7. Draw the back neck 2 to 3 cm deep. Trace the whole draft to make a separate front, then draw the front neck in the style chosen, for example a round neck 14 cm deep, and scoop the front armhole about 1 cm deeper.
8. Add seam allowances: 1.5 cm at the shoulders, 2 cm at the sides, 1 cm at the neck and armholes, and 4 cm at the hem.
9. Draft the sleeve from the sleeve block, using the kurti's armhole measurement.

How much fabric?

Lay the pattern pieces on a marked-out floor area the width of the fabric, or work it out on paper first.

EXAMPLE

Neha's fabric is 110 cm wide. Folded in half lengthwise, it is 55 cm wide, enough for one half-pattern up to 30.5 cm wide on the fold. Front and back each need 105.5 cm ($100 + 1.5 + 4$), so 211 cm together, one below the other. For the elbow sleeves she refolds the last part with both selvages meeting in the middle, making two folds, and needs about 36 cm more. Total: about 247 cm, so she buys 2.5 m.

TIP

A wide neckline leaves a narrow strip of shoulder. Keep at least 6 to 7 cm of shoulder seam on a kurti, or it may slip off the shoulders.

CHAPTER 7

Drafting a basic blouse

A **blouse** worn with a sari fits closely, so it needs darts and careful measurements. This chapter drafts a basic front-opening blouse from the bodice block. Styles such as the katori (cup) blouse and princess-line blouse are built on the same ideas with extra seams, and come later in your training.

What changes from the block

- **Less ease.** Use about 4 cm at the bust, so each quarter is $(86 + 4) \div 4 = 22.5$ cm.
- **Shorter length.** The blouse ends a little below the bust, not at the waist. Neha's back length is 35 cm from the top line, and the front 38 cm at the centre front.
- **The waist becomes the under-bust.** Neha's under-bust is 72 cm. With 2 cm ease, each quarter is $(72 + 2) \div 4 = 18.5$ cm, plus the dart.
- **Two darts in the front** shape the blouse over the bust.

The back

1. Trace the back block down to the blouse length.
2. Redraw the side seam: 22.5 cm at the bust line, and 18.5 cm plus a 2 cm dart at the lower edge.
3. Draw a dart 2 cm wide at the lower edge, halfway along it, pointing straight up and about 12 cm long.
4. Draw the back neck in the chosen style, for example 12 cm deep.

The front

1. Trace the front block to the blouse length, keeping the centre front lower than the side.
2. Redraw the side seam as for the back: 22.5 cm at the bust line, and 18.5 cm plus a 3 cm dart at the lower edge.
3. Mark the apex X as on the block.
4. **Waist dart:** directly below X, 3 cm wide at the lower edge, ending 2.5 cm below X.
5. **Side dart:** from the side seam, about 5 cm below the armhole, draw a dart 2 cm wide pointing at X and ending 2.5 cm short of it.
6. Lower the side point of the lower edge by 2 cm, the width of the side dart. When the dart is sewn, the front and back side seams match.

7. **Opening:** add 2.5 cm beyond the centre front for the hooks to overlap.
8. Draw the front neck in the chosen style, for example 15 cm deep.

The sleeve

Use the sleeve block with the blouse armhole. A short blouse sleeve usually ends just above the elbow or higher. Make the hem the upper arm round plus about 2 to 3 cm, so the arm can move.

SAFETY

Pins and needles slip when you fit a close garment on a person. Pin with the points facing away from the body, and warn the wearer before you put pins in.

DID YOU KNOW

Darts can be moved. A side dart and a waist dart can be combined into one, or moved to the shoulder or the neckline, without changing the fit. This idea, called **dart manipulation**, is how designers create many blouse styles from a single block.

CHAPTER 8

Drafting a simple salwar

A **salwar** is a loose trouser gathered at the waist with a drawstring, called a **nada** or **nara**, and narrowing to the ankle opening, called the **mohri**. Salwar methods vary widely from region to region and from tailor to tailor, so this chapter explains the parts, the measurements and the checks that every method shares. Your teacher will give you the proportions for their method.

