

# McCall's SEWING BOOK



A Random House Book

FEATURING

**NEW  
Sizing**

A COMPLETELY REVISED GUIDE TO:  
DRESSMAKING × TAILORING × MENDING × EMBROIDERING × HOME DECORATING







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**McCall's**  
**SEWING BOOK**





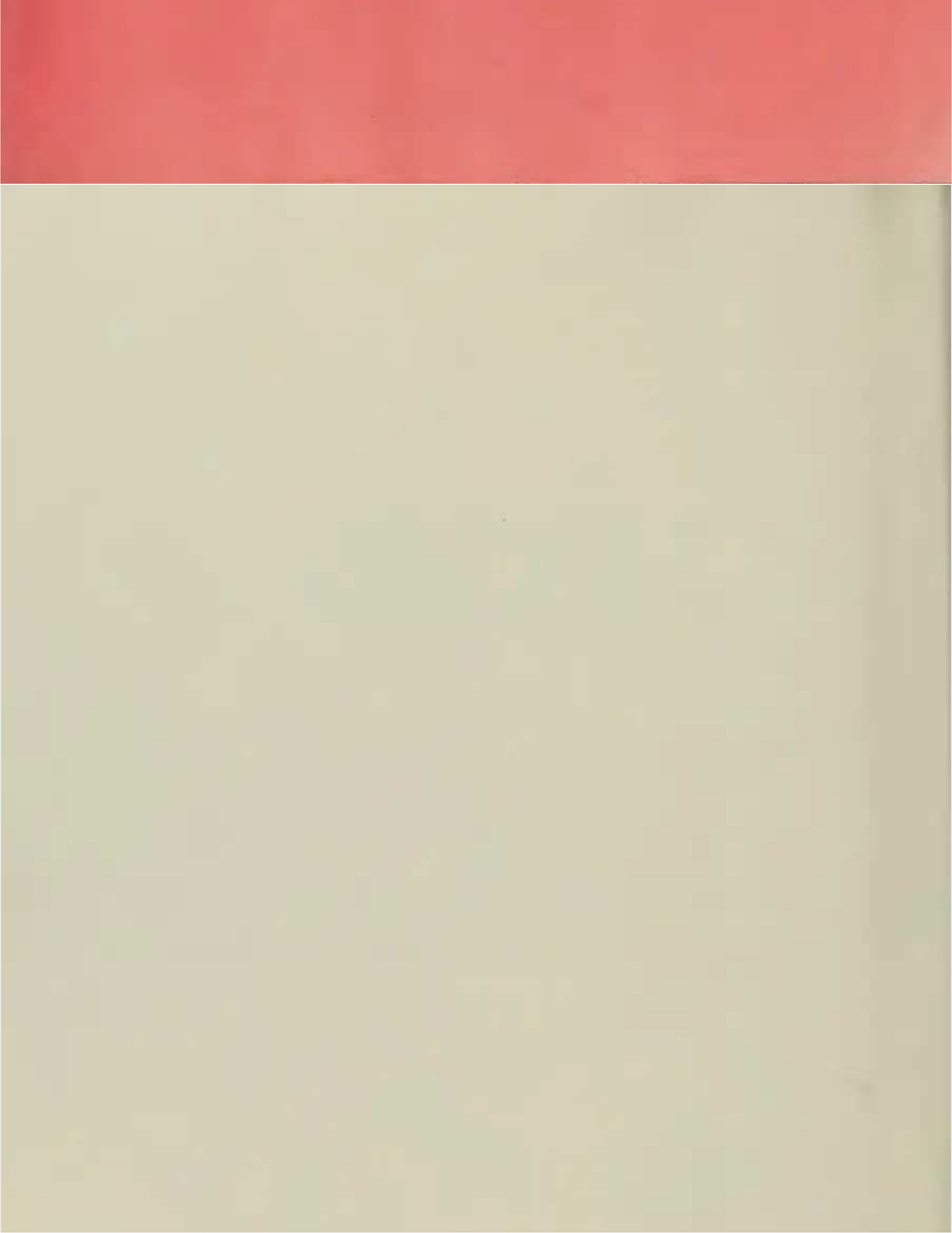
# McCall's

## SEWING BOOK

Random House

McCall's







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## INTRODUCTION

This is a book for the woman who sews—and for the woman who wants to. It explores the art of sewing in all its facets to show you how to transform a piece of fabric into a lovely gown, how to change a dowdy appearance into an attractive, individual one. For just knowing how to sew is not enough. You must know how to select the right pattern for your figure, your personality, your way of life, and then fit it and finish it to give the clothes you make the smart look of good ready-to-wear ones.

This book has been planned to help you do just that. It takes you step by step through the selection of a becoming and appropriate style, the choice of a flattering fabric, and then into construction. Beginning sewers will find outlined the simple construction methods that will let the merest novice turn out a professional-looking garment. And more experienced sewers will welcome details on advanced construction techniques, as well as the fact-filled chapters on tailoring and home decoration.

Even the woman who seldom sews will find helpful the information on how to choose the most becoming styles, the instructions for mending and remodeling, the wealth of data on selection and care of fabrics valuable, not only for home sewing, but in choosing ready-mades as well.

Sewing can be fun, and easy to do if you take it one detail at a time. You can make it a pleasant, satisfying hobby with the added and long-lasting enjoyment of being able to wear the results of your creativity with pride.



## CHAPTER 1

# BUILDING A NEW YOU

## YOUR GOAL— FASHION PERFECTION

The look of fashion is an intangible thing, difficult to analyze, but easier than you think to achieve. There are several ways to earn a place in the list of "best-dressed" women in your town. You can put yourself in the hands of a top couturier and expect for the price you pay to get dresses made just for you, properly fitted, in the right size, in styles which are most becoming to your face and figure, and in colors and fabrics which are flattering. Or, if you are one of the lucky few who is a "perfect" size 10, 12 or 14, you can find, if you search diligently, ready-made garments that you can wear right off the rack.

Realistically, of course, few women have the money it takes to be a full-time patron of the *haute couture*. Even fewer are so perfectly proportioned that any ready-to-wear garment will fit perfectly without some adjustment to individual measurements. They are subject, too, to the curse of mass production—thousands of copies of their dress—any of which is just waiting to be met at a party, a PTA meeting or at the home of a friend.

Thousands of women are finding that there is a

## Personal Analysis

Like the beauty of a work of art, which is dependent upon an artist's ability to create pleasing line composition and use color attractively, fashion perfection is also achieved by correct application of line and color. However, in the case of a fashion design, you are the canvas. And you are a great deal more complex than a flat cloth surface. So the first step in creating the appearance you want is to analyze yourself and decide exactly how you want to look.

Because it is difficult to see oneself as one really is, don't rely on a mirror. A snapshot or two (one full-face, the other side view), preferably in a bathing suit, will give you a better answer. Flaws never seem quite so realistic in a mirror as they do in a picture. And don't be disheartened. Once you know what's wrong, there's a great deal you can do to correct it.

**FIGURE CHECK.** First study the general effect you present to the world. Are you short or tall, fat or thin, average in weight and height? How is your posture? Are your shoulders squared and straight, or do they have a tired droop? How about your tummy? Is it flat and tucked in? Is your head held confidently high? Is your waistline clearly defined? Are you well proportioned, or do you bulge in the wrong places? Are you tall enough for your width?

practical answer to their desire for clothes that look right, fit right and have the touch of individuality that a ready-made can never give them. They are becoming their own couturiers, are making their own clothes and at a fraction of what even ready-to-wear would cost. Like them, you too can always be sure of having the right dress in the right color. You can free yourself from the whims of manufacturers, from the dictates of fashion whose current decrees may not be the most becoming styles or hues for you. You can create a new you with a wardrobe tailored to fit *your* specifications.

Your body measurements can also be revealing, so make a record of them. Measure around chest, bust, waist, abdomen, upper hip, lower hip, thigh, knee, calf, ankle, upper arm and wrist. And measure your height accurately, without shoes and with the height heel you normally wear. Because the appearance of clothes is improved when placed on a well-proportioned figure, now's the time to begin correcting any irregularities. But whether you try to change your proportions or not, measurements have a disconcerting habit of changing, so keep your record up to date.

## BUILDING A NEW YOU / THE EFFECT OF LINE

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**FACIAL CHECK.** Push back your hair and look into the mirror. The ideal facial shape is an oval. Decide whether your face is oval, round, oblong, square or triangular. By choosing the correct neckline you can often make the shape of the face seem to change.

**COLOR CHECK.** Decide which colors are most flattering to your skin, hair and eye colors. Drape fabrics of different colors over your shoulders and see which bring out the highlights in your hair, emphasize the color of your eyes, make your skin look its glowing best. These are the colors you should stress in your wardrobe planning.

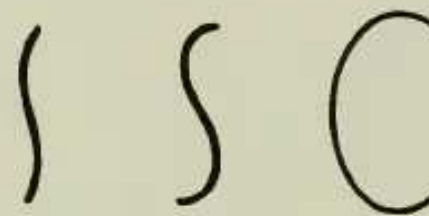
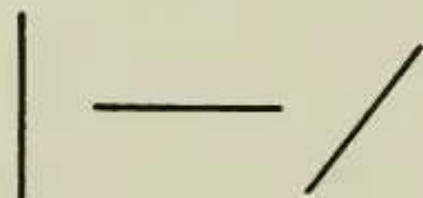
### THE EFFECT OF LINE

Since line is a major factor in developing a pleasing appearance, line and the things you can do with it deserve first place in your choice of a style. The total appearance you present to the world contains a profusion of line—not only in the clothes you wear, but in the contours of your face and figure. Notice how lines define the basic body outline, how they separate the form into various areas. Necklines, sleeve lines, waistlines and hemlines act as dividers which form shapes and spaces. They make the design interesting and pleasing to the eye. If the direction and spacing of each line is not carefully plotted, the result can be one of confusion.



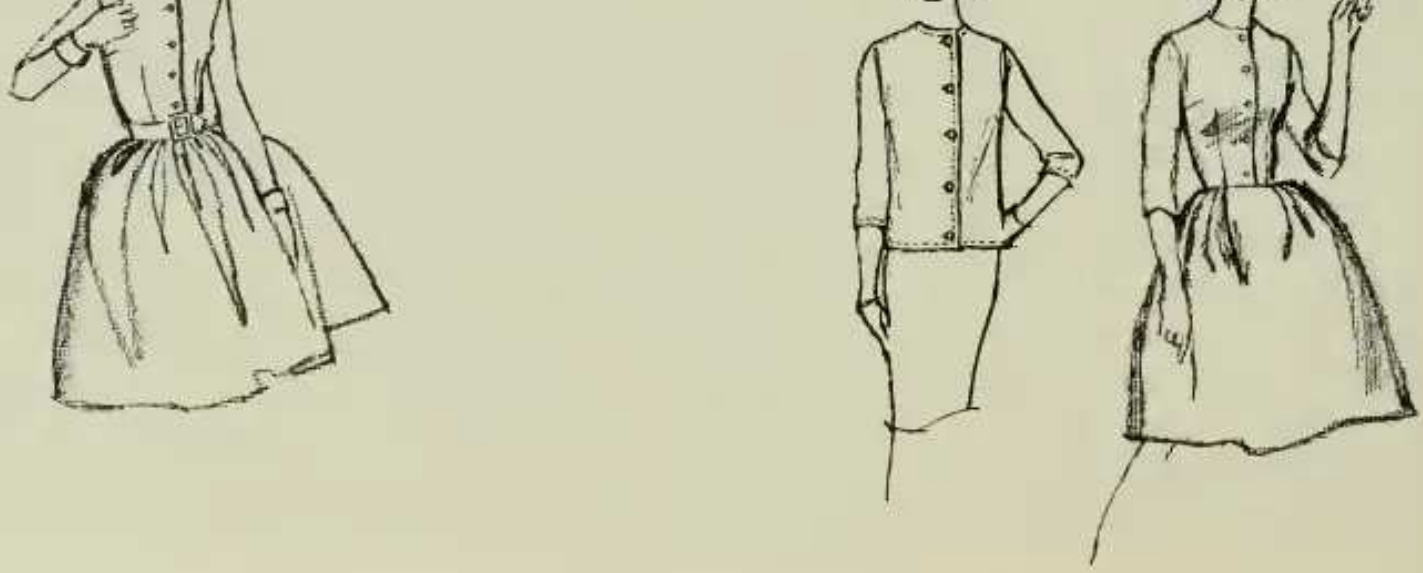
### Line Analysis

In order to use line correctly, it is important to understand that lines have both functional and emotional significance. Although there are only two types of line, straight and curved, they offer infinite variety. Straight lines may follow a vertical, horizontal or diagonal direction; they can be continuous or broken and combined into angles. Curved lines can be round as a full moon or flattened until they appear almost straight. No matter what form a line takes, it has an inherent power to create strong impressions.



**STRAIGHT LINES.** The straight line seems stiff and unrelenting to the point of seriousness or sternness. However, the direction it takes can influence the mood of a design. Vertical lines give a feeling of dignity and sophistication, while horizontal lines are calm and gentle. Diagonal lines are a satisfying combination of both. They modify the vertical qualities of dignity and sophistication to give a more relaxed feeling.





## BUILDING A NEW YOU / THE EFFECT OF LINE

**CURVED LINES.** The curved line, on the other hand, creates an entirely different mood, and is considered to be more graceful than a straight line. However, curved lines must be controlled if they are to be completely lovely. A full circle can become monotonous. The most graceful curved line is one which takes a diagonal direction. Curved lines can be merry half moons, large luxurious graceful curves, or gay little restless round circles.

**DOMINANT LINES.** When several lines appear simultaneously, as they do in most dress designs, the eye will follow the strongest line. It is this reaction that makes it possible to emphasize figure assets and minimize faults by attracting the eye to a certain area. If you can keep attention focused on a pretty face, a badly proportioned figure may go unnoticed.



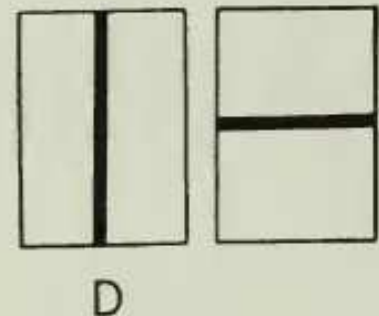
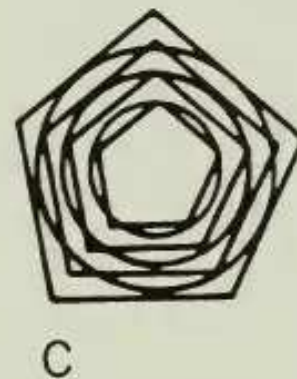
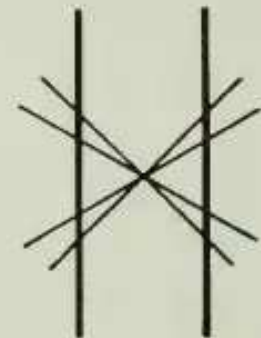
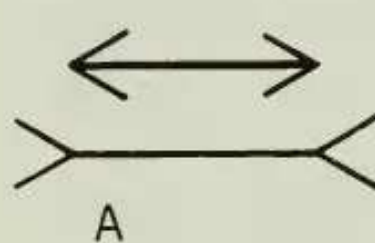
The drawings shown here illustrate various dominant line patterns. Notice the strong horizontal line in each case. A large collar draws attention to a pretty face; pockets and waistline interest emphasize a tiny waist, and a decorative motif attracts the eye to lovely legs.

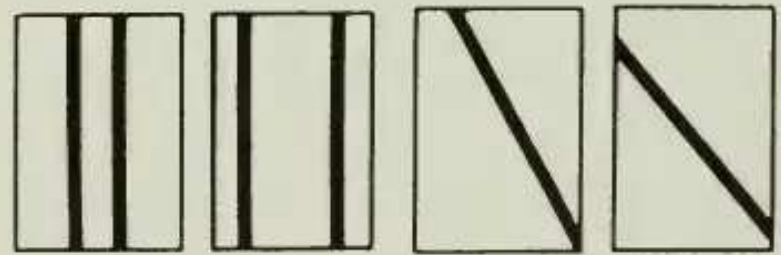


appearance. To do so, it's important to understand optical illusion and understand how this magic can be put to work to produce the kind of effect you want. Here are some simple examples:

Take the first group of lines, *A*. You can see immediately that one looks longer than the other although, when you measure them, they are identical in length. Now notice how the vertical lines in *B* seem to curve. Actually, they are straight. And while the circles superimposed on the pentagon *C* may seem to flatten out, they are really perfectly round.

Now look at the rectangles in *D*. Certainly the one divided by the vertical line looks narrower than the one divided by the horizontal line, yet they are identical. The rectangle in *E* with the narrow panel appears much narrower than the one with the wide panel; they too are alike. As a final example, in *F*, the rectangle divided by a diagonal which starts at the top line looks narrower than the same rectangle with a diagonal which starts at the side.





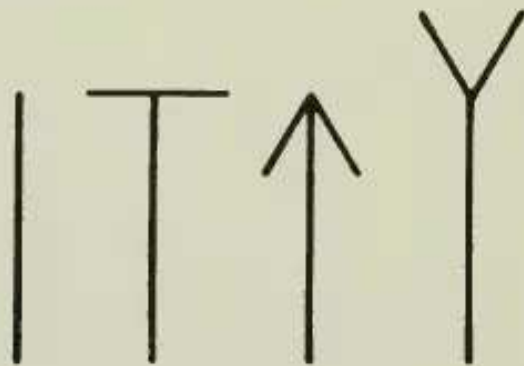
### Tricks with Line

Sometimes it is hard to believe that your eyes don't always tell the truth, but because they don't, you can employ fallacies of vision to create a more attractive

You may wonder how these geometric shapes can apply to dress design. By applying these same principles to your clothes, you can make yourself look taller and thinner, or shorter and wider.

## BUILDING A NEW YOU / THE EFFECT OF LINE

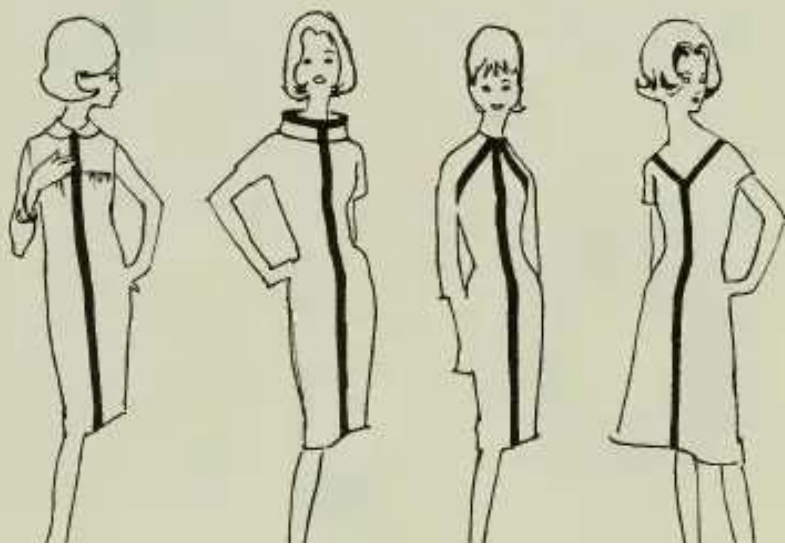
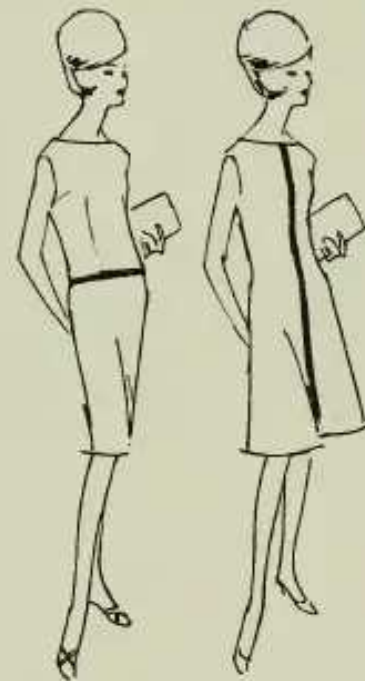
Notice how the diagrams shown here illustrate this.



In the first line, there is no opposing force. Therefore the eye continues upward to the end of the line, and an illusion of height is created. Going up the second line, the eye meets the opposing horizontal and starts to travel from side to side, making the vertical line seem shorter. In the third line, the eye is forced downward by the diagonal lines and so this line seems even shorter than the second; in the fourth line, the diagonal lines carry the eye upward so that the vertical line seems even longer than it did in the first diagram.

### Tricks with Space

Line is not the only factor to use in creating illusions. Spaces can play tricks too. The manner in which a design is divided into areas by lines influences the appearance. Remember how much wider the rectangle looked when it was divided by a horizontal line? In



dress design the same principle can be followed. A straight hip-length jacket presents the same illusion as the rectangle divided by a horizontal. Conversely, a simple sheath dress with a straight front closing can create the same effect as the rectangle divided by a vertical line. In dividing an area into smaller sections, the reaction of the eye must always be considered. For instance, study again the rectangles divided into panels. The narrow center panel makes the rectangle appear



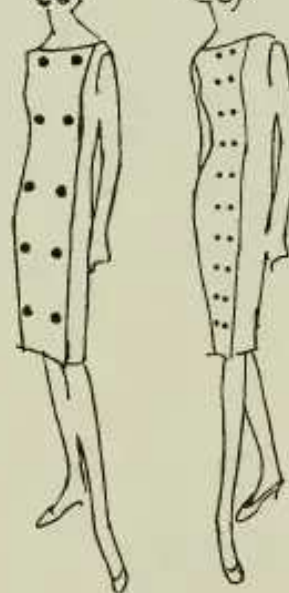




By analyzing line direction in the design when you select a pattern, you can often achieve the effect you wish.

Remember: lines which carry the eye in a vertical direction will make you look taller; those which move in a horizontal direction will give an effect of width; while those that travel diagonally will create an effect of tallness or wideness depending on whether their emphasis is vertical or horizontal.

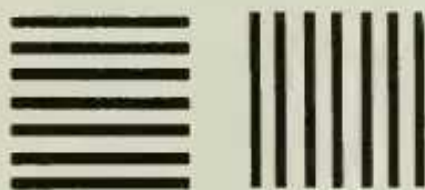
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## BUILDING A NEW YOU / THE EFFECT OF LINE

narrower because the eye travels upward between the lines with little attention to the rest of the design. When the wider panel is used, however, the eye moves back and forth between the lines giving an impression of width.

Thus, although the general principle of line is that verticals make an object appear taller while horizontal lines widen, there is always the exception that proves the rule. A reverse effect may occur when pleats, tucks or striped fabrics are used. Notice in this drawing how



much wider the vertical lines make the area look than the horizontal lines do. This is due to the spacing between the stripes, so in planning an arrangement which gives a striped effect, it is important to study the reaction of the eye so that the effect is the one you want to achieve.

### Vertical Illusions

One of the best ways to produce a tall slender illusion is to use the tubular silhouette, unbroken by horizontal lines. A straight princess-line sheath is an excellent example of this line. The garment should fit the figure gently, being neither too tight nor too loose. A narrow center panel, often seen in a princess-line dress, will add height if it is correctly proportioned to the figure. The long lines of surplice openings and full-length coats, or a short bolero jacket with the corresponding long line of a straight skirt, will emphasize the tall



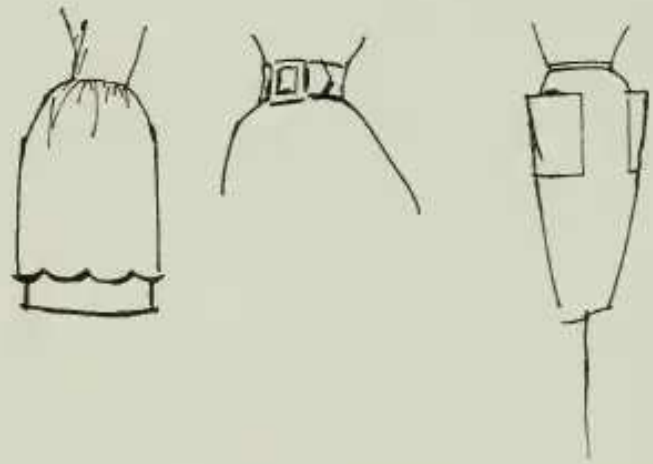
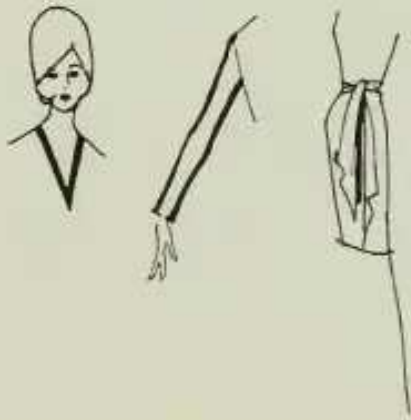
illusion. Tuxedo collars which extend the entire length of a coat can produce the same effect.

If you wish to make your face and throat appear more slender, wear a V-line at the neck. The U-line, particularly a deep U, can produce this effect too, but it will be less pronounced than the V-line. Fairly narrow collars that produce a V-shape, or a coat collar worn open at the throat and high at the back of the neck will keep the eye moving upward and add length to the face.

Your choice of accessories, too, can help to maintain a vertical illusion. Scarves and hats can add to the upward look. Belts should be narrow with unobtrusive closings and in the same fabric as the dress so that the eye will not be stopped in its vertical movement.

### Horizontal Illusions

Generally the bouffant or bell-shaped silhouette will produce a horizontal illusion. However, the impression it creates will depend on the width of the skirt. Wide



or full sleeves, or sleeves with cuffs that end at the bustline or hipline will carry the eye across the figure,

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## BUILDING A NEW YOU / THE EFFECT OF FABRIC DESIGNS

making it seem wider especially at that spot. Pockets can produce the same effect. Wide belts make the waistline seem broader, and suits, two-piece dresses, short capes, or short jackets which cut the figure in half, or three-quarter-length coats will tend to shorten the figure. Tunics and peplums, particularly if they flare, will have the same effect.

In order to make a thin face seem broader, round, bateau and square necklines can add width. High, close necklines, and round collars such as a Peter Pan, can



create the same illusion of width. Collars with wide revers extending almost to the armhole with the points falling below the shoulder line, or a scarf tied so that the ends extend horizontally will also keep the eye moving from side to side.

## THE EFFECT OF FABRIC DESIGNS

The optical illusions that are accomplished by proper use of line can often be achieved or heightened through the use of patterned fabrics such as stripes or prints. These effects may often be more difficult to accomplish than the ones in which you depend upon line alone, but the figure flattery you can achieve may be well worth the effort.



If this is hard to believe, notice how the different arrangements of lines shown here seem to create varying illusions. In *A* the vertical lines do keep the eye moving upward, creating a feeling of height, but in *B*

## Tricks with Stripes

Stripes are a perennial favorite, and variations in widths, colors and arrangement give them a new look each year. Not only do stripes produce interesting effects, they can also create flattering illusions. Usually stripes running in a vertical direction will make a person look taller and thinner, but this is not a hard-and-fast rule. There are times when stripes can make the figure appear much wider. The same principle holds true when using stripes horizontally. Although usually stripes moving from side to side make the figure seem stouter and shorter, it is also possible for this direction to make the figure look taller. It all depends on how your eye reacts to the width of the stripes and the distance between them.

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the vertical lines carry the eye from side to side, increasing the apparent width of the area. If you can't quite believe what your eyes are telling you, measure each of the areas to be sure. When the spaces between the stripes are proportioned so that the eye moves easily from one line to the other without stopping, a sideways illusion is created.

Using stripes in a diagonal direction can also create optical illusions. Notice how the diagonals converging at one spot can make two parallel lines seem to bulge.

Therefore, it's very important to analyze a striped fabric before you buy it. Always keep your dress pattern in mind and visualize the direction the stripes will take. Will this have the effect on your figure you desire? Usually, a simple design will give the most pleasing results.

## BUILDING A NEW YOU / THE EFFECTS OF FABRIC

### Tricks with Prints

Like stripes, prints also can be used to create desirable effects. However, you should remember that prints



usually make the figure look larger than a plain fabric in the same color. Usually designs of medium size with close color contrasts will prove the most flattering to any figure type. Light and bright colors, sharp contrasts and large motifs will tend to increase the apparent size of the wearer; while darker, blurred, all-over patterns will act to decrease size.

Motifs arranged to give a vertical movement to the design seem to add height. When this kind of design is made up of colors that are close in value and the motifs are closely spaced, the print will be flattering to a short figure. Widely spaced, sharply contrasted motifs will call attention to the wearer's size even though the background may be subdued. Circular motifs give an illusion of roundness and will have

Border prints used at the hemline will have a tendency to attract the eye, particularly if the border is dark and wide. Such a border is ideal if you wish to call attention to pretty legs. However, the strong horizontal illusion makes it impossible to create a feeling of height at the same time, so this type of print is more becoming on a tall slender figure than a short one.

There is one way to create a lengthening effect with a border print, and that is to use it as the central panel running up and down the dress. Thus the panel creates a path for the eye to follow. This is most successful if the border is a narrow one.

## THE EFFECTS OF FABRIC

Fabrics, like lines, can also influence your apparent size. Often a person can select just the right style and lines for figure flattery and then ruin the effect by selecting the wrong fabric. Whether a fabric reflects or absorbs light, is rough or smooth, stiff or clinging will account to some degree for its effect on your appearance.

### Light Reflection

Shiny fabrics which reflect a great deal of light will

motifs give an illusion of roundness and will have a flattering effect if you are thin.



Shiny fabrics which reflect a great deal of light will make the figure appear larger, while dull surfaces will tend to minimize size. The illusion created is the same as when an object is placed in a bright clear light, then in a dim diffused light. Naturally, the more light it receives and reflects, the larger the body appears. So, the heavy person who selects a design with long, tall vertical lines and then makes the dress in a very shiny satin is defeating her own purpose. She may wonder why she looks so large, yet if she had used a dull silk broadcloth, the gown would have been just as dressy and vastly more flattering.

Some fabrics both reflect and absorb light. Velvet is a good example of this type in which the pile catches light and also casts shadows. As long as the fabric is not a bulky one, it will not noticeably affect the apparent size of the figure.

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## BUILDING A NEW YOU / THE EFFECT OF COLOR

### Rough and Smooth Textures

Rough-textured fabrics tend to appear bulkier than they are, and will increase the size of the figure in proportion to their roughness and bulkiness. Naturally, a pebbly crepe will not noticeably add pounds, but a very rough, nubby wool tweed may have a decided effect. Smooth textures will not affect the appearance of the figure as long as they are not shiny.



**Stiff Textures**



### Transparent Textures

Although see-through materials can often be draped in soft, graceful folds, they also reveal the outline of the figure. It is not wise to use transparent fabric if you wish to hide extra folds of flesh or a too thin bony structure.

## THE EFFECT OF COLOR

Lines and textures do not offer the only "bag of tricks"

Stiff materials tend to conceal the outline of the figure because they do not follow it. However, although they can hide some figure faults, they usually make the body seem somewhat larger. For example, a person with heavy hips, but with a waistline and bustline in proportion to her height, could wear a stiff fabric to advantage, whereas a person who is heavy all over should avoid it.

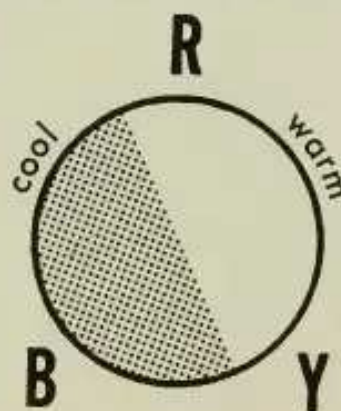
### Clinging Textures

Fabrics of this type have a double personality. When used for straight, tubular designs, clinging materials outline the figure so completely that they often make it seem larger or thinner than it actually is. However, when they are draped into soft silhouettes, they can be very flattering.

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Lines and textures do not offer the only bag of tricks at your disposal for creating optical illusions and enhancing the effects you wish to achieve. Colors can produce illusions, too.

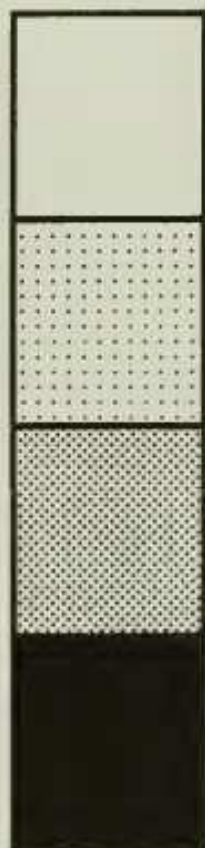
Although there are hundreds and hundreds of different hues, they all come from three basic colors—red, yellow and blue—which are called primary colors. When two primary colors are combined in equal parts,



## BUILDING A NEW YOU / THE EFFECT OF COLOR

secondary colors—orange, green and purple—are created. This type of combination can continue indefinitely to give us the infinite variety of colors we see all around us.

Colors may vary in other ways, too. Depending upon whether they are mixed with white or black, they have qualities of lightness and darkness which are known as



*values*. Colors also have brightness or dullness, which is described as their *intensity*. All of these factors can affect the way your eye will react to a color, so it is

object seem farther away and of course smaller. However, value and intensity also influence the size, so you cannot say that every red dress will make you look larger than every blue dress. A bright crimson may increase size, but dark, grayed red will probably not affect the size of your figure at all. A good way to test this is to look at your feet in white and in black shoes; in shiny patent leather and in suede.

### Facial Flattery

Tones of the skin, hair and eyes vary so widely that it is impossible to give definite rules for color selection that will be flattering to everyone. Probably the best results are obtained by actually testing colors against your face, to find out which hues give the best effect with your individual combination of skin, hair and eyes.

Generally, the skin is considered first when selecting a color for a costume. Skin tones are composed of varying amounts of red and yellow, and naturally you will want to subdue any predominance of either of these tones. By remembering that color will be emphasized both by repetition and contrast, you will avoid using complementary colors such as green if your skin is ruddy, or purple if your skin is sallow. You won't choose yellow if there is a predominance of yellow in your skin tone, or red if there is too much red. Usually, dark colors grayed in tone are becoming to a person with a florid complexion but should be avoided if the skin is yellow.

The power of white to reflect light and black to

important to know just what tricks color can play.

## Tricks with Color

Colors can make you feel warmer or cooler; they can make you look larger or smaller. Some hues will cause your skin to seem clear and lovely; others may tinge it with unpleasant red or yellow tones.

In terms of comfort, red and orange seem to give an impression of warmth; blue and blue-violet of coolness. Dark colors and black which absorb light also make you feel warmer, while white and light colors which reflect light actually make you feel cooler. Keep these ideas in mind when selecting colors to wear at various times of the year.

As far as size is concerned, hues containing red and yellow are called advancing colors; they make an object seem closer and in turn larger. On the other hand, colors containing blue are receding; they make an

absorb it should be considered when choosing colors to be worn next to your face. Black seems to remove the color from your skin. This is the reason for wearing a light collar on a dark dress. Although a dark color can create a dramatic effect if worn by a person with a clear white skin, it is usually better for a person with a pale complexion to avoid it. Large amounts of bright color will have the same effect. To emphasize the pink tones in your cheeks, wear greens and blue-greens.

If your skin is dark in tone, you will find the blue-greens especially becoming. Grayed medium colors will be more pleasing than the very bright, light or dark.

To emphasize the color of the hair, you will find that light colors make black and dark brown hair seem darker, whereas dark colors will emphasize the golden lights in blond hair.

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## BUILDING A NEW YOU / BECOMING LINES, FABRICS AND COLORS

Sometimes, a person with lovely eyes wants to enhance their beauty. This can be done by repeating the color of the eyes in small amounts of a bright color, large amounts of a grayed one, or by using complementary colors.

### Figure Flattery

Although colors are usually chosen to enhance the beauty of the face, their effect on the figure should not be forgotten. Remember how dark, grayed and receding colors make the figure appear smaller, whereas light, bright and advancing colors make it seem larger? Although black makes the figure look smaller, it does clearly define the outline. If you want to camouflage a figure irregularity, such as heavy hips, you will want to avoid the use of black and use instead medium or grayed colors that blend with the background.

The possessor of a tall and well-proportioned figure is fortunate. She can wear all types of colors. She can even introduce strong color contrasts in her outfit, dividing the costume into definite parts.

of a lighter color will create a slimming illusion.

The short, slender figure will find one-color costumes most flattering. Designs using two colors, such as a light blouse and dark skirt, should be avoided.

The short, stout figure should also wear one-color costumes. Dark- or medium-value colors will make the heavy figure appear taller and thinner. Light and bright colors, as well as costumes that have a definite contrast in color, should be avoided.

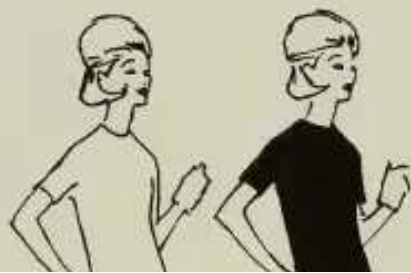
When the figure is out of proportion in certain areas, it is best to wear medium grayed colors. Light and bright colors, as well as sharp contrasts, will only emphasize the imperfection.

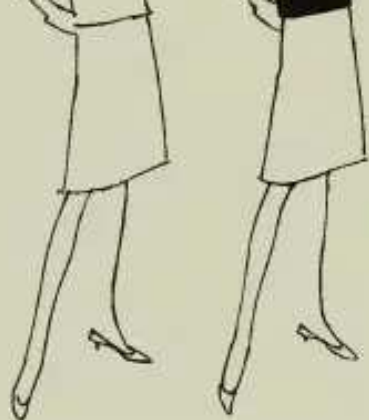
## BECOMING LINES, FABRICS AND COLORS

All of the factors just outlined have to be put together to get results that will be right for you. As a guide, here are the most important points to remember in relation to your figure type:

### Tall and Slender

You're a natural for high fashion and may as well enjoy it. Lines of color values and intensities shouldn't





The tall, angular figure can also use color in many ways. Two-color costumes will be good. They give an illusion of soft roundness, which she needs.

The tall, heavy figure should wear color carefully. She should avoid colors which will add bulk to her large figure. Grayed medium colors that make the outline indefinite will be best. Sometimes a front panel

offer many problems for you. Do avoid lines and colors that make you appear too tall and slender for fear of looking gaunt. Maintain the slenderness without too much height by selecting soft, curved vertical lines. Use bright, vivid colors if they suit your coloring and personality; make good use of striking color contrasts. Avoid very coarse or heavy fabrics which may overpower the delicacy of your figure.

### **Tall, Too Thin**

The flat, angular look may be right on the pages of fashion magazines, but in real life you're apt to look scrawny. A rounded feminine figure is more pleasing to the eye. Use restrained and slightly full curves in your clothes. Wear bouffant skirts, wide collars, full sleeves. Divide your rectangular figure into spaces to produce a widening effect. Peplums, tunics, hip-length jackets, tiered skirts will do this. If possible, wear bright

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## **BUILDING A NEW YOU / BECOMING LINES, FABRICS AND COLORS**

colors that add a bit of fullness to the figure. Color contrasts at waist and hip will make your figure seem shorter and fuller. Select medium-weight fabrics which drape nicely and add roundness, stiff fabrics which add fullness, and fairly heavy-weight fabrics with smooth surfaces. Avoid clinging fabrics which reveal the thinness of the figure and too coarse or too heavy fabrics.

### **Tall, Heavy**

Lines for the "viking" type are a problem. You'll want those which slenderize without adding height. Diagonal lines are the answer; they have the power to be both horizontal and vertical at the same time. Surplice closings, draped effects, gentle flares will be flattering, as long as they are kept simple in design. Softness is what you want, rather than severely tailored or very frilly designs. Grayed colors or those of medium intensity will be more flattering than very light or very dark ones. Select medium-weight fabrics which drape nicely, dull fabrics which have slightly uneven textures, and smooth textures for tailored garments. Avoid large patterns, very crisp and shiny fabrics.