The parts

Part	What it does
Leg pieces	The two main pieces, one for each leg, running from waist to ankle

Part	What it does
Kali	Long side panels, often triangular, that add fullness to the legs
Crotch shaping	Where the two legs join between them. Some methods use a separate square or triangular piece for this
Waist casing	A folded channel at the top for the nada
Mohri	The finished ankle opening, often faced or bound

Measurements you need

- **Salwar length**, from waist to ankle at the side.
- **Hip**, so you can check the waist edge will pass over it.
- **Crotch depth**: sit on a hard, flat chair and measure down the side from the waist string to the seat. A salwar hangs low, so its crotch is always deeper than this.
- **Mohri round**, chosen by style and checked against the foot.

Allowances

To the finished length, add about 4 cm at the top for the casing and 3 cm at the bottom for the mohri hem. So for Neha's salwar length of 98 cm, each leg piece is cut $98 + 4 + 3 = 105$ cm long.

Checks before you cut fabric

1. **Top edge**. Add up the widths of all the pieces along the top edge, without seam allowances. The total must be well over the hip measurement, because the drawstring gathers it and it has to pass over the hips. Neha's hip is 94 cm; a salwar's top edge is often far wider.
2. **Crotch depth**. The draft's crotch depth must be more than the body's, plus generous ease.

3. **Mohri.** The finished opening must pass over the foot and heel comfortably. Test it by slipping a loop of tape of that size over the foot.
4. **Matching seams.** Every pair of edges that will be joined must be the same length, or one must be meant to be eased.

TRY THIS

Make a half-scale salwar from newspaper first, using half of every measurement. Tape it together. You will see how the kali and the crotch shaping fit before you cut any fabric.

REMEMBER

A salwar is a loose garment, so a small error in width hardly shows. Length and crotch depth matter much more. Check them twice.

CHAPTER 9

Cutting layout, grain line and marking

A perfect draft is wasted if it is placed on the fabric crookedly. This chapter covers how to lay out, cut and mark.

Grain

Woven fabric is made of two sets of threads. The **lengthwise grain** runs parallel to the **selvedge**, the firm, finished edge along each side of the fabric. It is the strongest direction and stretches least. The **crosswise grain** runs from selvedge to selvedge and stretches slightly more. The **bias**, at 45°, stretches the most.

Most garment pieces are cut with their length along the lengthwise grain, so they hang straight. Each pattern piece carries a **grain line** arrow to show this.

Laying out

1. **Prepare the fabric.** Wash cotton first, because it may shrink. Iron it flat.
2. **Fold it** as the layout needs, usually in half lengthwise with the right sides inside and the selvages together.
3. **Place large pieces first**, with pieces marked "place on fold" exactly against the fold.
4. **Line up each grain arrow:** measure from each end of the arrow to the selvedge. Both distances must be equal.
5. **Check one-way fabrics.** On a print with a top and bottom, such as flowers growing upwards, and on velvet, which looks different in each direction, all pieces must point the same way.
6. **Pin** the pattern every 10 to 15 cm, pins inside the edges.

Cutting

Keep the fabric flat on the table. Cut with long, smooth strokes of sharp shears, keeping the lower blade on the table. Walk round the table instead of lifting the fabric.

SAFETY

Sharp shears are dangerous. Carry them closed, with the points down, and never leave them open on the table. Younger students should cut with an adult beside them.

Marking

Before you unpin the pattern, transfer the important marks to the fabric:

- **Tailor's chalk** along stitching lines on the wrong side.
- **Tracing wheel** with dressmaker's carbon paper for lines on both layers. Test it on a scrap first, as some carbon does not wash out.