### **Short and Slender**

Usually the short person wants to appear taller, and seeks vertical illusions in her clothes. Coat dresses, princess lines, narrow front panels, surplice closings

costumes in medium grayed tones will make the outline of the figure indefinite and will be more flattering. Select dull, soft fabrics, blurry indistinct patterns. Avoid heavy, crisp, coarse and shiny fabrics.

You may be happy with the height of your figure and its size, but have a particular problem which you'd like to camouflage; or maybe you have a lovely feature you would like to emphasize. Line and color illusion can be used equally effectively for these purposes.

### **Hip-Heavy**

This is the most common problem of all, since women are naturally full-hipped. Keep bodices trim; avoid very straight skirts. Select flattering flares instead and keep skirts smooth fitting over the hips. Place interest high on the costume, using neckline interest to draw attention away from the hipline. Avoid jackets, overblouses and peplums which cut across the hip. Do not use color contrasts at hipline. However, if you have a tiny waist and well-proportioned bustline, a dark skirt and a light bodice will de-emphasize hips.

### **Small Bust**

If you have a small waist and bust, then look for set-in midriff styles, gathers beneath the bust, slightly bloused bodices. For a large-waisted figure, yokes, soft fullness at the neckline and draped bodices will be more flattering. You can use overblouses if your hips are fairly

will all create the tall illusion. Be careful when selecting suits or jackets; keep them fairly short, usually waist-length. A long expanse of skirt will make the figure appear taller. Keep costumes in one color, matching belts; if contrast is used, keep it high. Select soft fabrics in light or medium weights and small patterned fabrics. Avoid coarse and heavy fabrics which may overpower the figure.

### **Short and Plump**

Vertical is again the general direction for the short and plump figure—not perfectly straight lines, but carefully controlled diagonals and verticals which slenderize. Actually, many of the same lines used for the tall, heavy person can be used here, but in a slightly different manner. The diagonals should be almost vertical in direction. Surplice closings, princess lines, coat dresses with a slight flare will be good choices. Jackets that cut the figure in half are best avoided. One-color

narrow.

### **Low, Full Bust**

Start with the proper foundation garments, and if possible, have them fitted by a professional. Then select softly draped bodices, with not too much fullness but just a little. Keep interest high on the figure. Avoid very high or low necklines. Do not use bodice colors that are light, bright or shiny, or fabrics that cling.

### **Thick Rib Cage**

Center the interest away from the rib cage, at neckline or hemline, depending on your best feature. Boxy jackets, bloused bodices, soft draping, overblouses will help de-emphasize this area.

### **Short-Waisted**

Make the waist look longer through low-waisted designs, hip-length jackets, overblouses. Wear one-color

## **BUILDING A NEW YOU / WARDROBE NEEDS**

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costumes with smooth, uninterrupted lines. Avoid contrasting belts, very full skirts or very slim ones.

### **Long-Waisted**

Wide sashes, contrasting belts, set-in midriffs will give a lift to the waistline. Tunics, peplums and long jackets are equally effective. This figure must be careful, when short, short skirts are the fashion, to avoid looking top-heavy.

### **Round Shoulders**

Bloused bodices will help conceal the curved line, as will necklines with angular rather than curved collars. Try using shoulder pads to raise the shoulder line at the right spot, and placing the shoulder line of a garment back of its normal position will help.

### **Narrow Shoulders**

Set-in sleeves with a small amount of padding to build up the shoulder will best conceal too-narrow shoulders. Avoid kimono sleeves, dolman and raglan styles which only emphasize the narrow line.

### **Short Neck**

Choose necklines no higher than a jewel neckline.

skirts, flared skirts and shirred waistlines are effective. Fill in the hollow above the derrière with blousing such as a sash or a flying panel.

## **WARDROBE NEEDS**

With the tricks of optical illusion at your disposal and a definite idea of what you want to do to change your appearance, you should consider your wardrobe needs. No matter how carefully you have chosen your design, the effect will be spoiled unless the garment is right for the occasion at which it is worn. This doesn't mean that you need lots and lots of clothes. A few costumes which can be used for different occasions are a wise choice. Usually every woman needs a simple coat, a classic suit, several basic dresses which may be dressed up or down by the use of accessories, a casual dress, skirt, blouse, sweater, sports ensemble and after-five dress. However, when to wear them may be confusing. A few general suggestions are given here for you to consider in planning your wardrobe.

### **At Home**

The homemaker often makes the big mistake of thinking she does not have to look her best when doing her daily chores. Actually, ill-fitting clothes lower her morale and make her less able to cope with everyday trials. This doesn't mean she has to dress up, but it



Stand-away collars, collarless styles and V- or U-shaped necklines will make the neck seem longer.

## Long Neck

The swanlike throat can be enviable, but it can also look plain scrawny. Shorten it with high turtle and mandarin necklines, or large collars and high chokers.

## Prominent Abdomen

Start with a good foundation garment and check your posture. Pleats or shirring at sides of the skirt with a straight front panel will be the best camouflage. Wear boxy hip-length jackets. Strive for vertical lines to carry the eye up the figure, skimming over the problem area.

## Prominent Derrière

Look for flowing lines, particularly those which flow in back. Hip-length boxy jackets will help; box-pleated

does mean that she should look neat and trim.

If you look well and feel comfortable in slacks or shorts, wear them when working in the home. But be sure you look well in them and that they fit properly.



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## BUILDING A NEW YOU / WARDROBE NEEDS

A simple shirtwaist dress or wrap-around with flared or pleated skirt will often present a much more attractive appearance and be just as comfortable as pants.

For evenings at home a simple dress is always in good taste. But dress up a little bit if you wish. It adds a touch of gaiety or elegance to a family gathering. However, the degree of dressing-up depends on your situation. Fancy pants or long skirts may look ludicrous in one place, marvelous in another.

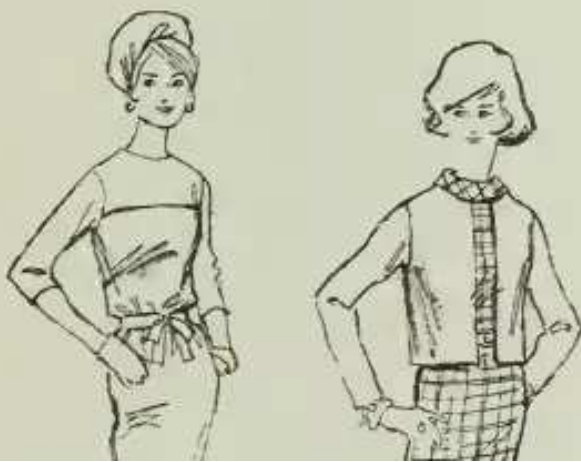
## On the Job

A simple dress, suit, skirt, jacket, and blouse that can be mixed and matched form the basis of this wardrobe. Keep the clothes tailored, uncluttered and easy to care for. Usually a career girl's wardrobe is largely



## For Sports

Sportswear in our modern sense covers both clothes for sports events and casual clothes in general. Naturally, participating in special sports requires special costumes. What you need for golf is wrong for tennis. And as a spectator at sports events, choose comfortable, sturdy-looking clothes. Separates, simple dresses and classic suits are always appropriate.





selected in dark and basic colors, but don't be afraid to include some brighter colors just to add a little pep.

Clothes that are too tight or too revealing are taboo in an office. Dressy, low-cut clothes should be avoided. Casual clothes that look wonderful on the campus are out of place in a more sophisticated business atmosphere.

### **For School**

Separates are the answer to the schoolgirl's needs. Skirts, sweaters, jackets and blouses that can mix and match are perfect. A few basic dresses for social occasions such as church, teas, informal gatherings, and a party dress or dressy separates for formal functions will complete the schoolgirl's wardrobe. Of course, a good cover-everything coat is a necessity.

### **For Shopping**

By this, we mean shopping in a city department store. Slacks and shorts are taboo. Again, simple dresses and suits are best. A comfortable topcoat which can be worn over suit or dress is most useful.

## **BUILDING A NEW YOU / WARDROBE NEEDS**

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### **For Traveling**

Tailored clothes are always best. Flared skirts are more comfortable to sit in, and give a more pleasing look as well. When you reach your destination, the clothes you need will depend on the locale. Resorts require rather gay, festive clothes; cities more conservative businesslike costumes, while rough country life demands casual, comfortable garments.



### **For Evening Parties**

Evening clothes depend entirely on the type of social life you lead. For informal parties, an afternoon or cocktail dress or suit can be used. For formal dances, long or short evening gowns can be worn. The formality of your evening clothes will depend upon the community you live in.





### For Club Activities

Dressmaker suits, simple dresses, such as the sheath, shirtwaist and coat dress are always appropriate. They may have soft touches, but avoid fussy styles.





## CHAPTER 2

# KEYSTONE TO FASHION— A PERFECT PATTERN

*Naturally, not every pattern style will look equally well on everyone, just as no ready-made garment is the answer for every woman. But unlike ready-to-wear, the garment you plan to make at home cannot be tried on in advance. You have to take a chance, but if you know how to pick the right pattern, your risk can be a very small one. This is not just a matter of flipping through the pages of a pattern catalog and selecting an appropriate style. It involves finding your correct figure type and size.*

*Choosing a pattern in the correct figure type and size seems to be a difficult thing for many women to do. They prefer to choose a style and then worry about how to make it fit, whereas if they chose the correct pattern in the first place, it would solve a great many of their problems. It may also make the difference between a smooth, professional look and an amateurish one. Pattern companies divide their catalogs into sections depending upon figure types, so that once you have determined your type, you can turn directly to the section you need.*

Pattern sizing has been changed to correspond more closely to standard ready-to-wear sizing. Measurements for the new sizing were developed and approved by the Measurement Standard Committee of the Pattern Fashion Industry. All major pattern companies have adopted the new standard of body measurements. Patterns issued after November 1, 1967 have the new sizing. The patterns using the new standard body measurements are indicated with this symbol 

The figure types remain the same except for a new Young Junior/Teen figure type which replaced the Teen and Pre-Teen types. All patterns within this new figure type are marked with this symbol . The size ranges within the different figure types have been extended to correspond more closely to sizes available to ready-to-wear.

The sizing for Toddlers', Children's and Girls' patterns have minor changes in the measurements, but these changes do not affect pattern size. No changes have been made in the Men's and Boys' sizing.

To see the differences between the former and the new sizing or revised standard measurements, compare the body measurement charts on page 17. As a general rule, you may be buying one size smaller in the new

may not always be true, so be sure to check the new measurement charts. Your bust measurement is the key to your correct size. The waistline in the new sizing is slightly smaller in proportion to the bust and hips than in the former sizing.

## Figure Types

Because of varying human shapes, patterns are designed to fit seven different groups of figures with differences in height and contour; Misses', Women's, Half-Sizes, Junior Petite, Junior, Young Junior/Teen and Girls. Your lengthwise or vertical measurements determine figure type. Age is not a factor.

## Pattern Sizes

Patterns are made not only for seven different figure types but also for different sizes within each figure type. Your size is determined by your measurements taken horizontally around the body. Numbers indicate sizes. Even numbers are used for Misses' 6-18 and Women's 38-50; odd, for Junior 5-15 and Junior Petite 3-13; half, for Half-Sizes 10½-24½. A combination of odd and even numbers are used for Young Junior/Teen 5/6-15/16 and Girls 7-14.

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / FIGURE TYPES AND SIZES

### Body Measurements

It is important for you to know your measurements to obtain a pattern correct for you in size and figure type. Your measurements determine the pattern which fits you best. Essential body measurements are the actual measurements in inches of your height, bust, waist, hip and back waist length taken over foundation garments you will wear with your fashions.

Have someone take the measurements for you. Tie a cord around your natural waistline. Then stand in stocking feet in a normal posture with your feet together and have person doing measuring stand in back of you. Measure *height* by standing flat against a wall, lightly marking the position of the top of your head on the wall. Then measure from the floor up and record the actual feet and inches. To measure the *bust*, place the tape over the fullest part of the bust and measure around the body, high under the arm, and straight across the back. For *waist* measurement, place the tape snugly around the natural waistline. For *hip*, measure around the fullest part of the body, 9 inches below the natural waistline for Misses'.

Buy the same size pattern for a suit and coat as you would for a dress. Slim skirts are selected by waist measurement unless hip is 2 inches larger than the hip measurement of pattern. Full skirts are bought by waist measurement. In purchasing a pattern for slacks, shorts and pants the hip measurement, rather than the waist measurement, should be given first consideration.



**MISSES'** is considered the "average" figure type, 5'5" to 5'6" tall, with "average" waist length and bust position. All other figure types will be compared to Misses'.



**WOMEN'S** patterns are made for the larger figure 5'5" to 5'6" tall with average bust position.



**HALF-SIZE** patterns are designed for the figure 5'2" to 5'3", shorter-waisted and with a lower bustline than the Misses'. Waist and hip are larger in

Women and Junior; 7 inches below the natural waistline for Half-Sizes, Junior Petite and Young Junior/Teen. *Back waist length* is measured from the top of the most prominent bone at the base of the neck to the cord tied at the natural waistline.

Record these measurements and the date they were taken. Be sure to check measurements frequently. It is surprising how they can change in a matter of a few weeks.

## Selecting Figure Type and Size

Determine your figure type first by comparing your height, back waist length and bust position with figure type and measurement chart. If you are short with a young figure, consider Young Junior/Teen; if you are short-waisted, Junior and Half-Sizes; in case you are very short, Junior Petite; if average-waisted, Misses'. A Women's figure type is actually a large version of the Misses'.

To determine your size, compare your measurements with the ones for your figure type. Find the size with the measurements closest to yours. If you fall between two sizes, select the smaller size if you are small boned; the larger size if your bone structure is large.



proportion to bust than other figure types.



**JUNIOR PETITE** patterns are for the small, mature figure 5' to 5'1" tall, shorter-waisted than the Misses' but with average bustline position.



**JUNIOR** patterns are designed for the figure 5'4" to 5'5" tall, shorter-waisted and with higher bustline than the Misses'.



**YOUNG JUNIOR/TEEN** is the new size range designed for the developing pre-teen and teen figures, about 5'1" to 5'3" tall.



**GIRLS** patterns are made for the very young figure about 5' tall. Notice that she has no defined bustline and is shorter-waisted than the Misses' figure.

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / FIGURE TYPES AND SIZES

### Comparison of Body Measurement Charts

**NEW Sizing**

**FORMER SIZING**

#### MISSES'

Size	6	8	10	12	14	16	18
Bust	30½	31½	32½	34	36	38	40
Waist	22	23	24	25½	27	29	31
Hip	32½	33½	34½	36	38	40	42
Back Waist Length	15½	15¾	16	16¼	16½	16¾	17

Size	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
Bust	30	31	32	34	36	38	40
Waist	23	24	25	26	28	30	32
Hip	32	33	34	36	38	40	42
Back Waist Length	15½	15¾	16	16¼	16½	16¾	17

#### WOMEN'S

Size	38	40	42	44	46	48	50
Bust	42	44	46	48	50	52	54
Waist	34	36	38	40½	43	45½	48
Hip	44	46	48	50	52	54	56
Back Waist Length	17¼	17½	17½	17¾	17¾	17¾	18

Size	40	42	44	46	48	50
Bust	42	44	46	48	50	52
Waist	34	36	38½	41	43½	46
Hip	44	46	48	50	52	54
Back Waist Length	17½	17¾	17¾	17¾	17¾	17¾

#### HALF-SIZES

Size	10½	12½	14½	16½	18½	20½	22½	24½
Bust	33	35	37	39	41	43	45	47
Waist	26	28	30	32	34	36½	39	41½
Hip	35	37	39	41	43	45½	48	50½
Back Waist Length	15	15¼	15½	15¾	15¾	16	16¼	16¼

Size	12½	14½	16½	18½	20½	22½	24½
Bust	33	35	37	39	41	43	45
Waist	27	29	31	33	35	37½	40
Hip	37	39	41	43	45	47	49
Back Waist Length	15¼	15½	15¾	16	16¼	16½	16¾

## JUNIOR PETITE

Size	3JP	5JP	7JP	9JP	11JP	13JP
Bust	30½	31	32	33	34	35
Waist	22	22½	23½	24½	25½	26½
Hip	31½	32	33	34	35	36
Back Waist Length	14	14¼	14½	14¾	15	15¼

Size	3JP	5JP	7JP	9JP	11JP	13JP
Bust	31	31½	32	32½	33	33½
Waist	22½	23	23½	24	24½	25
Hip	32½	33	33½	34	34½	35
Back Waist Length	14	14¼	14½	14¾	15	15¼

## JUNIOR

Size	5	7	9	11	13	15
Bust	30	31	32	33½	35	37
Waist	21½	22½	23½	24½	26	28
Hip	32	33	34	35½	37	39
Back Waist Length	15	15¼	15½	15¾	16	16¼

Size	9	11	13	15
Bust	30½	31½	33	35
Waist	23½	24½	25½	27
Hip	32½	33½	35	37
Back Waist Length	15	15¼	15½	15¾

## YOUNG JUNIOR/TEEN

Size	5/6	7/8	9/10	11/12	13/14	15/16
Bust	28	29	30½	32	33½	35
Waist	22	23	24	25	26	27
Hip	31	32	33½	35	36½	38
Back Waist Length	13½	14	14½	15	15¾	15¾

## TEEN

Size	10T	12T	14T	16T	8PT	10PT	12PT	14PT
Bust	30	32	34	36	28	29	31	33
Waist	24	25	26	28	23	24	25	26
Hip	32	34	36	38	31	32	34	36
Back Waist Length	14¾	15	15¼	15½	13½	13¾	14	14¼

## PRE-TEEN

## GIRLS

Size	7	8	10	12	14
Bust	26	27	28½	30	32
Waist	23	23½	24½	25½	26½
Hip	27	28	30	32	34
Back Waist Length	11½	12	12¾	13½	14¼

Size	7	8	10	12	14
Bust	25	26	28	30	32
Waist	22½	23	24	25	26
Hip	27	28	30	32½	35
Back Waist Length	11	11½	12¼	13	13¾

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / FIGURE TYPES AND SIZES

Generally, dresses, suits and coats are selected according to bust measurements. Skirts are selected by waist measurement unless the hip is two inches larger than the standard hip measurement given for the size. If this is the case, then select skirts for the hip measurement and alter the waist to fit. Full skirts can be bought according to waist measurement, since there is usually enough fullness to take care of the larger hip. Slacks are selected by hip measurement.

### Ease Allowance

There is one important thing to keep in mind when determining your size in a pattern. The measurements given for each size are *standard body measurements*, not actual measurements of the pattern pieces. If garment measurements were the same as the figure, the fabric would pull across the figure and probably split with every movement of the body. To assure that a garment will fit comfortably and smoothly, there has to be a certain amount of ease. McCall's Patterns pro-

able to adjust the pattern using the Easy-Rule Guide for the short- or long-waisted figure, which is another special feature of McCall's Patterns.

Once you have determined your figure type, please don't be tempted to try a different type simply because you like a particular style. And insist on buying the size that fits you best. If the store doesn't have it, ask them to order it. It will be better to wait a few days for it than to struggle through the great amount of adjusting that is necessary to alter the wrong size.

### Sizes for Children

Once you've developed your sewing skill, undoubtedly you'll want to make garments for your family.

Children's, Toddlers', Boys' and Girls' pattern sizes are based on waist and chest measurements. They should never be selected according to the age, height or weight of the child. Compare the child's measurements with the standard body measurements for each size shown here. It is easy to lengthen or shorten bodices, skirts or sleeves by using the printed Easy-Rule Guide.

vides this ease in every pattern.

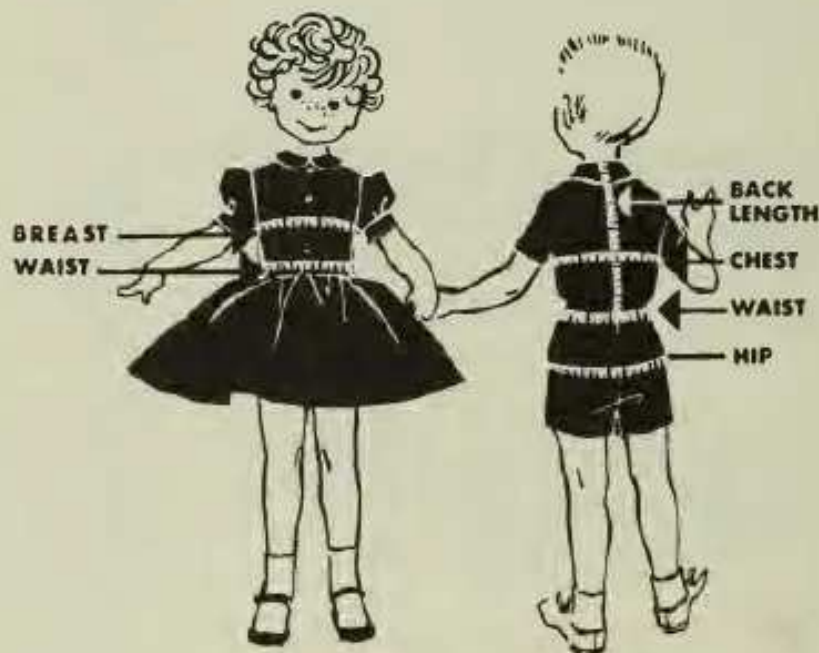
Generally, the ease allowance in McCall's Patterns is:

**Bust:** 3 inches over the standard bust measurement, in most dresses. Evening bodices which are designed to fit very tightly in the bodice may have less.

**Waist:** 1/2 inch.

**Hip:** Approximately 2 inches on slim skirts.

**Back Waist Length:** 1/4 to 3/8 inch.



## Proportioned Patterns

Many women find that they have normal body proportions for a Misses' or Junior size but the over-all height in the figure type does not correspond to their own. McCall's has a special pattern to meet this need, the proportioned-to-height patterns in the Misses' and Junior figure types. These patterns are designed to fit tall (5' 8" to 5' 10"), average (5' 6" to 5' 7") or short (5' 3" to 5' 5") figures. All construction markings and proportioning details such as darts, crotch lengths, pleats and hemlines are printed on the pattern for tall, medium and short figures.

If none of the pattern types and sizes have back waist length measurements to suit your figure, don't despair. Select the type and size which is closest to your measurements and general contours. You will be

## Children's Sizes:

Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	6X
Breast	20	21	22	23	23½	24	25
Waist	19½	20	20½	21	21½	22	22½
Hip					25	26	27
Back Waist Length	8½	8½	9	9½	10	10½	11

## Toddlers' Sizes:

Size	6 Mos.	1	2	3
Breast	19	20	21	22
Waist	19	19½	20	20½

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / LANGUAGE OF PATTERNS

Children need lots of room in their garments, since they are more active than adults. Patterns provide this ease at the waistline of dress patterns, generally two to three inches over the standard body waist measurement. Skirts, slacks and shorts which must fit snugly at the waist do not have this additional ease allowance.

On many dress patterns, the design features a raised waistline located above the child's normal or natural waistline. When the design does feature this type of waist, you will find the words "high-waisted" in the description of the style on the back of the pattern envelope. If you want a dress which fits the natural waistline, you should select another style.

There is often some confusion about the differences between Toddlers' and Children's sizes. Toddlers' sizes are designed for the non-walking child and are two inches shorter than children's sizes, with the same chest and waist measurements.

determining factor in pattern selection. Don't choose a pattern that is too difficult. It is much better to select something simple and construct it in a professional way than to do an unprofessional job on a more difficult design. As you become more proficient, you can proceed from the easy to the more difficult constructions.

Slim or flared skirts make excellent beginning projects. A blouse with an unmounted sleeve such as kimono and raglan also can be made by the novice. Graduate from blouses and skirts to jumpers and dresses before you attempt a coat or suit.

## THE LANGUAGE OF PATTERNS

When sewing for the men in your life, select their shirt patterns according to the neck size, no matter what the chest measurement is. It is almost impossible to alter the neckline of a shirt, but with the pattern's full eight inches of ease through the chest, there is ample allowance for chest girth variations. If you find there is too much ease to suit him, the pattern may be easily altered according to the instructions given in Chapter 6.

Men's shorts, pants and slacks are sized according to waist measurements; sport coats and vests by chest measurements.

**Men's Sizes:**

Chest	32	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48
Waist	28	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44
Neck Base Girth	13½	14	14½	15	15½	16	16½	17	17½
Shirt Sleeve Length	33	33	33	33	34	34	34	35	35

## PATTERNS AND SKILL

When you choose a pattern, remember not every seamstress is an expert. Your own prowess should be a

A beginning seamstress may feel that Einstein's theories are as easy to understand as the intricacies of a first pattern. Here again is a place where first steps should be taken slowly. Once you have the basic information that will allow you to read the easy-to-follow directions, when you can decipher the symbols and follow the charts that come with your pattern, you will find using a pattern no more difficult than using a recipe. And, whether you are a beginner or an experienced home-sewer, every pattern should be carefully studied before you lay out your pattern and start to cut.

Each pattern company differs to some extent in the symbols used to mark its patterns and in the sewing methods it recommends. Be sure to choose a pattern from a firm that marks them clearly and accurately and provides adequate directions presented in an easily understandable manner. A McCall's pattern, for example, not only gives complete instructions for constructing the garment, but also suggests the proper fabrics to use and provides basic information on preparing fabric, adjusting the pattern, cutting, marking and sewing techniques. Vital directions are clearly printed on the pattern tissue, and each pattern has an Easy Sewing Guide to lead you through the construction step by step. Once you know how to interpret each symbol and direction correctly, working with a pattern is easy.

### KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / LANGUAGE OF PATTERNS

#### The Pattern Envelope

Your study should begin with the pattern envelope before you buy the pattern. The envelope is a storehouse of valuable information. It provides enough data to help you judge how the garment will look and fit your figure, and whether you can easily handle the construction of it. Remember, patterns cannot be returned.

**THE FRONT DESIGN.** No doubt the sketch of the design on the front of the envelope will catch your eye first. Study it. Be sure the silhouette and design lines are right for you. Check the different views and

versions of the design. Decide which one will be most suitable for your needs. Note the fabric and trims illustrated. If the design is a good one for plaids, prints, checks or stripes, the illustration will feature these fabrics. If the designer feels that certain trims will enhance the design, these are also illustrated.

**TYPE AND SIZE.** Double-check the figure type and size of the pattern. Be sure it is the right one for you. Do not accept another size or type even if the one you wish is not readily available. The figure type is listed under the large pattern number, preceding a very brief description of the type of garment. Size is noted below the large pattern number.







TYPE and SIZE

SPECIAL FEATURES

KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / LANGUAGE OF PATTERNS

**SPECIAL FEATURES.** Special pattern features such as EASY, INSTANT and Proportioned will be clearly marked on the front of the envelope. The EASY and INSTANT patterns are identified in big red letters which can't be missed. The Proportioned patterns have the word "proportioned" preceding the figure type. Look for these names and use them for quick, easy sewing. Detailed instructions for handling these special patterns are given in Chapter 8.

**THE BACK SKETCHES.** On the back of the pattern envelope there is quite a bit of information to digest. First check the sketch of the back view of the design to see if it will be flattering. Read the detailed

description of the design above the sketch, noting the type of sleeve, collar, skirt and closings used. Decide whether the design features the details you want. Beginners may wish to avoid certain design features such as gussets, long button-front closings, complicated collars, intricate darting. These features may not be clearly shown in the sketch, but they will be noted in the description. Use this information to judge whether the construction of the garment is within your level of skill.

The sketch of each pattern piece which appears on the back of the envelope is mainly to help you sort the pattern before cutting. Here each piece is sketched to scale and identified as to section. The experienced seamstress can tell a great deal about the construction

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Misses' Basic Dress with Slim or A-Line Skirt

65c

NEW Sizing

FABRIC REQUIRED		6	8	10	12	14	16	18
VIEW A—	44" or 45" Without Nap*	2	2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2
	52" Without Nap*	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2	2	2 1/2	2 1/2
VIEW B—	44" or 45" Without Nap*	2	2	2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2
	52" Without Nap*	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2	2	2 1/2	2 1/2
VIEW C—	35" or 35" Without Nap*	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	3	3	3
	44" or 45" Without Nap*	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2
VIEW D—	35" or 35" Without Nap*	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2
	44" or 45" Without Nap*	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2
VIEW E—	35" or 35" Without Nap*	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2
	44" or 45" Without Nap*	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2
VIEW F—	35" or 35" Without Nap*	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	3	3
	44" or 45" Without Nap*	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2	2	2 1/2	2 1/2
VIEW A, D or F—								
Optional Dress Underlining—45" fabric		1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2
Width at lower edge		36 1/2	37 1/2	38 1/2	40	42	44	46
VIEW B, C or E—								
Optional Dress Underlining—45" fabric		1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2
Width at lower edge		46	47	48	49 1/2	51 1/2	53 1/2	55 1/2
ALL VIEWS—1/2 yd. 37" non-woven or 45" woven interfacing for front & back neck								
*WITHOUT NAP means fabric with either way design or without nap or pile								
Body Measurements		6	8	10	12	14	16	18
Bust		30 1/2	31 1/2	32 1/2	34	36	38	40
Waist		22	23	24	25 1/2	27	29	31
Hip		32 1/2	33 1/2	34 1/2	36	38	40	42
Back waist length		19 1/2	19 1/2	19	18 1/2	18 1/2	18 1/2	17
Finished B, C or F length from back of regular neckline		38	38 1/2	39	39 1/2	40	40 1/2	40 1/2
SUGGESTED FABRICS: All Views—Cotton Broadcloth, Flannel, Fleece, Lightweight Tweed, Crepe, Felt, Shantung, Serak, Synthetic Mixtures, Bulcher, Rayon, Printed Fabrics, View A, B or C—Wool Crepe, Flare or Bonded Jersey, Flannel, View C, D, E or F—Cotton Knit, Loran								
NOTIONS: Thread, Seam Binding for Waistline, Colonial Seam Binding for Hem, Belt and Buckle Kit for 1" Belt or Purchased 1" or 2" Wide Belt, 1 Hook and Eye, View B, C or E—Optional Iron-On Seam Binding for Hem, View A or B—Two 4" Neck-Type Zippers for Sleeves, View A, D or E—22" Neck-Type Zipper, View B, C or F—24" Neck-Type Zipper.								

Diagram

Yardage Chart

Body Measurements

Finished Lengths

Suggested Fabric

Description

Back View Sketch

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / LANGUAGE OF PATTERNS

of the garment from studying the pieces sketched, and can judge approximately how much time it will take to construct the garment. The beginner should avoid designs made with a great many pieces, since these are usually more time-consuming and more difficult to handle than the simpler styles.

**SUGGESTED FABRICS.** Perhaps the most important and most neglected section on the back of the pattern envelope is the "Suggested Fabrics" listing. Here the designer notes the fabrics he knows have the proper weight and draping quality for the design. Remember that in discussing fabric for a design in Chapter 1, the importance was stressed of finding a fabric which naturally drapes or falls into the general silhouette and line of the pattern. If you neglect to follow the suggestions given, your fabric may create a silhouette which is entirely different from the one in-

positive directions, up and down. "With Nap" means that all pattern pieces must be cut in one direction on the fabric. Among "With Nap" fabrics are one-way designs, prints or weaves; those which reflect light in different ways depending on the up-and-down direction of the weave (satin); all the pile or napped fabrics such as velveteen, velvet, fleece, fake furs; and some flannels and bouclés.

If you do plan to use a napped fabric and the yardage chart doesn't indicate "With Nap" yardage, examine the design sketch carefully to be sure a napped fabric can be used successfully. You'll have to devise your own cutting layout because there will not be one in the pattern instructions, so try a sample layout before purchasing fabric. Lay the pattern pieces out, all going in the same direction, on brown paper folded to the width of the fabric you plan to use. Measure the length needed to lay out the pattern and buy that

tended.

Here is a sample "Suggested Fabrics" list found on one pattern. All the fabrics indicated are medium-weight materials that have firmness and body. Any of these can be successfully used, or one of comparable weight and body such as a waffle piqué, firm rayon similar to linen, brocade, denim or cotton tweed. A sheer voile, a soft batiste or a heavy-weight fleece would completely alter the look of the design.

If you plan to use a diagonal print or weave or stripes, checks or plaids, read the "Suggested Fabrics" section very carefully. If the design is cut so that these fabrics are unsuitable, a notation "Not Suitable for Diagonal Prints or Diagonal Weaves" will appear in the section. The same notation will be made for stripes, checks and plaids.

**YARDAGE CHART.** Once you have the type of fabric in mind, refer to the yardage chart to find out how much material you will need for the garment in your size. The yardage chart has been carefully tested to give the exact yardage needed for each size, view and width of fabric when using the layouts given in the pattern instructions. By reading down the column from the size and across from the widths of fabric listed, the exact yardage for size and width of fabric is noted. On proportioned patterns, yardage is given for height as well as size and width of fabric. Be sure to note whether the fabric is listed as "Without Nap" or "With Nap." "Without Nap" refers to any fabric which can be cut with the pattern pieces laid in op-

length of fabric.

When interfacings or other shaping materials are essential to the design, the yardages will be listed. Since shaping materials are becoming increasingly important in garment construction, many patterns are now suggesting linings and underlinings which are optional. You should use them whenever you feel they will help the look and wear of the garment. If you do plan to use a lining or underlining and yardage is not given, figure the proper yardage by laying out the pieces to be lined in a sample layout, and measure the length of fabric needed.

Yardages for belting for fabric belts and for special trims suggested for a design will also be noted in this section.

**NOTIONS.** While making a list of fabrics and trims needed, check the "Notions" section to see what notions are required. You will save time by buying everything at one time, and it's easier to match color of thread, zipper, buttons and trims if they are all purchased at once. Be sure to buy all the notions listed. It's frustrating to have to interrupt a sewing session just to run out and pick up a forgotten item.

**BODY MEASUREMENTS.** For your convenience, the body measurements of the figure types and sizes available in a particular pattern are listed on the back of the pattern envelope. Although you should be fully aware of your proper type and size before you request a pattern, you may wish to refer to this for a double-check.

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / LANGUAGE OF PATTERNS

**FINISHED LENGTHS.** When you become familiar with pattern alterations, and know generally whether you need to shorten or lengthen a pattern to suit your figure, you will want to check the finished lengths listed on the pattern envelope. As you sew, become familiar with the length jacket, skirt, blouse, dress you prefer. Compare these to the finished length indicated on the pattern you plan to purchase. You can estimate whether you'll have to shorten or lengthen, and this may affect the yardage needed. Become familiar with the width skirt you find most flattering, and also compare this to the notation on the pattern envelope.

Certainly, with all this information right at your fingertips, it should be an easy decision whether to purchase the pattern or not. If one pattern doesn't suit your specific needs, look for another. The large col-

tern. Each pattern company prepares this guide in a different manner. McCall's has given the preparation of its Easy Sewing Guide a great deal of thought, making it simple to understand and follow. Directions are presented in step-by-step form. Illustrations are clearly drawn and profusely shown.

Before any work is done with your pattern, read the sewing guide carefully. This is important even for the experienced seamstress. Study each step of the construction process. If any part is not clear, find out how it should be handled before you begin to sew. This sewing book has been written for just that purpose, to provide reference material which will amplify and clarify sewing instructions. Beginners may find that the printed instructions are not as detailed as they might be, because instruction sheets are printed to fit a certain space and sometimes do not include minute

lection of McCall's Patterns most certainly will include more than one pattern that is a perfect choice for you.

## Sewing Guide

A special sheet of instructions is placed in every pat-

tern. The pattern maker must assume that the customer has certain basic sewing knowledge and understands the sewing language.

In addition to the basic construction information, the Easy Sewing Guide contains helpful suggestions for altering the pattern by the Easy-Rule Guide, preparing the fabric, and general tips on cutting, mark-

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### EASY SEWING GUIDE

FOR STEP-BY-STEP, CUTTING AND ASSEMBLING

**IMPORTANT** - First be sure that washable, washable fabrics, ironings and hemmings are prepared.

**1. YOUR PATTERN**

- a. All the pattern pieces included in this design are shown in Section 1. Select the pattern pieces to be used. Place remaining pieces inside the envelope. Press pattern pieces using a warm dry iron.
- b. Patterns are made to body measurements. Ease is allowed for general style and for wearing comfort. If pattern adjustments are necessary, they should be made before placing pieces on fabric. NOTE: For complete information regarding pattern adjustments, see "McCall's Step-by-Step Sewing Book".

**2. YOUR FABRIC**

See page 10 for more information on fabric. Straighten fabric by tearing across, or if it does not tear well, draw a thread across, then cut on line of drawn thread (sketches A and B).

**HOW TO STRAIGHTEN FABRIC**



To straighten fabric (sketch C), stretch fabric on the bias in opposite direction until the crosswise threads are equal with the selvages (sketch D).

**3. MARKING YOUR FABRIC**

All markings should be made on the **WRONG SIDE** of fabric.

- a. Marking darts - Locate position of dart by placing pins firmly through pattern and two layers of fabric. Carefully remove pattern by pulling it over heads of marking pins. Draw a line along pins with chalk pencil and ruler on upper side. Turn piece over and mark position of pins on underside. Remove pins.



- b. Tracing wheel - Trace lines of pattern with a tracing wheel. For single thickness, lay one piece of dressmaker's carbon paper **FACE UP** under the **WRONG SIDE** of fabric. For double fabric, lay one piece of tracing paper **FACE UP** under the fabric, another piece **FACE DOWN** directly underneath the dressmaker's carbon.



**SEWING TERMS USED ON EASY SEWING GUIDE**

**SEAM:** The result of joining fabric edges or parts of pieces together.



**SEAMLINE:** Line where stitching is placed to make a seam.

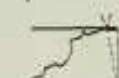


**SEAM ALLOWANCE:** Fabric between seamline and cut edge. Patterns allow a 3/8 inch seam allowance unless indicated otherwise.

**EASE:** When one seamline is larger than the other, fullness is evenly distributed by spreading fabric threads together without gathers or darts.



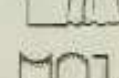
**DART:** A finished fold of fabric used for shaping over body curves. Fold fabric, right sides together. Mark markings and stitch.



**GATHER:** One or two rows of hand or machine stitching drawn up to form even fullness.



**CLIP:** A cut in seam allowance extending from outer edge to line of stitching. Allows a curve to lie flat and a corner to turn.



**TRIM:** Cut away seam allowances as even with top stitching to reduce bulk.



**GRADE OR LAYER:** To create a flat, smooth look, cut seam allowances to different widths, reducing bulk.



**PINKING:** Notched finish for fabric edges cut with pinking shears.



**EDGE-STITCHING:** Row of machine stitching placed close to corner or free edge of fabric to prevent fraying.



**OVERCASTING:** A small slanting stitch placed over the free edge of fabric to finish the edge and keep it from fraying.



**UNDERSTITCHING:** Row of machine stitching, through facing and seam allowances, placed close to seamline. Prevents facing from rolling to outside.



**PRESSING:** Press seams and sections as work progresses. Press with seam open after stitching unless the directions state otherwise.