- **Tailor's tacks:** loose loops of thread through both layers at dart points and pocket positions. Cut the threads between the layers so each piece keeps a tuft.
- **Notches:** small marks or V-shaped cuts in the seam allowance that show which edges join, such as the centre of a sleeve cap and the shoulder seam.

EXAMPLE

Kavita in Kanpur forgot to notch the centre of her sleeve caps. When she set the sleeves in, she could not tell where the shoulder seam should meet them, and one sleeve twisted. Now she notches every cap before unpinning.

CHAPTER 10

Fitting adjustments and the record card

Even a careful draft needs fitting, because bodies differ in ways a tape does not show: sloping or square shoulders, a forward neck, a high bust.

The trial garment

For a new client or a new style, first make a **trial garment**, also called a **toile**, in cheap cotton or old sheeting. Tack the seams with long stitches. Fit it on the person, pin the changes, and transfer them to the pattern. Then cut the real fabric.

Common problems and fixes

What you see	Likely cause	What to do
Pulls across the bust; side seams strain	Too little ease	Let out the side seams; add ease to the pattern
Loose fabric gaping at the front armhole	Armhole too deep, or too much width above the bust	Pin out the extra at the shoulder or with a small dart

What you see	Likely cause	What to do
Armhole cuts in under the arm	Armhole too high or small	Scoop it lower, 0.5 cm at a time
Shoulder seam falls past the shoulder tip	Shoulder too wide	Move the shoulder tip in
Diagonal wrinkles pointing to the bust	Dart in the wrong place, or too long	Re-mark the dart to point at the true apex, ending 2.5 cm short of it
Kurti pulls at the hips; slits gape open	Hip too tight	Let out the side seams at the hip
Hem higher on one side	Uneven posture or uneven cutting	Mark a level hem with a ruler from the floor
Sleeve tight at the upper arm	Not enough ease	Let out the underarm seam; widen the cap next time

REMEMBER

Correct the pattern as well as the garment. Otherwise you will make the same fix again next time.

The record card

Keep a card for every person you sew for, with their measurements and what you learnt at each fitting.

Item	Example entry
Name and phone	Neha Verma, with her mobile number
Date measured	12 July
Measurements	Bust 86, under-bust 72, waist 70, hip 94, shoulder 36, armhole 40...
Garment and style	Kurti, round neck 14 cm, elbow sleeves, side slits

Item	Example entry
Fabric	Printed cotton, 2.5 m, 110 cm wide, pre-washed
Fitting notes	Shoulder tip moved in 0.5 cm; armhole scooped 0.5 cm
Trial and delivery dates	Trial 20 July; delivery 24 July
Charges and advance	! ____ total; ! ____ advance received

Measure again after a few months, or whenever the client says a garment feels different. Write the new figures on the same card with the date, so you can see what changed.

TIP

Keep each client's pattern pieces in a large envelope with the record card. Next time, you can cut straight from them after checking a few key measurements.

CHECK YOURSELF

Practice questions

1. What is the difference between a block and a pattern for a particular style?
2. What is an L-scale used for?
3. Why should you not mix inches and centimetres in one garment?
4. Why do you tie a string round the waist before measuring?
5. How tight should the tape be for round measurements?
6. Where is the nape, and which measurement starts from it?
7. What is ease, and why is it needed?

- 8.** How much bust ease would you add for a fitted blouse and for a loose kurta?
- 9.** Neha's hip is 94 cm and you add 10 cm ease. What is the quarter hip measurement?
- 10.** What is the difference between ease and seam allowance?
- 11.** How is the armhole depth worked out in this book's bodice block?
- 12.** Why does the front waist sit lower at the centre front than the back waist?
- 13.** Where should a dart end, and why?
- 14.** How is the width of the sleeve found at the cap line?
- 15.** What is cap ease?
- 16.** Why is the front armhole scooped deeper than the back?
- 17.** Why is the front side seam of the blouse lowered by the width of the side dart?
- 18.** Name the parts of a salwar.
- 19.** What must be true of the total top edge of a salwar, and why?
- 20.** What is the lengthwise grain, and why are most pieces cut along it?
- 21.** How do you check that a pattern piece is on the grain?
- 22.** What are notches for?
- 23.** What is a toile?
- 24.** A shoulder seam falls past the shoulder tip. What is the fix?