**FITTING: TRY DARTMENT OR AFTER MAJOR SEAMS ARE STITCHED, MAKE ANY NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS FOR YOUR INDIVIDUAL FIGURE BEFORE FINISHING CONSTRUCTION**

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / LANGUAGE OF PATTERNS

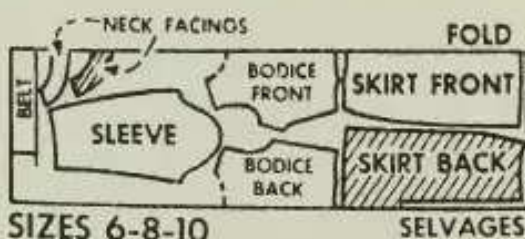
ing, sewing and pressing. Even the experienced seamstress will find this worthwhile reading. McCall's staff

sketch of the pieces found on the back of the pattern envelope to make sure the right pieces are included in

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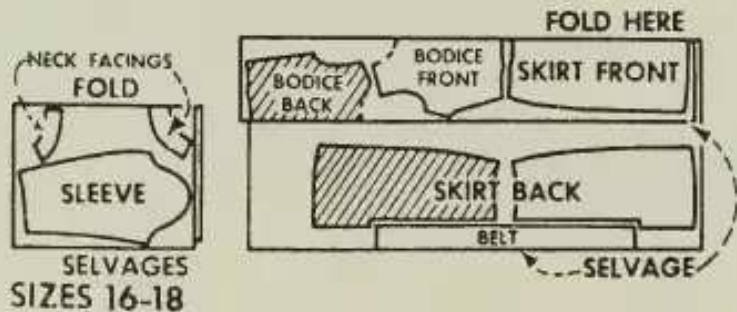
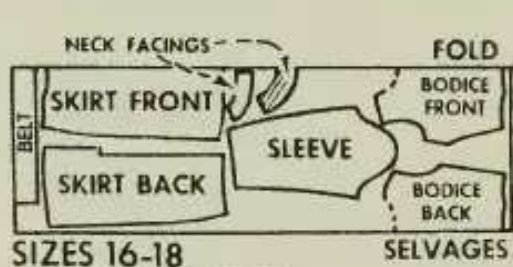
### VIEW A

44 or 45" FABRIC



52" FABRIC





INTERFACING  
37" NON WOVEN or  
45" WOVEN INTERFACING



of experts constantly experiments to find new and easy methods of sewing. When they do discover better ways of doing things, their findings are included in the Easy Sewing Guide.

One of the most important features of the Easy Sewing Guide is the section which provides pattern layouts for various sizes and widths of fabric. Circle the one for your view, size, and width of fabric. You'll be referring to it often when you begin laying the pattern on the fabric. If you plan to use a napped fabric, check to see if a napped layout is provided.

### The Pattern

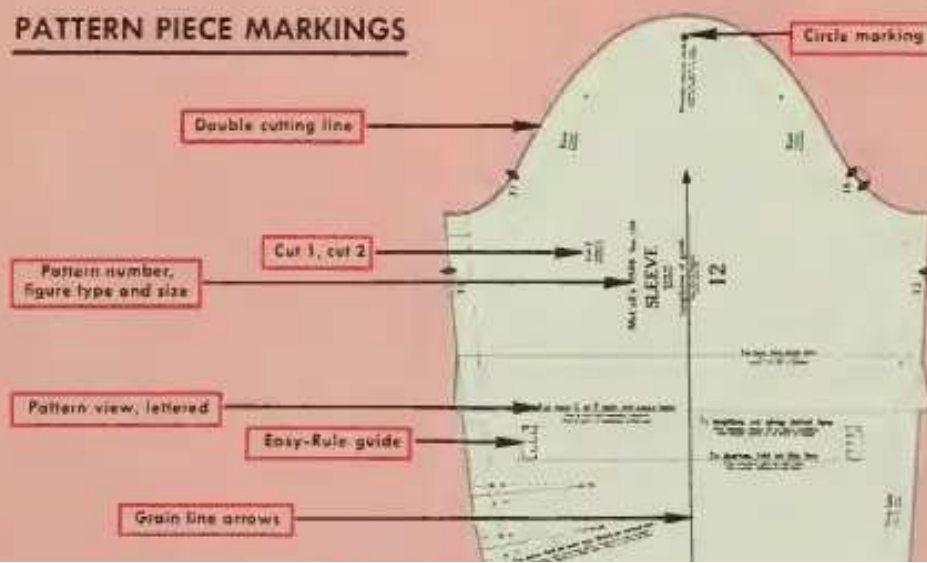
Sort the pattern pieces carefully, selecting only those needed for the version of the garment you're making. Use the layout as a guide for sorting as well as the

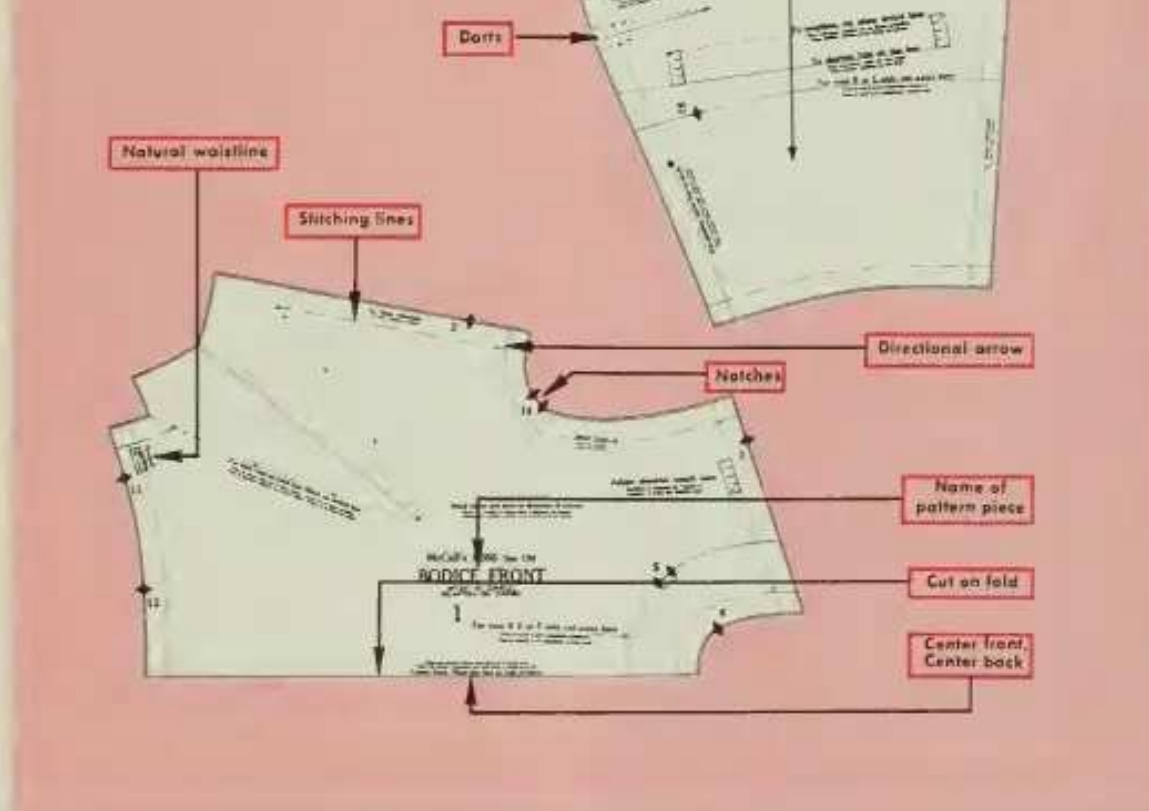
the pattern. As you sort, check each piece to see that the correct pattern number and size are printed on it. Patterns are packed by hand, and once in a great while a wrong piece is inserted in the envelope, or a piece is omitted. It rarely occurs, but it's best to double-check. If you do find a mistake in packaging, return the pattern to the pattern company, and they will replace it with the correct pattern.

Each pattern company provides various markings on the printed pattern pieces which help you construct the garment. McCall's prints all markings on the patterns, making construction as easy, accurate and quick as possible. There are markings which aid in quick sorting of the pieces, markings for pattern alterations, markings for proper layout, and the actual construction markings. Outlined here are the various types of markings, and a brief description of each.

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / LANGUAGE OF PATTERNS

### PATTERN PIECE MARKINGS





### Markings for Sorting Pattern Pieces

- Pattern number, figure type and size printed in center of each pattern piece.
- Pattern view lettered by an identifying *A, B, C, D*. Select only those pieces with the letter symbol for the view you plan to make.

### Markings for Pattern Alteration

- Easy-Rule Guide, a solid and dotted line marking, divided like a ruler, is printed on bodice, sleeve, shoulder and skirt to make shortening and lengthening the pattern piece an easy task.

- Lines on Proportioned patterns indicating where height adjustments are to be made.

### Markings for Correct Layout

- Arrow line indicates fabric grain line and should be placed along a single yarn of the fabric. Printed along arrow line will be the words "lengthwise [or crosswise] of goods," indicating the direction in which the piece should be laid.
- Single line at edge of pattern will have "place this line on fold of fabric" printed along the line. This appears at center back or center front of a garment.
- "Cut 1," "Cut 2" or the words "to be faced" printed on the pattern piece indicates the number of fabric pieces to be cut from the one pattern piece.

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / GLOSSARY OF TERMS

When "to be faced" appears, a second piece of fabric or facing material is cut from the pattern piece.

### Markings for Accurate Cutting

- Double cutting lines, an exclusive feature of McCall's Patterns, make cutting more accurate and easier. Cutting is done directly between the two lines.
- Direction arrows along the seam line indicate the direction to cut and stitch the fabric in order to maintain proper grain direction. This will prevent stretching the fabric, reduce raveling of cut edges and prevent any grain distortion.
- Notches are used to match seams quickly and accu-

of buttonhole. These markings will be the correct length for the size buttons suggested in the "Notions" section on the pattern envelope. They are also in proper position for the design, unless the pattern piece must be shortened or lengthened.

- "Clip" or "slash" will be printed along a solid line on the pattern piece, meaning the piece must be clipped or slashed along that line. Study the guide sheet before clipping or slashing. Sometimes the seam is stitched, then clipped; at other times a slash has to be reinforced before it is cut. Be sure to read the instructions to find which method is required for each particular design.

### Markings for Correct Fit

rately and are indicated by diamond shapes along the seamline. Cut notches out from, never into, seam allowance which may be needed for alteration. Cut along the solid line across the top of double or triple notches; it is much easier to cut and as easy to match as separately cut notches. Notches are numbered in the order in which they are to be joined.

## Markings for Accurate Sewing and Fitting

- Printed name of each pattern piece appears in the center of the piece. Skirt front, bodice front, sleeve, facing are quickly identified by simply looking for the name on the pieces.
- Darts and tucks are marked by short broken lines indicating the stitching line. Stitching lines must be accurately matched; the solid line in the center of dart and tuck markings is used as a fold line, making matching of stitching lines easier and more accurate.
- Circle markings may appear along stitching lines of darts and tucks indicating points to match for accurate stitching. Circles along seam lines may also indicate the beginning and ending of an opening. Stitch the seam only as far as the marked circle.
- Seam line stitching lines are long broken lines along the edge of pattern piece, normally  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch from the cutting line which is the standard seam allowance.
- Pieces for set-in sleeves have large circles at the top of a sleeve-cap seam line to indicate the point on the sleeve that should be matched to the shoulder seam line of the bodice. Notches and small circles on the seam line of the sleeve cap and bodice armhole are matched so fullness or ease may be evenly distributed.
- Buttonholes are marked by solid lines with small circles at outer edge which indicate the termination

□ Center front and back are marked along the fold or stitching line except when button closings are used. On buttoned closings, there will be a separate solid line with the words "center front" or "center back" printed along it. Mark these clearly on the garment section with basting. These markings indicate width of lap and emphasize proper grain line, which help in checking the grain and fit of the garment.

□ Natural waistline for the standard figure in each pattern size is marked by a short straight line, and the words "natural waistline." Check waist length measurement from this point and shorten or lengthen according to your needs.

## GLOSSARY OF SEWING TERMS

Following directions of any kind requires a pretty thorough knowledge of the terminology. By using this glossary you can check your own sewing vocabulary and add new terms. Keep it handy for quick reference and browse through it when you have time. The larger your knowledge of terms, the easier sewing becomes.

### A

*Allowance* Extra fabric outside the seam line, or within the garment, to accommodate gathers, tucks, shirrings or bloused effects.

*Appliqué* Small piece(s) of fabric applied as decorative trimming by hand or machine.

*Armhole or Armhole* The opening in a garment for the arm. It is faced or bound, or a sleeve is set into the opening.

*Arrowhead Tack* A small, hand-embroidered, triangular trim detail used on tailored garments as a reinforcement stay at the ends of pleats, vents, pockets.

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### B

*Back-Stitch* A small hand-stitch that looks like machine-stitching on the right side but with stitches overlapping on the wrong side.

*Bands* Strips of fabric, ribbon or bias applied to edges or set into garments to finish or decorate. They may be cut on the bias or straight of grain.

*Bar Fagoting* Decorative trim used between seams and created by wrapping your needle with thread and making parallel bars from edge to edge.

*Bar Tack* Hand-worked decorative trim used across ends of pockets, buttonholes, etc., to reinforce the

end used for threading tape, elastic or ribbon through beading or casing.

*Body Measurements* Actual measurements of the body—bust, waistline, hip, back waist length—used to purchase the correct pattern. Also, measurements given on the back of the pattern envelope that are correct for the size and figure type of a specific pattern.

*Boning* Stiff piece of bone, plastic or metal used within a seam or along a dart to give added support or fit in a bodice or hip area.

*Box Pleat* Two side pleats which turn away from each other.

*Braid* A woven novelty trim finished on both edges.

ends.

*Basic Pattern* A pattern printed on non-woven fabric, fabric, or paper assembled and altered for correct garment fit. Used then as a guide to compare with other patterns to make correct pattern alterations.

*Basting* A loose, long, temporary stitch made by hand or machine. Usually made with a contrasting colored thread.

*Beading* A narrow open-work insertion through which ribbon can be run. It is usually placed between fabric edges but can also be used with lace edges.

*Belt Carrier* A thread or fabric loop used to hold belt in place.

*Belting* A stiff ribbonlike banding used inside a waistline as a stay, or covered with fabric and used outside as a belt.

*Beveling* See Grading.

*Bias* The 45-degree diagonal of a fabric. It is used when you need "give" in your material.

*Bias Band* A strip of bias used to finish edges or decorate a garment.

*Bias Facing* A strip of bias-cut fabric used to finish curved edges.

*Bias Seam Binding* A bias rayon, silk or nylon binding used to finish curved raw edges.

*Bias Tape* A bias cotton binding used to bind, face or pipe curved edges. Comes in double or single fold.

*Bishop Sleeve* A long sleeve, wide at the bottom and gathered into a band.

*Blanket Stitch* A decorative edge finish formed by looped, interlocking stitches.

*Blend* A mixture of different fibers in one yarn, or different yarns in one fabric, each lending its own characteristics to the fabric.

*Blind-Stitch* A form of hemming made by catching only one thread of the outer fabric.

*Bodkin* A blunt needle with an eye or a pin on the

Comes in cotton, wool, rayon and nylon in a variety of widths and weights and can be applied by hand or machine.

*Breakline* The roll line of a lapel when it turns back from the garment.

*Bridle* A strip of pre-shrunk tape that is applied behind the breakline of a lapel to prevent stretching.

## C

*Canvas* Firmly woven fabric used for coat interfacing. Can be of linen, cotton, wool or hair fabric.

*Cartridge Pleats* Unpressed, rounded pleats used decoratively.

*Casing* A hem with an opening so that ribbon or elastic can be drawn through.

*Catch-Stitch* A cross-stitch used to hold raw edge in place securely.

*Chain-Stitch* A decorative stitch formed by interlocking loops.

*Chalk* Tailor's chalk is a firm grade of chalk used for marking pattern lines and fitting marks. French chalk is a powder that can be dusted on your hands to keep them fresh and your garment unstained.

*Clean Finish* An edge finish for facings, hems or seams in non-bulky fabrics that ravel. Turn under raw edges  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch and machine-stitch close to turned edge.

*Clip* A short cut into the seam allowance of a garment which allows a corner or a curved area to turn and lie flat.

*Cording* A cord which is encased in bias fabric and used to finish and decorate edges, waistlines, button-holes.

*Couching* An embroidery stitch in which a long, heavy double thread or cord is laid along a design and caught in place by another thread at equal intervals.

*Crease* A folded line pressed into the material.

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / GLOSSARY OF TERMS

*Crosswise Grain* The grain of the fabric that runs from selvage to selvage at right angles to the lengthwise grain.

*Crow's Foot* A triangular-shaped thread design used as an end stay for pleats and pockets.

*Custom Finish* Professionally perfect in its fit and construction.

## D

*Dart* A stitched fold of fabric tapering to a point at one or both ends, used to shape a garment to fit the curves of the body.

*Design Allowance* Extra ease in a garment to permit

*Embroidery* Machine- or hand-stitching worked for decorative effect.

*Emery Bag* A small bag filled with an abrasive powder used to sharpen and remove rust from pins and needles.

*Entre-Deux* Another term for beading or veining; it is an open-work strip that can be inserted between fabric edges and run through with ribbon.

*Even Basting* Large stitches equally sized and spaced, used for temporary joining.

*Extension* Any additional fabric jutting out beyond a seam or a center marking.



*Design Allowance* Extra ease in a garment to permit blousing, tucking or shirring.

*Diagonal Basting* A temporary stitch used to hold two layers of fabric together without slipping.

*Directional Cutting, Stay-Stitching, Stitching, and Pressing* Working with the grain of the fabric to retain the original shape. The pattern is marked with small arrows on each seam indicating the direction in which to work.

*Drape* Soft folds of fabric controlled by pleats or gathers.

*Dress Form* A duplicate of the human figure made of padded fabric, wire, paper or plastic. Helpful for fitting or draping a garment.

*Dressmaker's Carbon* Carbon of many colors used with a tracing wheel to mark construction lines.

## E

*Ease* When one section of a seam is slightly fuller than the section to which it is joined, the fullness is distributed evenly without gathers or puckers and pressed so that the threads within the fabric are crowded closer together. This ease allows shaping for curved areas such as the bust in princess line, set-in sleeves, etc.

*Ease Allowance* An allowance in measurement over and above the given body measurements of a pattern. This ease allowance gives needed room in a garment for it to be comfortable and allow for movement.

*Edge Finish* Any finish applied to the raw or cut edge of fabric, such as hemming, binding, stitching, fringing, overcasting, zigzagging or pinking.

*Edging* Any lace, tatting or novelty trim with one straight edge and one decorative edge.

*Edge-Stitch* A line of stitching placed close to a finished edge of a garment.

*Elastic Thread* Thread made with a rubber core that gathers fabric as you stitch. Can be applied by machine as well as by hand.

*Eyelet* A small hole in a garment, finished by hand-stitches or a metal ring to hold the prong of a buckle. Also used to give lacing effect with ribbon, yarn or cording.

## F

*Facing* A piece of fabric, fitted or bias, applied to finish the edges of neckline, armhole and openings in a garment.

*Fagoting* A trim placed between seams. It is either handmade or commercially purchased as tape.

*Fashion Stitches* Decorative stitches used for trimming. Made by hand or with sewing machine.

*Fastenings* Hooks, eyes, snaps, buttons, etc., used to close garments.

*Featherboning* Light-weight, fabric-covered boning that is used for support of seams in strapless bodices, wide belts, etc.

*Feather Stitch* Blanket stitches that are slanted to create a decorative pattern.

*Felling* A slanted hemming stitch used in tailoring to attach undercollar to coat.

*Fibers* Natural or man-made substances used to form the yarns of fabrics.

*Figure Type* The classification for various figures according to height and body proportions. Within each figure type are various size ranges.

*Filling* The yarns interlaced at right angles to the warp yarns to produce fabrics. These run across the fabric from selvage to selvage.

*Findings* See Notions.

*Fish Dart* A dart that tapers at both ends, generally used at waistline.

*Fitting* Adjusting pattern or garment to fit your individual figure.

*Flap* A piece of fabric that hangs loose and is attached at one edge only. Found on pockets.

*Flat-Fell* Seam used on shirts, slacks and other tai-

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / GLOSSARY OF TERMS

lored garments in which one seam is trimmed and the other stitched over it. Gives a flat, finished seam on both sides of the garment.

*Flounce* Circular, gathered or pleated length of fabric that is applied to the bottom of skirts, curtains or furniture.

*Fly Front* Closing that conceals buttons or zipper, usually associated with men's pants, topcoats and Chesterfield-type coats.

*French Chalk* See Chalk.

*French Knot* Decorative hand-stitch in which the

*Grain* The direction of fabric threads. The yarns running parallel to the selvages form the lengthwise grain; the yarns running from selvage to selvage form the crosswise grain.

*Grain-Line Arrow* The arrow line printed on a pattern indicating the exact grain-line for each garment piece. Place this printed line along one yarn of the fabric, lengthwise or crosswise, as indicated on the pattern.

*Guide Sheet* Printed instruction sheet included with each pattern giving specific detailed instructions for

thread is twisted around the needle and brought down through the fabric at almost the same spot to form a small dot.

*French Seam* A double-stitched seam that looks like a plain seam on the right side and a small neat tuck on the wrong side. Used on straight seams and as a finish for sheer fabrics or infants' clothes.

*French Tack* A thread bar fastening used to hold two pieces of a garment together loosely. Used to attach lining to coat at hemline.

*Fringe* Decorative edge finish purchased by the yard or formed by raveling the edge of fabric.

*Frog* Decorative closing formed by looping braid, bias binding, or cording. Usually associated with Oriental style garments.

## G

*Gathering* One or two rows of stitching, either hand or machine, that are drawn up to form even fullness.

*Gauging* Fullness drawn up in uniform-sized deep folds of fabric where a long length of fabric is to be gathered into a small space. This produces a decorative effect.

*Gimp* A heavy thread that is often used on worked buttonholes.

*Glove Stitch* Decorative top-stitching made by taking the same size stitch on both sides of the work.

*Godet* Triangular or shaped piece that is set into skirts, curtains, etc., for added width at the bottom.

*Gore* Tapered or flared section of fabric that is narrow at the top and wide at the bottom. Usually refers to a skirt section.

*Gorge Line* Part of the seam line that joins the collar and the facing. It extends from the crease or roll line to the notch.

*Grading* Trimming all the seam allowances within a seam to different widths to eliminate bulk. The interfacing seam allowance is always trimmed close to the seam.

the complete construction of each pattern view in that particular pattern.

*Gusset* A small triangular or shaped piece of matching fabric set into a slash or seam to give added ease and shaping. Usually placed at underarm.

## H

*Ham* A ham-shaped cushion that is used for pressing or molding shaped areas and curves.

*Hand-Pricking* A variation of the back-stitch used for applying zippers by hand or as an edge finish on a tailored garment.

*Hand-Rolled Hem* A fine edge finish for sheer fabrics or for a scarf, sash or ruffle formed by rolling raw edge between fingers and hemming by hand.

*Heading* Area above the pleating or gathering line of a casing, flounce or ruffle.

*Heavy-Duty Thread* Heavy-weight thread used for sewing on buttons or sewing on heavy fabric such as sailcloth, drapery or upholstery fabric.

*Hem* An edge finish formed by folding back the raw edge and stitching it by hand or machine. The depth of the hem and the method of stitching depend on the garment and type of fabric.

*Hemline* The marked line at the bottom of a garment where the hem is turned.

*Hemstitch* A decorative open-work stitch made by drawing lengthwise threads of the fabric and fastening the crosswise threads in clusters.

*Honeycomb Stitch* A basic smocking stitch worked alternately on two rows at a time. Fits smoothly over curved areas since it tends to spread and close like an accordion.

## I

*Insertion* A piece of lace or decorative banding (straight on both edges) set into a garment for trimming.

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / GLOSSARY OF TERMS

*Inset* A piece of fabric inserted in a garment for fitting or decorative purposes.

*Interfacing* A suitable fabric sewn between the garment and facing to give added body, shaping and support to the garment. Usually used along edges, in collars, cuffs, pockets, waistbands.

*Interlining* A suitable fabric sewn and shaped the same as the garment, placed between the garment and lining to give added warmth.

*Inverted Pleat* Two side pleats which turn toward

overcast stitches at intervals of  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch gathering it in puffs.

*Lingerie Seam* Supposedly "rip-proof"; made by pressing both edges of a seam to one side and top-stitching with a zigzag stitch along the edge.

*Lining* A suitable fabric constructed in the shape of a garment to cover and finish the inside of the entire garment or a section of it. It can also give shaping and prevent stretching.

*Link Buttons* Two flat buttons held together with

each other.

*Invisible Stitch* Used for hems and attaching facings and interfacings in tailoring.

## K

*Key* To match pattern markings or seam edges on the sections to be joined.

*Kick Pleat* A short pleat at the lower edge of a skirt. It is formed by an extension cut on the center or side seam and is top-stitched across the upper edge to hold it in place.

*Kimono Sleeve* Bodice and sleeve cut in one piece with or without a shoulder seam.

*Knife Pleats* Series of pleats that turn in the same direction, are usually equal in width and are pressed straight to the hem.

*Knot-Stitch* See Lock-Stitch.

## L

*Lap* To place one piece of fabric over another.

*Lapel* Upper edge of a coat front that turns back.

*Lapped Seam* A seam used for yokes and applied pieces such as gussets. One seam allowance is lapped over the other seam allowance and top-stitched.

*Layering* Another term for grading, staggering or beveling; trimming one seam allowance narrower than the other to eliminate bulk.

*Layout* The way the pattern pieces are placed on the fabric for cutting. The pattern guide sheet has diagrams showing the easiest and most economical way to place the pattern pieces on the fabric for each width of fabric, pattern size, and pattern view.

*Lazy Daisy Stitch* Embroidery stitch that is a long chain stitch arranged to form a flower.

*Lengthwise Grain* The yarns in the fabric that run parallel to the selvage. It usually has a greater number of yarns to the inch, is stronger and will stretch less than the crosswise grain.

*Lingerie Hem* A rolled hem that is caught with two

several threads covered with blanket stitches. Used as cuff links.

*Lock-Stitch* Stitch used to secure thread at beginning and end of stitching, made by releasing presser foot and stitching in one place several times.

*Loop* A fastening, which extends beyond the finished edge, used on closings with no lap. Can be made of thread, cording or fabric.

## M

*Machine-Basting* A long machine-stitch used in place of hand-basting. Can be pulled out easily.

*Machine-Gather* One or two rows of long machine-stitches pulled up to hold fullness evenly.

*Machine Hem* A hem stitched in by machine. Usually found in sportswear, curtains or slip covers.

*Marking* Transferring all necessary pattern symbols to the wrong side of the fabric by one of the various methods best suited to the fabric.

*Matching* Joining construction markings.

*Military Braid* A flat rayon or metallic braid used as a trim.

*Miter* Diagonal joining of two pieces of fabric or lace that meet at a corner.

## N

*Nap* The short fibers on the surface of the fabric that have been drawn out from the yarns of the fabric and brushed in one direction.

*Needle Board* A board covered with fine steel wires set vertically for use in pressing velvet and other nap or pile fabrics.

*Notch* A small diamond-shaped printed marking or group of markings on the cutting edge of the pattern that indicate where fabric edges match corresponding edges.

*Notions* All dressmaking supplies that are used in the construction of a garment: thread, zippers, tape, buttons, etc.

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / GLOSSARY OF TERMS

*Nylon Closure Tape* Nylon tape with a fleece side and burr side which adhere firmly to each other, used for fastening openings, belts, etc.

## O

*Open-Work* Decorative insertions of open designs and patterns; can be made by hand or machine.

*Outline Stitch* An embroidery stitch made with a short back-stitch worked from left to right.

used to hold pattern and fabrics together and to hold pieces of fabric together.

*Piping* A fold of bias fabric, ribbon or braid inserted in a seam.

*Pivot* Refers to way of stitching a sharp corner. Leave the needle in the fabric, lift the presser foot, turn the fabric to the desired angle, lower the presser foot and continue stitching.

*Placket* Opening in a garment that allows for ease

*Overcasting* A small, slanting stitch placed over the raw edge of fabric to finish the edge and keep it from raveling.

*Overhanding* A straight stitch used to hold finished edges together when a strong, flat, invisible seam is needed, as in table linen, undergarments, sewing on lace or patching.

*Overlap* Part of a garment that extends or laps over another part.

## P

*Padding Stitch* Tiny, diagonal hand-stitches used to hold interfacing to the fabric securely on tailored garments. The stitches do not show on the right side of the garment.

*Permanent Basting* Any type of basting with matching thread that remains in the finished garment.

*Pickup Line* The center fold line of a dart or tuck.

*Picot* An edge finish made by cutting through a line of machine hemstitching.

*Piecing* Sewing two pieces of fabric together when more width is needed as in a circular skirt; should always be done on grain.

*Pile* Fabric woven with a third set of yarns forming tufts or loops on the surface of the fabric. Loops may be cut or uncut. Velvet, velveteen, corduroy, terry cloth are examples.

*Pin-Basting* A method of joining seams before stitching them. Place pins at right angles to edge and an even distance from the edge.

*Pin-Fit* To pin and adjust the garment to your figure before permanent stitching.

*Pin Tucks* Tucks pressed on a thread of the goods and stitched close to the edge.

*Pinch Pleats* Cluster of pleats used in drapery headings. Made by dividing one pleat into several smaller ones.

*Pinking* A notched seam finish cut with pinking shears. Can only be used on fabrics that do not ravel badly.

*Pins* Dressmaker or silk pins—rustproof and sharp—

in dressing. Plackets are closed by means of snaps, hooks and eyes or zippers.

*Plain Seam* The stitching together of two pieces of fabric placed right sides together. Most common seam used in sewing.

*Pleats* Folds of fabric used to control fullness in a garment.

*Pocket Stay* A strip of interfacing sewn to the wrong side of a pocket opening for reinforcement.

*Pre-Shrink* Treatment of fabrics so that size will not be appreciably altered by washing or dry-cleaning.

*Prick Stitch* See Hand-Pricking.

## Q

*Quilting* Stitching several layers of fabric together in an all-over design.

## R

*Ravel* To draw yarns out from along the edge of the fabric to form fringe.

*Regulation Stitch* The permanent stitching placed in a garment, usually 12 stitches per inch. May be varied in length to suit the fabric.

*Reinforce* To add strength to corners and areas of great stress by adding rows of stitching or a patch of fabric.

*Revers* Wide shaped lapels on a garment.

*Reversible* Fabric that has been finished so that either side may be used or a garment finished so that it may be turned and worn on either side.

*Rick Rack* A saw-tooth-edge braid made in cotton or metallic thread. Can be applied as a flat braid or set into a seam.

*Rip* To open a seam by pulling out or cutting the stitching.

*Rolled Hem* See Hand-Rolled Hem.

*Ruffle* A band of fabric that is gathered or pleated and applied to an edge as trimming.

*Running Stitch* The simplest form of hand-stitching; small stitches that appear the same on both sides of the fabric, used for gathering.

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## S

*Saddle Stitch* A decorative top-stitch made by taking longer stitches on top and shorter ones underneath.

*Sag* The stretch that occurs in the bias grain of garments after hanging, or the effect of strain on any part of a garment.

*Satin Stitch* An embroidery stitch made by rows of

*Slip-Basting* Invisible hand-basting, put in from the right side.

*Slip-Stitch* Tiny hand-stitches taken through and under a fold of fabric where the stitching must be invisible.

*Slot Seam* A seam which has an underlay of fabric and resembles an inverted pleat.

*Smocking* A decorative way of gathering a piece of

flat stitches placed close together.

*Scallop* An edge finish made up of a series of semi-circles.

*Seam* The line or fold formed by stitching two pieces of fabric together.

*Seam Allowance* The fabric edge that extends beyond the stitching line. The normal seam allowance in all patterns is  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch unless it is marked and printed otherwise on the pattern.

*Seam Finish* The finish applied to a raw edge to control fraying and raveling.

*Seam Roll* A long, firmly padded cylinder that is used for pressing seams.

*Selvage* The narrow woven border on the lengthwise edges of the fabric.

*Shank* The stem between the button and the fabric to which it is sewn; may be part of the button or can be made with thread when the button is sewn on.

*Shaping Materials* Appropriate fabric used as interfacing, underlining, interlining or lining in a garment.

*Shell Edge* A narrow hem that is stitched by hand and stitched over the edge at measured intervals to form scallops. Used on lingerie.

*Shell Tuck* A tuck that is sewn by hand with a stitch taken over the edge at measured intervals to form scallops.

*Shirring* Two or more rows of gathers.

*Shrinking* Contracting of fabric usually resulting from washing or dry-cleaning. Most fabrics are now treated by manufacturers to control shrinkage.

*Side Pleats* Also called Knife Pleats.

*Size* The measurement classification within a figure type which allows for variations in body measurements such as bust, waist, and hip. Each figure type has a range of sizes.

*Sizing* A chemical finish applied to a fabric to give it added body or stiffness.

*Slash* An even cut in the fabric along a straight line. This is a longer cut than a clip. Slashes are usually finished with a seam or facing.

*Sleeveboard* A small, narrow, well-padded board for pressing sleeves.

fabric into regular folds; done before the garment is made up.

*Soutache* A narrow rayon braid with rounded edges used for decorative effect. Can be curved or shaped easily.

*Spanking* Pounding or flattening fabric with heat and steam to shape it. Used primarily on woolen fabrics.

*Stab-Stitch* A stitch in which the needle is brought in and out of the fabric at right angles. Used for sewing on buttons or as an edge stitch.

*Stay* Tape or fabric sewn into a section of the garment to reinforce the section and hold it securely in position. Used at waistlines, under gathers or shirring.

*Stay-Stitching* A row of machine stitching placed on the seamline. Used as a reinforcement or as a guide for turning an edge accurately.

*Steam Press* To press a garment using steam produced by moisture and a hot iron to remove creases, raise nap in pile fabrics and shrink out fullness in woolens.

*Stiffening* Fabric such as crinoline, horsehair or non-woven interfacing used to stiffen parts of a garment.

*Straightening* Manipulating fabric to correct grainline; pulling out a crosswise thread of the fabric and then cutting along that line.

*Straight of Goods* This refers to the lengthwise grain or crosswise grain of the fabric.

*Sunburst Pleats* Pleats that are wider at the bottom than at the top.

*Surplice* Front closing that is cut on the diagonal.

## T

*Tack* To hold two pieces of fabric together at a point with tiny hand-stitches.

*Tailor's Tack* Method of marking pattern symbols with temporary loose basting stitches sewn through double layer of fabric and cut apart when pattern is removed.

*Tailoring* The technique of shaping and molding the garment throughout the construction processes in making a suit or coat.

## KEYSTONE TO FASHION—A PERFECT PATTERN / GLOSSARY OF TERMS

*Taping* Sewing tape on the back of fabric for reinforcement at points of stress.

*Tension* The degree of looseness or tightness of bobbin thread and needle thread in machine-stitching. The bobbin thread and needle thread should lock evenly together in the fabric.

*Termination Point* Marking placed at the end of a

*Vent* A lapped, finished opening on the hem edge of a sleeve, jacket or skirt.

## W

*Warp* The yarns that run lengthwise in a woven fabric. The filling yarns are interlaced with them at

tuck or dart to guide in matching the layers of fabric exactly.

*Top-Stitching* A line of stitching on the outside of the garment, usually placed close to a finished seam or a finished edge.

*Trapunto* Quilting in which only the design part is padded.

*Trim* To cut away excess fabric in the seam allowances after the seam has been stitched.

*True Bias* Exact 45-degree diagonal of the fabric. When cut on this line, material will have the most "give."

*Tubing* A hollow cylinder of fabric used for button loops and decorative trim.

*Tucks* Straight folds of fullness evenly stitched.

*Twill Tape* A woven cotton tape used as a stay, drawstring or ties.

## U

*Underlap* A part of a garment that extends or laps under another part.

*Underlay* An additional piece of fabric placed under a section for the purpose of joining as in a pleat or slot seam.

*Underlining* A suitable fabric used to back a section or an entire garment. It is used to give body and shaping and to prevent sagging and stretching of the outer fabric.

*Understitching* A row of machine-stitching through the facing and seam allowance close to a seamline. This holds the facing to the seam allowances and prevents the facing from rolling to the outside.

*Unit Construction* Organization of sewing procedure so that an entire garment section is completed before it is joined to another.

## V

*Velvet Board* Another name for a needle board.

right angles.

*Weights* Metal discs which are covered with fabric and sewn in cowl necklines or in the hemlines of coats and jackets.

*Welt* An applied strip of fabric used to finish the lower edge of slashed pocket. It is stitched on three sides and left open at the top.

*Whip* Stitching two finished edges together securely with tiny slanting stitches.

*With Nap* Designation for fabric that must be cut with all the pattern pieces laid in one direction. This includes napped fabrics, pile fabrics and those with a one-way design produced by light reflection (sateen, satin), printed or woven with an up-and-down direction.

*Woven Seam Binding* A straight-edged rayon, silk or nylon binding used to finish raw edges of hems or as a stay. It cannot be shaped or used on curved edges.

## Y

*Yardage* The amount of fabric needed to make a particular garment. The back of the pattern envelope has a yardage chart. This gives the exact amount of fabric necessary for each view and size for the various widths of fabric.

## Z

*Zigzag Stitch* A machine-stitch made by the movement of the needle from side to side rather than in a straight line. The stitch is made with a zigzag attachment or an automatic machine. Used to stitch two edges of fabric together, finish the raw edges of seams, stitch plain seams for greater elasticity, apply appliqués, mend tears or make decorative stitching.

*Zipper* A closure made of metal or nylon chains attached to tape so that it can be stitched into a placket.

*Zipper Foot* Machine foot with one prong for stitching in zippers or cording. Right, left or adjustable attachments are available.

## CHAPTER 3

# THE RAW MATERIALS— FABRIC, SHAPING MATERIALS, NOTIONS

*The basis of any fashion is, of course, the materials of which it is made. Fabric, thread, buttons, trimmings and the like are the seamstress' raw materials—her paint and canvas. Top designers use fabrics as fine artists do paint—subtly, skillfully, dramatically creating fashions that are exciting and beautiful. Many home-sewers haven't achieved this perfection, but everyone should understand how different materials handle and the effects they create. Then putting a costume together will not be thought of as a flat jigsaw puzzle, but instead, as the molding and draping of fabric to create the desired result.*

## THE ART OF FABRIC SELECTION

Fabrics are a lot like people. They have very distinct personalities and behavior patterns. They can be stiff and unyielding; crisp and businesslike; soft, fluttery and feminine; even whimsical and fun. Studying the personality of fabrics is almost as interesting and profitable as studying people. The more you know about them, the more you enjoy them, and the more success you have in dealing with them.

If a garment is to be completely successful, the personality of the fabric must be used to full advantage. It should be flattering to you, expressive of your personality, and completely suitable to the design and the occasion. In short, the fabric in a garment as well as the design must be in good taste. Developing perfect taste in fabric selection is not an easy task, but neither is it an impossible one. It takes study, experimentation and probably a few mistakes before one unerringly selects the right fabric for every design.

### Suggested Fabrics

When choosing fabric for a particular design, check the pattern envelope for "Suggested Fabrics." Here are listed the designer's choices of fabrics having the proper weight and drapability for the design. Your

choice needn't be confined to these selections, but you should look for fabrics similar in weight and drapability. In Chapter 4, you will find a complete "Glossary of Familiar Fabrics" with their descriptions and suggestions for their use.

Before you decide on a fabric, study the sketch of the design and determine the general silhouette of the garment. Hold the fabric in these same general lines. Does it poke out when it should fall in graceful folds? Will it gather softly into shirring at the waist? Will it hold crisp pleats? Will it pouf if a bouffant effect is needed? If the design is a molded one, will the material be firm enough to retain the shape?

Learning to understand fabric and how it will shape in a garment takes two things—practice and observation. Practice feeling fabrics, all sorts of fabrics. Observe their behavior carefully. Look at the fabrics used in ready-to-wear garments. Check pattern publications to see which fabrics the experts select for various styles. Soon you will be able to look at a fabric and visualize it in a specific design, or look at a pattern and see it in a particular fabric.

There are two artistic factors that play a part in fabric selection—texture and color. Four basic elements are involved in texture: the light reflection which determines a fabric's sheen or dullness; the touch, its roughness or smoothness; the look, its richness or plainness; and the hand, which means the weight, body and drape. As to color, in addition to

the optical illusions you can create with the right choice of color, as outlined in Chapter 1, there are other considerations in selecting color for your wardrobe. Which colors go well with each other and how much of each to use is an important decision you will

ual wishes to convey. Always select the texture that makes you feel your best at all times.

have to make.

## TEXTURE

Each of the elements of texture will have an influence on the total appearance of the garment and the figure wearing it. Whether a fabric is shiny or dull, whether it has a look of elegance or an everyday air, will make it more or less suitable for you and for the occasion. Surface roughness or a smooth silky look will determine to a large degree the type of garment for which a fabric can be used, as will its body and its ability to be draped softly, pleated crisply or molded sleekly.