Answers

1. A block is a basic, close-fitting pattern with no style added; a style pattern is made by tracing the block and changing it.
2. For drawing straight lines and right angles (squaring lines), and for measuring.
3. Because a mix-up between the two systems is a common cause of serious mistakes.
4. It marks the natural waist, which several length measurements start or end at.
5. Snug but not tight: you should just be able to slide one finger under it.
6. The knobbly bone at the back of the neck. The back length is measured from it to the waist.
7. Ease is extra room added to body measurements for breathing, moving and style. Without it a garment could not be worn.
8. About 4 cm for a fitted blouse; about 12 to 16 cm for a loose kurta.
9. $(94 + 10) \div 4 = 26$ cm.
10. Ease is added inside the stitching line to make the garment roomier; seam allowance is added outside it and goes into the seam.
11. Half the armhole round: $40 \div 2 = 20$ cm, measured down from the top line.
12. To give extra length over the bust, so the garment does not ride up at the front.
13. A little short of the fullest point it shapes (about 2.5 cm from the bust point), so it does not make a sharp, pointed bulge.
14. Swing a line from the top of the cap to the cap line, with a length of half the armhole round, and mark where it meets the cap line.
15. The small amount by which the sleeve cap is longer than the armhole, eased in so the sleeve sits smoothly over the shoulder.
16. Because the front of the body curves forward more at the armhole, so the front armhole is scooped more.
17. So that, once the side dart is sewn, the front side seam is the same length as the back.

18. Leg pieces, kalis, crotch shaping (sometimes a separate piece), waist casing and mohri.
19. It must be well over the hip measurement, because the drawstring gathers it and it has to pass over the hips.
20. The direction parallel to the selvedge. It is strongest and stretches least, so the garment hangs straight.
21. Measure from each end of the grain line arrow to the selvedge; both distances must be equal.
22. They show which edges join and where, such as the centre of a sleeve cap meeting the shoulder seam.
23. A trial garment in cheap fabric, used to check and correct the fit before cutting the real fabric.
24. Move the shoulder tip inwards, on the garment and on the pattern.

WORD LIST

Glossary

Pattern drafting

drawing garment pieces on paper from a person's measurements.

Block

a basic, close-fitting pattern with no style added, used as the base for other styles.

L-scale

an L-shaped ruler for drawing straight lines and right angles; a tailor's square.

French curve

a curved ruler for drawing smooth armholes and necklines.

Squaring a line

drawing a line at exactly 90° to another.

Nape

the knobbly bone at the back of the neck.

Shoulder-neck point

the point where the shoulder meets the neck.

Apex

the fullest point of the bust, also called the bust point.

Ease

extra room added to body measurements for comfort and style.

Seam allowance

fabric added outside the stitching line for the seam.

Armhole depth

the distance from the top line of the draft down to the bust line.

Dart

a stitched, tapering fold that shapes flat fabric to the curves of the body.

Sleeve cap

the rounded top of a set-in sleeve.

Cap ease

the small extra length of a sleeve cap, eased into the armhole.

Kali

a long, narrow panel that adds fullness to a salwar or kurta.

Mohri

the ankle opening of a salwar or churidar.

Nada

the drawstring that gathers a salwar at the waist.

Selvedge

the firm, finished edge along each side of a fabric.

Grain line

the arrow on a pattern that must run parallel to the selvedge.

Bias

the direction at 45° to the threads, where woven fabric stretches most.

Notch

a small mark or cut that shows where two pieces join.

Tailor's tack

a loose loop of thread used to mark a point on two layers of fabric.

Toile

a trial garment made in cheap fabric to test the fit.



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