### Texture and Individuality

Just as certain styles seem more suitable for certain personalities, so do textures. For instance, three career women with comparable figures may select the same suit pattern. The first wants to look cool, crisp and efficient. She selects a smooth worsted wool in a conservative color. The second likes casual clothes with a bit of country about them. Her choice is sturdy, casual wide-wale corduroy. The third prefers the feminine look, and chooses a soft, airy bouclé woolen. Each suit is in good taste. The fabric is appropriate for the style and expresses the personality the individ-



Texture and a pattern design should be thought of together, so that they will not be in conflict. If a design calls for a bouffant effect, select a fabric that creates poufs naturally. However, if the design shows soft folds, be sure not to use a crisp or stiff fabric. Just like people, fabrics are more successful if they are doing what they like to do.

In defining texture, the word "hand" is frequently used. The hand, or weight and draping quality of the fabric, will determine to a great extent the designs for which it may be used. The way to determine and understand the hand of a fabric is to become a "fabric feeler." Touch it, drape it in folds, hold it up to see how it falls.

### Textures for the Occasion

Usually one thinks of selecting the right clothes for an occasion, without consciously considering the appropriateness of the fabric. Obviously, there are certain elaborate fabrics which are never worn in the daytime. Satins, brocades, sequined fabrics are strictly for evening wear. On the other hand, there are fabrics and textures which seem more suited to city, country or resort wear.



## THE RAW MATERIALS / THE ART OF FABRIC SELECTION

Generally, clothes for the city and for business are best fashioned in fine-textured fabrics that are conservative in feeling. Recently, the range of "city" fabrics has been considerably extended. Tweedy mate-

taining. Again, when the whole atmosphere is one of fun and relaxation, let the fabrics help set the mood.

Although certain fabrics are strictly evening fabrics, many popular daytime fabrics are now appearing in



rials, homespun fabrics, nubby woolens are being used to create more casual-looking city clothes. Textures which wear well, resist soil and keep their shape are not only more practical for city wear, but more appropriate.

For the country, the rougher, sturdy fabrics look marvelous, and are in the right setting. The style of clothes for the country is more casual because living is more leisurely there. The textures should carry out the same theme of casual comfort.

Resort wear is the most fun of all. Here all the whimsical, funny, even bizarre fabrics and textures look right at home. The wild prints that are wrong for the suburbs are very right in the carefree atmosphere of the resort. For those who don't visit resorts, the same sort of textures can be used for at-home enter-

very effective evening fashions. The plaid woolens, formerly worn by school girls in skirts and dresses, appear in sleek, informal evening sheaths. Soft, drapable wool jersey is cut into a "little nothing" dress that is perfectly right for today's casual entertaining. However, many of these fabrics can be called "novelty" fabrics as far as evening wear is concerned, and usually look right only on younger girls or women with youthful figures and appearances. Soft flannel sheaths can be very striking for informal evening wear with the right sparkly jewelry; in summer many of the new "dressy" cottons and silky synthetics are perfect choices for evening ensembles. But when you want to feel really dressed up and ready for a big night, try the real evening fabrics. You'll feel more gala. There is something special about the luxurious feel of a silk crepe or satin, the rustle of taffeta or brocade, that makes you feel your elegant best.



## Combining Textures

Being well dressed would be a simpler task if someone could just devise a hard-and-fast rule about combining textures, colors and lines. There just isn't any. Some women seem to have a sixth sense when it comes to coordinating a costume; most of us have to work at it.

The basic concept in combining the elements of any artful creation, be it a painting or a Paris costume, is unity of idea, with some variety. When working with textures, it generally means using sheers with sheers, heavyweights with heavyweights. Quite obviously, you do not add a wool tweed cummerbund to a nylon chiffon gown, nor a draped chiffon blouse to a cotton corduroy suit. However, some of the subtleties of selecting just the right textures in a costume are less obvious.

The only way to become adept at combining textures is to study the effect of one texture on another, and to observe various textural combinations used in fashion. Experiment with different combinations when planning a costume. When you sew your own, this is easier to do than when purchasing garments. You can take swatches of your garment along with you as you shop for blouses, accessories or other fabrics which will be combined with the garment you make.

## THE RAW MATERIALS / COLOR

### COLOR

The second factor you have to consider in choosing a fabric is color. While the color is often more obvious

### Color in the Balance

Proper balance of color is important, especially when forceful and weak hues are used together. A good rule

a fabric is color. While the color is often more obvious than the texture, it creates just as many problems because of the profusion of colors that exist. It is so easy to employ too much color or the wrong kind, unless you learn to follow a few basic guides based on the principles of design.

### Chart a Color Scheme

In planning your wardrobe, it is most important that you have a definite color scheme in mind. Unless you do, the various garments and accessories you make or buy will not seem to belong together. This lack of coordination will cause colors to clash or, what may be even worse, leave you with gaps in your wardrobe. A lovely suit without the right blouse can hang in the closet for months.

In order to avoid this unhappy situation, there are certain things you can do. First, decide on the colors which are most becoming to you. If you like one especially well and it can be used as a basic color, then make this your background color. Naturally, a basic color should be one which will combine nicely with a variety of other colors.

Usually, you will use the basic color for garments you plan to wear for several years, such as a coat or a suit. This is the most satisfactory plan for "carry-over" clothing, for it allows you to introduce unusual or livelier colors as accents in your wardrobe and change them from time to time without discarding the major garment.

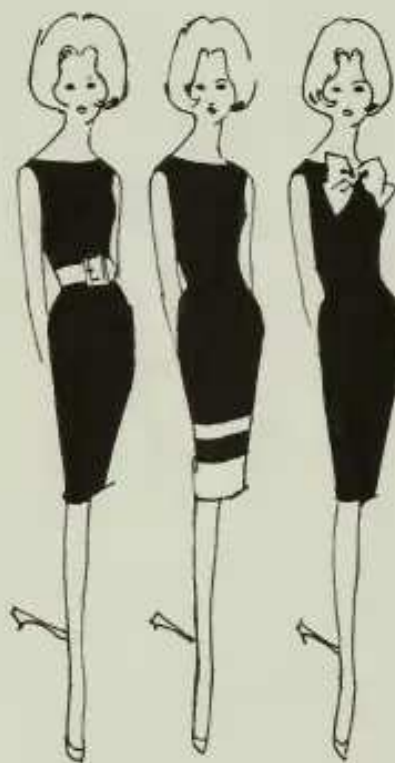
Dark colors and those that create a neutral effect are the ones most frequently used for basic colors. Black, navy blue, brown and gray fall into this category. Although brighter colors can be used as basics, it is usually best to avoid them unless you can afford to change your entire wardrobe frequently. A person seems to tire of colors of high intensity more quickly than of those in more subdued hues. There is no reason for a basic color to give your wardrobe a monotonous look if you learn to employ color wisely and with imagination.

As soon as your basic color is chosen, you should look at all other colors with it in mind. Each new piece of apparel you select should be chosen to blend with your basic color. Gradually, you will evolve a color scheme which will make your entire new wardrobe more attractive and satisfying to wear.

to follow at such time is that the larger the area to be covered, the less intense the color should be; the smaller the area, the brighter the color can be.

The amount of a color to use is also a matter of proportion. Subtle variations in the tone and the amounts of color used will create an interesting effect, while too much repetition of one color can become monotonous. For instance, the identical hue used for a hat, bag, gloves and shoes will create a less pleasing effect than if you were to choose one dark, one light and one bright tone of the same color.

Remember, too, that a light color has power to attract the eye and hold attention. This makes it possible for you to camouflage figure irregularities by drawing the eye to your most attractive feature. If several light areas are used, the eye will dart from one to the other. Unless they are placed advantageously, they can cause the figure to appear shorter and stouter. But a rhythmic feeling can be developed in a design if the colors are placed properly and used in correct amounts. The eye will seem to glide from one hue to the repeated one.



### Color Harmony

Naturally, it is important for any color combination to give a feeling of harmony. To produce such an arrangement, colors should seem to belong together. This may be done by combining related colors in a

## THE RAW MATERIALS / PATTERNED FABRICS

monochromatic or an analogous harmony. It may also be achieved by using contrasting colors in a comple-

Then the mood of the print should be considered. Some create a formal or conservative feeling; others a

mentary harmony. Whichever you choose, one color should be emphasized with the others playing subordinate roles.

## PATTERNED FABRICS

Prints, plaids, checks and stripes can add a delightful excitement to an otherwise drab wardrobe. However, it is important to select a patterned fabric that is flattering to the wearer.

### Analyze the Design

The size of the fabric design should be in proportion to the size of the wearer. Small prints, miniature checks, narrow stripes seem best for the petite figure, larger designs for the taller. Large, bold prints, dramatic plaids and stripes should be worn only by someone with a Miss America figure. Usually the medium-sized print with an indefinite outline will be most flattering to the average figure.



Because of their versatility, prints have become a part of everyone's wardrobe. However, to select one which embodies the elements of good design is not always easy. The oft used principle of "unity with variety" is a good rule to follow. Motifs should be related. They should be placed so that the eye glides rhythmically from one motif to the next. Try an artist's trick. Hold the fabric at arm's length and study it through half-closed eyes. Do the designs and colors seem to blend in a pleasing harmony? If they do, you have probably chosen a good design.

frivolous, gay spirit. Some seem demure; others exotic. Never allow the design to seem more important than you. Remember, you are simply selecting a background for your personality.

## THE PRACTICALITIES OF FABRIC SELECTION

Once you have chosen a fabric that you like, one that is suitable for your pattern and appropriate for you, there is another point you will have to check at the store, and this is whether or not the fabric has a straight grain.

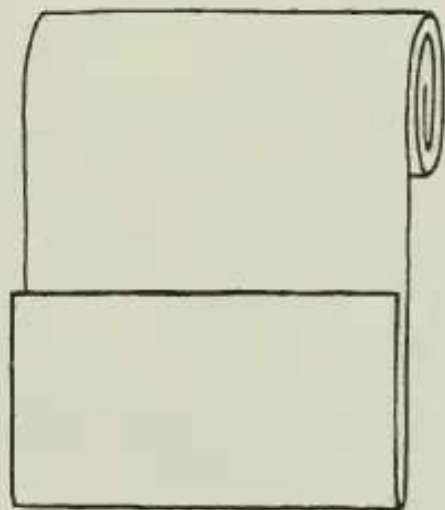
## THE IMPORTANCE OF GRAIN LINES

Since the entire appearance of the garment may depend on whether the various sections are cut properly on the straight grain of the fabric, you should check fabric before purchasing it to see if the grain is straight. If it is not, then you will have to decide whether you can successfully straighten it yourself. Although fabrics are always originally woven on grain, finishing or printing processes will often pull them off-grain. In some cases a permanent finish may lock the threads in the off-grain position and the fabric can never be straightened. Wash-and-wear fabrics, in particular, should be carefully checked.

### Testing for Position of Grain Lines

To test the grain of a fabric before you buy it, fold the fabric back on itself, matching the selvages. If the end of the fabric has been torn, see if the torn end is exactly at right angles to the selvage. If the fabric has been cut straight across the end, then try to follow a single crosswise thread to see if it is exactly parallel to the end of the fabric. Be sure to check carefully any prints with a regular design. It may be that the fabric was printed in an off-grain position and when straightened, the print pattern will be distorted.

On plaids or prints having a regular design at right angles to the selvage, make the following test. Unroll about a yard of the fabric from the bolt. Fold back



ing the fold at right angles to the selvage. Now, see if the design is parallel to the folded line. If it is a wash-and-wear or permanently finished fabric and is more than one-half inch off grain, don't buy it. You will never be able to straighten it and have a satisfactory garment.

It is rather difficult to determine grain straightness in knits, since most of them are produced in circular or tubular form with no lengthwise finished edges. The only way to check grain, before you buy the fabric, is to fold back about one-half yard and match the lengthwise folded edges carefully. This makes a fold at right angles to the edges. See if a single rib is at right angles to the folded line.

## SHAPING MATERIALS

Shaping materials have been in existence for centuries. Look at the costumes in a museum. Elaborate metal and bone hoops, bustles and other contraptions gave fantastic shapes to garments of the past. Shaping materials are no less important today than they were in the days of Marie Antoinette, but fortunately for us, light-weight, shape-retaining fabrics do the job. They are much more comfortable to wear and work with.

Not only do shaping materials help shape the garment, but they also add to its durability. Below is a list of the jobs that shaping materials can be expected to do.

- Prevent sagging and stretching of knitted or loosely woven fabrics at points of strain, such as skirt backs.
- Give greater crease-resistance to all fashions.
- Add firmness and body to fashion details such as necklines, pockets or to the entire silhouette.

lars, peplums and stand-away flares.

- Strengthen edges where buttons, buttonholes, hooks and eyes are used.
- Tailor a fashion and help assure perfect fit.
- Increase the life of the garment.
- Add warmth to a garment.

## Selecting Correct Shaping Fabric

Choosing the proper shaping materials for a garment is almost as important as selecting the right fashion fabric. Picking just the right one will take almost as much thought and consideration. You will have to choose a shaping material with two major points in mind. First, is it right for the fashion fabric—the proper weight and color—and second, what effect will it create in the garment? Will it stiffen it, make it soft and drapable, or just firm enough? The basic criteria for selecting shaping materials are:

- Correct weight—no heavier than the fashion fabric, unless you want a very crisp, standing effect.
- Proper finish and texture—should be somewhat similar to the fashion fabric.
- Right degree of stiffness and flexibility—it should suit the silhouette of the garment, or be able to take the shape of a specific detail.
- Shrinkage control—be sure to read the hang tags to see that the cleaning is the same for fabric and shaping material.
- Color—try to match the fabric color as nearly as possible; shaping materials may show through some fabrics.

The best way to determine which shaping material to use is to test the effect by draping the fabric and shaping material over your hand. Decide how they combine. Feel the two together to get an idea of the weight and texture; hold them up to see how they drape. Carefully consider how the two will shape into the silhouette of the garment.

## How to Use

Shaping materials are used in a garment in four different ways, each having a slightly different purpose. They can be used as underlining, lining, interfacing or interlining.

**UNDERLINING.** A piece of shaping material usually cut in the shape of the design section of the

garment, and used to back that section. The main purpose of underlining is to give shape to the garment and add to its crease-resistance and wear. The two pieces, garment section and underlining, are treated as one during construction.

**LINING.** Similar to underlining, except that it is constructed separately from the garment pattern pieces and joined to a major seam. Lining will not only shape the garment and add to its wear, it will provide a nice finished look to the inside of the garment.

**INTERFACING.** A piece of shaping material cut in the shape of a facing section and placed between the

facing and the garment. Its purpose is to add firmness to the section, usually an edge, and help it retain its shape.

**INTERLINING.** Cut in the shape of a lining section and used between a lining and the design section. It is often used in coats or jackets when shape and added warmth are needed. Interlining is constructed separately and catch-stitched to the garment facing before the lining is sewn in.

Usually patterns indicate when shaping materials should be used. Study the chart shown here before choosing your shaping material.

## WHAT MAKES THE SHAPE

### SHAPING MATERIALS

USES	WOVEN	NON WOVEN	IRON ON
1. To tailor heavy coats and heavy suiting fabrics	1. Hymo "Special" Hair Canvas P-20 Bravo	Pellon—heavy weight Interlon—heavy weight	Shape-Flex Hair Canvas P-93
2. To tailor medium-weight woolens and synthetics; to give crisp effect to firm cottons and linens	2. Hymo "Regular" Veriform—crisp Undercurrent—crisp Si Bonne—crisp Sta-Shape—medium weight Veri-Super—crisp Super Siri—firm Hair Canvas—P-17, P-26 Acro Fino Formite	Interlon—regular weight Pellon—medium weight	Hair Canvas P-92 Detail Pelomite Shape-Flex
3. To give soft shaping to medium-weight fabrics; to give crisp shaping to lightweight fabrics	3. Si Bonne—soft Super Siri—soft Finolite Hair Canvas P-27 Undercurrent—medium soft Veriform—medium soft Veri-Super—medium soft Sta-Shape—lightweight durable press Also: organdy, permanently finished cotton, crepe, batiste, muslin, China silk	Pellon—lightweight all bias Interlon—lightweight all bias	Hair Canvas—P-91 P-94 Detail Pelomite Shape-Flex
4. To give soft shaping to lightweight fabrics; to give crisp shaping to sheers and laces	4. Si Bonne—soft Super Siri—super soft Also: net, organdy, organza, marquisette, lawn		



edges on the inside of garments. It comes in assorted colors and is available in cotton percale, pima and nainsook, rayon or silk. The fabric closest to your garment fabric should be selected, so it will react to washing or cleaning the same as the rest of the garment. It is purchased as single-fold, double-fold or wide bias tape. Rayon and silk bindings are single fold and are used to finish curved seam edges and hems. Double-fold cotton bias tape is most useful as a trim since it is already folded and easily applied. For use as a facing, it is best to use the single fold. The cotton percale tape used for trimming is also available in stripes, checks, plaids and small prints and can add a gay finish to summer sportswear or children's clothing. The wide bias tape is used for quilt binding or edge trimming. See page 230 for complete directions on how to apply bias seam bindings.

### **Woven Seam Binding**

A straight woven tape with finished edges. Used to finish hem edges, and as a stay to eliminate stretching of a seam. It is available in rayon, silk or nylon, and in assorted colors. Commercially, the ½-inch width is usually the only size available.

### **Bias Skirt or Hem Facing**

This is a bias strip 2½ inches wide with folded edges. It is used for facing hems when the skirt is not long enough for a self hem or when a very bulky fabric is used and a hem would produce an unsightly bulge. It comes in assorted colors and is of percale, nainsook or rayon taffeta.

### **Twill Tape**

A cotton tape used in tailoring to tape edges and roll lines as well as seams to prevent stretching, especially in heavy-weight fabrics or very stretchable materials. It has a sturdy twill construction that has no stretch or give. It is available only in black or white and in widths of ¼ to 1 inch. The ¼ inch is used for tailoring, the ⅜ to ⅝ inch for making ties on garments or for taping seams. The 1-inch is not readily available, since it is used mainly in upholstery work.

### **Cording**

Cording is used to pipe edges and seams, tucks, buttonholes, in loops and frogs, and in shirring. It is available

in sizes 40 to 300. The fine cable cord (No. 40) is excellent to use for cording buttonholes and for fine piped edges. The heavyweights can be used for drawstrings or heavy cord belts. When using cord for seams at the waistline or for edge trims, select the size cord needed for your fabric and for the effect you desire. Cording comes in white only because it is covered by the fabric.

### **Corded Piping**

This is a fine cording covered in bias cotton for use as a decorative edge trimming. It is available in assorted colors and provides a neat decorative finish for faced edges and seams.

### **Braid Trims**

There is a wide assortment of novelty braid trimming available, including fold-over braid, middy braid, soutache (very fine braid), shell and novelty trims. The pattern may indicate the type of trim needed, or you can use your own judgment.

### **Elastic**

Available as thread or in various widths up to several inches. Ordinarily it is made of nylon or rayon and is limited to white, pink and black. The elastic thread is sometimes found in light blue, brown, navy and gray in addition to the regular white, pink and black.

### **Belting**

The width and yardage needed for making belts is listed on the back of the pattern envelope. You may cut your own belt interfacing or backing from heavy interfacing fabrics, buckram, heavy canvas or gros-grain ribbon. However, the commercial beltings are quite fine and easier to use. They come plain, rubber-backed or leather-backed and are made of heavy cotton or rayon. Belting can be purchased by the yard or in standard belt length packages. Also very popular are belt and buckle kits that come by waist size and in widths from ½ to 3 inches.

### **Buckles**

The size buckle needed will depend upon the width of the belt. The inside measurement of the buckle should be slightly wider than the width of the belting used. Buckles are available in bone, wood, plastic,

metal, leather, pearl or fabric-covered, and with or without a prong. The kits for covering buckles are very easy to use, and provide a nice self-belt finish to a garment. Select the type and shape buckle which is best suited to the garment style and any buttons or trims used.

### **Shoulder Pads**

The style in shoulder padding changes with the look of fashion. The size, shape and thickness will vary according to the fashion of the shoulder line and to the shape of your shoulders. Today, pads are used mainly to correct figure faults, for example, to build up narrow or rounded shoulders in garments which normally do not require their use. Commercially, several shapes of shoulder pads are available in styles for blouses, dresses, suits or coats. Dress and blouse pads are usually covered in fabric, or you can cover them in the dress fabric. Suit and coat pads are usually purchased uncovered; they are placed between the garment and the lining.

### **Featherboning**

Featherboning is used wherever stays and stiffening are needed—in strapless bodices, hoop skirts, high collars, wide belts and cummerbunds. The boning is covered in cotton or synthetic fabric (white or black) and it can be stitched to the garment or encased in a lining. The width and yardage needed is listed on the pattern envelope of the garment requiring it.

### **Stays**

These are metal, plastic or bone strips in various pre-cut widths and lengths and are used for strapless bodices, points in collars, cummerbunds. The length, width and number needed are listed on the pattern envelope.

### **Zigzag Wire Stays**

These are spring wires which are flexible and adjustable in length. Because of their flexibility, they are almost invisible when used in necklines or collars or for formal gowns. They are inserted inside the seam and attached to the seam allowance. They come in either black or white and in several lengths.

### **Horsehair Braid**

Horsehair braid is a stiff woven braid used for hemming the edge of light-weight full skirts and lace garments to give the hem support. It is available in widths from ½ inch to 3½ inches in black or white.

### **Weights**

Round lead weights available in various sizes are used to weight the hem edges of jackets and coats, or for weighting necklines and collars for a particular fashion effect.



## FABRIC FACTS

*"Little lamb, who made thee?" might be a logical question to ask today when viewing a mound of fuzzy lamb's wool in a fabric department. Years ago the question would have been silly because everyone knew a sheep on a hillside provided the origin. Today it may come from a laboratory and be composed entirely of man-made fibers.*

*Although the vast, wonderful array of new fabrics which appear each year are a delight to see, they can at the same time be bewildering. Years ago, women took pride in being able to identify a fabric by looking at it and feeling it. Now, this is almost a lost art. Because of new methods of manufacture, identities have become confused so that synthetics may resemble wool; cotton, silk; silk, linen. In fact, fabrics can look, behave and feel just about any way man wants them to. It all depends on what is done to the fiber when converting it to cloth.*

*Because sewing and pressing techniques vary according to the material, it is important that you understand the three factors—fiber, construction and finish—which influence the manner in which a fabric is handled. Try to be as knowledgeable as possible about these matters. It will make your sewing easier, and make you a better-dressed woman.*

### THE FIBERS

Less than fifty years ago, all fabrics were made of natural fibers. There was wool from the sheep; cotton from the cotton plant; silk from the silkworm cocoon and linen from the flax plant. Today we have the same natural fibers and a tremendous variety of new synthetics which originate in a test tube. Terms such as "polyamides," "cellulose triacetates," "polyesters" and "acrylics" appear everywhere. You may never see a polyamide or care to see one, just as you may never see a cotton plant or care to see one, but you really should know what these fibers will do for you.

The first place to start checking is the bolt of fabric. It is a Federal Trade Commission ruling that fabrics must have the fiber content identified before they are sold to retail outlets. Carefully check labels and hang tags before you buy. This knowledge may affect your purchase.

To help you obtain this information a list of the popular fibers and fabrics is given here. Important characteristics and general tips on sewing and care are also noted. New fibers and fabrics will be appearing regularly. Try to keep up-to-date by reading magazines, such as *McCall's Pattern Fashions*.

■ **NATURAL FIBERS**

*ANIMAL* (protein):

WOOL (hair fibers of various animals, most commonly, sheep). Others include mohair, cashmere, vicuna, camel's hair and alpaca

SILK (cocoon of silk worm)

*VEGETABLE*

COTTON (seed pod of cotton plant)

LINEN (flax fibers)

Warm, absorbent, wrinkle-resistant. Dyes well. Shrinkage tendencies reduced when treated or blended with nylon and other synthetics. Synthetic blends have tendency to pill.

Lustrous, smooth, drapes well. Is naturally resilient and strong. Takes brilliant dyes. Blends with wool, cotton and man-made fibers.

Versatile, strong, long-wearing; blends well with most fibers. Can be finished so that it is crease-resistant and needs little or no ironing.

Cool, comfortable, absorbent. Has a crisp, fresh appearance. Can be blended with natural and man-made fibers. Shrinks unless treated. Frequently has crease-resistant finish applied.

Dry-clean unless labeled washable, then follow manufacturer's instructions. Use press cloth and moderate iron when pressing. Dry away from heat. Sponge before sewing, unless fabric has been pre-shrunk.

Dry-clean unless labeled washable. Press on wrong side with moderate iron, when damp. Sew sheers over tissue; use silk or mercerized thread. Place sharp pins in seam allowance to avoid holes.

Shrinks, unless Sanforized or otherwise treated. Washable, can be pressed with hot iron while damp. Resin-finished cottons have wash-and-wear properties; need little ironing. With these finishes, follow sewing hints for man-made fibers.

Washable. Press with hot iron while very damp, on wrong side. Shrink (if not treated) before cutting. Cut, don't tear, to straighten ends. Raveling edges need special finishing; zigzag stitches are satisfactory.

**FIBER AND SOURCE**

**EXAMPLE**

**CHARACTERISTICS**

**SEWING TIPS AND GENERAL CARE**

■ **MAN-MADE FIBERS**

**RAYON** (regenerated cellulose)

Rayon (variety of manufacturers)  
 Coloray (Courtaulds) Solution-dyed yarn giving superior color-fast properties.  
 Cupioni (American Bemberg) A thick-and-thin rayon filament giving a slubbed appearance.  
 Bemberg (American Bemberg) A rayon filament made by the cuprammonium process.  
 Jetspun (American Enka) Rayon yarn solution-dyed.

Drapes and dyes well. Blends with all natural and synthetic fibers. Characteristics similar to cotton. Can be textured, creped, moiréed; variety of finishes applied.

Dry-clean or wash, depending on manufacturer's instructions. Use warm iron. Handle carefully when wet since rayon loses strength in wet state; do not wring; dry-roll in a towel.

**ACETATE** (acetylated cellulose)

Chromspun (Tennessee Eastman) Solution-dyed acetate yarn.  
 Celaperm (Celanese Corp.) Filament and staple acetate yarn.  
 Estron (Tennessee Eastman) White acetate yarn colored by conventional dyeing methods.

Soft, luxurious and smooth. Drapes beautifully. Takes sharp and brilliant colors. Blends well with synthetic and natural fibers. Heat-set pleats are permanent. Moth- and mildew-resistant. Fades on exposure to atmosphere unless solution-dyed.

Hand-wash or dry-clean. Use cool iron and press while quite damp. Use tissue under seams to avoid marking right side. Keep away from heat and acetone (nail polish removers) to prevent melting and dissolving of acetate fabric.

**TRIACETATE** (cellulose base)

Arnel (Celanese Corp.)

Excellent wet strength. Won't shrink or stretch. Takes permanent pleats well, resists wrinkles. Blends well with natural and most synthetic fibers, giving fabric a soft, comfortable feeling and beautiful drape.

Washable, quick-drying; easily pressed with iron set at "wool." In blends, treat as for the other fiber; sew as for synthetics. Use tissue under seams to prevent marking right side.

## FIBER AND SOURCE

## EXAMPLE

## CHARACTERISTICS

SEWING TIPS  
AND GENERAL CARE■ DERIVATIVES OF  
CELLULOSE

Zantrel (American Enka)

Luxurious soft hand; drapes well. Strong; low water absorption. Dimensionally stable.

Dry-clean unless marked washable.

ACRYLIC (more than 85% acrylonitrile)

Acrilan (Chemstrand Corp.)  
Orlon (DuPont)  
Creslan (American Cyanamid)  
Zefran (Dow Chemical)

Used alone or in blends with natural or other synthetics. As a group have natural, luxurious feel; warmth and bulk but light in weight. Good crease recovery; retain pleats and press. Resist damage by moths, sunlight and mildew.

Most blends are washable, using warm water and a detergent; rinse thoroughly to prevent graying. If ironing seems necessary, use low setting. Mercerized thread may be used; fine needles, sharp pins and scissors are necessary. Choose washable notions. Perfect machine tension is essential to prevent seam puckers. Avoid ripping out or pressing until fit is assured.

MODACRYLIC (35-85% acrylonitrile)

Verel (Tennessee Eastman)

Warm, strong; resistant to sunlight, moths and wrinkling. Bulk without weight.

Wash easily, dry quickly. In fur-like form should be treated as fur. Follow Acrylic washing instructions; use very low iron or shriveling will result.

FIBER AND SOURCE	EXAMPLE	CHARACTERISTICS	SEWING TIPS AND GENERAL CARE
<p>NYLON (polyamide)</p>	<p>Dynel (Union Carbide Corp.)</p> <p>Nylon (DuPont, Chemstrand) Caprolan (Allied Chemical)</p> <p>Antron (DuPont) trilobal nylon multifilament.</p>	<p>Coatings (fur-like fabrics of 100% Dynel or Dynel blended with Orlon). Has soft, luxurious feel; drapes well. Reduces static electricity, has good wrinkle recovery. Dyes beautifully; fire-resistant.</p> <p>Noted for toughness, elasticity and strength. Takes a durable pleat, resists moths and mildew. Blends well with both natural and synthetic fibers, giving added strength. Dry, silk hand, drapes and takes color beautifully.</p>	<p>Easily washed, using moderate temperature and mild soap. Rinse thoroughly. Wash white with white since nylon pulls color from other fabrics. Quick-drying, little or no ironing. Use low heat in pressing. Sensitive to strong sun. (See Acrylics for sewing.)</p>
<p>POLYESTER</p>	<p>Dacron (DuPont) Kodel (Tennessee Eastman) Fortrel (Celanese Corp.) Vycron (Beaunit Mills) T62 (DuPont) (trilobal extended Dacron filament)</p>	<p>Usually found in blends. High tensile strength. Has excellent wrinkle resistance and retains heat-set pleats. Good draping qualities and resistance to shrinking or stretching. Light-weight. Absorbs little moisture. Sensitive to heat. Resists moths, mildew and sunlight.</p>	<p>Spot cleans and washes easily in warm water; rinse thoroughly to prevent graying. Quick-drying, needs little or no ironing. Use iron on "warm" setting if you must press. Cannot be eased in or shrunk during construction, so correct pattern selection is important.</p>

## FIBER AND SOURCE

## EXAMPLE

## CHARACTERISTICS

SEWING TIPS  
AND GENERAL CARE

## STRETCH YARNS

Helanca Yarn (Heberlein Patent Corp.)  
Nylon 288 (DuPont)  
Agilon (Deering Milliken)

Warp stretch pulls parallel to selvage edge. Filling stretch pulls across the fabric width. Two-way stretch pulls in both directions.

Use the type of stretch the pattern calls for. Check manufacturer's directions for care. See Chapter 7 for full instructions on handling stretch fabrics.

## RUBBER

Lastex (Uniroyal)  
(elastic yarn)

Lastex yarn is the rubber core and is wound with cotton, wool, silk or yarns to produce a permanently elastic yarn. Used in warp or filling, the fabric will stretch in the direction of the lastex.

Washable, dry-cleanable; use moderate temperature iron. Use nylon thread, a fine needle and stitch at slow even speed with a small stitch (14 to the inch.) Adjust tension. A zigzag machine is very satisfactory to stitch seams and as a seam and hem finish.

## METALLIC

Lurex (Dow Chemical)

Yarn in which bright aluminum foil is put between plastic film. Woven or knitted into fabrics.

Usually washable if fabrics in which they appear can be washed. Test first, then press with moderate iron.

Mylar (DuPont)

Metal foil covered with polyester film to produce a metallic yarn.

Metlon (Metlon Corp.)

Aluminum foil between two layers of plastic film.

## FIBER AND SOURCE

## EXAMPLE

## CHARACTERISTICS

SEWING TIPS  
AND GENERAL CARE

GLASS

Fiberglas (Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corp.)

Glass yarn for home furnishings, curtaining and industrial uses. Resists moth, mildew, sunlight; fireproof and non-absorbent. Does not deteriorate with age.

Avoid rubbing, machine-washing, dry-cleaning, ironing. Test fabric for correct stitch, tension. Use mercerized thread, long stitch, loose tension, light pressure, sharp needle. Line with Fiberglas only.

URETHANE FOAM

Scott Apparel Foam (Scott Paper Co.)  
Curon (Reeves Bros.)

Rubber-like material used for interlining and interfacing. Light-weight, non-allergenic, non-toxic, odorless, gives warmth without weight. When bonded to another fabric, gives resilience and shape retention to the fabric.

Follow manufacturer's instructions for care. See complete instructions for handling in Chapter 7.

## THE BLENDS

Technicians in the textile industry are constantly experimenting with blends to improve the appearance and serviceability of fabrics. Wool is blended with Dacron to make it washable, more crease-resistant, lighter in weight. Cotton is blended with nylon to make it stronger, quick-drying and silkier in appearance. Some of the blendings are quite successful, but others may fail to give the performance expected.

The secret of perfect blending is in the balance of fibers. A 100 per cent synthetic of Dacron, Orlon, Acrilan, Arnel, nylon and others less well known will do exactly what is claimed. These synthetics are usually washable and highly crease-resistant. They won't shrink, stretch or lose shape. When they are combined with other fibers, usually the natural fibers, these same characteristics are partially added to the fabric, but only in proportion to the percentage of synthetic fiber in the fabric. If the fabric is to give the performance of the synthetic, the synthetic fiber must compose at least 50 per cent of the blend. In many cotton and rayon blends, the synthetic fiber must constitute 65 per cent of the fabric for the blend to react as the synthetic.

When confronted with a fabric that is composed of two or more fibers, it is often a problem to know just how to handle the combination of fibers to get the best results in your garment. Again, check those hang tags and labels. The various percentages of fibers in the fabric will be listed, and reliable manufacturers will state how the fabric should be cleaned. Don't think that just because a woolen has some Dacron in it, the fabric is washable. Be sure that the Dacron is at least 50 per cent of the fabric and the tag clearly states that the fabric may be washed. Don't assume that just because a cotton contains a little nylon, it won't shrink. The nylon may be there just to add sheen or to make the fabric stronger. Be sure that the tag or label states that the fabric will not shrink more than one per cent. Even then, it's often best to test the fabric for shrinkage. (See the shrinkage test on page 97.)

## FIBERS INTO FABRIC

from bark, bonding them into cloth. Weaving and knitting followed. Despite all our wonderful scientific advances, we still haven't found any new methods of making cloth. Man still must weave, knit or bond fibers into fabric.

From these three basic methods of making a cloth, a huge technology has evolved. Man can weave fabrics in an endless variety of textures; he knits them in all sorts of interesting stitches, and bonds them with heat, moisture and chemicals.

### Woven Fabrics

Most of our fabrics are woven. In weaving, two systems of yarns are interlaced at right angles to each other. The type of yarn used, the way the yarns are interlaced, even the colors of the yarn produce an infinite variety of interesting fabrics in look, feel and reaction.

It isn't so important for you to know how these weaves are made, but it is important to know what they will do, how they will look when you make them up in a garment. When you purchase fabric you should know if the weave is a sturdy one or if the very nature of the weave allows the fabric to stretch, and what will happen when the garment is worn. Although less important, it's nice to know what the different weaves are and what they are called, so when you read and hear about various fabrics you can at least have a mental picture of what the fabric looks like.

Surprising as it may seem, there are basically only three methods of weaving: the plain weave, the twill weave and the satin weave. They vary in the way the lengthwise threads or warp yarns are crossed by the crosswise threads or filling (weft) yarns. But there are many, many ways to vary each of these basic weaves.

**PLAIN WEAVE.** This is the most common of all weaves. Each filling yarn goes over one warp yarn and under the next alternately. Every second warp yarn is raised in the loom, the filling shot across, then the alternate warp yarns are raised, and the filling shot across again.

When warp and filling yarns of the same size are closely woven and equally spaced, the plain weave is the strongest of all weaves.

Familiar fabrics made with a plain weave are:



Man has been making cloth to cover himself since his very earliest history. He probably started with the skins of animals and then learned how to pound fibers

batiste, broadcloth, challis, gingham, muslin, madras. And there are many, many more.

One major variation of the plain weave is the *Basket*

## FABRIC FACTS / FIBERS INTO FABRIC

*Weave.* Double yarns are used in a plain-weave pattern, instead of the usual single yarn. This produces a very loosely woven fabric, which stretches easily and drapes well. The looseness of the fabric makes it less durable and not very satisfactory for clothing; it is very likely to stretch out of shape quickly in a garment.

The *Rib Weave* which has ribbed or corded effects in either the warp or filling direction is another variation of the plain weave. The rib may be produced by alternating fine yarns with coarse yarns, or single yarns with double yarns. In general, ribbed fabrics are not as long-wearing as plain-woven ones, especially when

the ribs are rather thick, because the coarser yarns tend to pull away from the finer ones, resulting in splits and tears in the fabric. The entire yarn is also exposed to abrasive wear and is less durable.

**TWILL WEAVE.** This weave is formed by the filling crossing at least two warp yarns before going under one or more yarns, with a shift to the right or left in succeeding rows forming diagonal ridges on the face of the fabric. Basically, twills are not as tight a weave as the plain weave, since the yarns are not as tightly interlocked. However, most twills are woven of sturdy yarns and give good service. They are often preferred for suits, coats and work clothes because of their rough and interesting texture. A few fabrics representative of the twill weave are: gabardine, drill, serge, whipcord, foulard, surah.

Changes in the direction of the twill weave's diagonal lines produce variations such as the herringbone, corkscrew, entwining and fancy twills.

**SATIN WEAVE.** This is the weakest type of weave. Similar to the twill in construction, the yarns are more widely spaced, producing long floats which lie on the surface and receive most of the wear. Satin weaves produce smooth, lustrous fabrics. Satin and sateen are made with a satin weave.

There are many variations of each of these weaves. To help you recognize the most popular of these special weaves a brief description of each is given here:

**PILE WEAVE.** This fancy weave uses both the plain and the twill weaves in construction. An extra warp or filling yarn is woven into the basic construction. This additional yarn is drawn up from the surface of the fabric forming loops. The loops may be cut or closely sheared as in velvet, or left uncut as in terry cloth.

**DOUBLE-CLOTH WEAVE.** In double-cloth, two fabrics are woven on the loom at the same time, one on top of the other and interlaced in construction. Two different weaves can be used; for example, a twill on one side, a plain on the other. These fabrics are

### WEAVES



- Plain weave
- Plain weave variation:
  - Rib
  - Basket
- Twill weave
- Satin weave
- Pile weave
- Double-cloth weave
- Leno/gauze weave
- Swivel weave
- Dobby weave
- Jacquard weave



Knitted fabric  
Bonded fabric

on one side, a plain on the other. These fabrics are frequently bulky. If made of warm, woolly fibers, they can give great warmth. Fabrics representative of double-cloth weaves are blanket cloth and upholstery fabrics of all types.

## FABRIC FACTS / FABRIC FINISHES

**LENO WEAVE; GAUZE WEAVE.** Very light-weight meshy fabrics are woven with the leno loom. Basically the plain weave is used with the second warp yarn twisting around the first warp as it passes alternately over and under the filling yarn, locking the filling in position. Some major fabrics woven on leno looms are marquisette, netting, mesh shirtings.

**LAPPET and SWIVEL WEAVES.** In both these weaves, decorative dots, circles or other small figures are woven on the surface of the fabric while it is being constructed in the loom. In the swivel weave, yarns are cut when the fabric is completed. Since the yarns cannot be securely fastened, the designs may pull out when the fabric is handled in washing. The lappet weave has the designs stitched in the fabric while it is being woven. The ends of the threads are fastened so they will not pull out easily. Dotted swiss is produced by both these methods. The lappet weave dotted swiss is preferable to the swivel weave.

**DOBBY WEAVE.** Special looms are needed for dobby weaves, which produce small geometric designs in the fabric. Although this weave does make use of floats, they are usually small enough not to affect the wear of the fabric. The most familiar of the dobby weaves is the popular bird's-eye, which is a small diamond pattern with an eye in the center.

**JACQUARD WEAVE.** The marvelous damasks, brocades and tapestries are made on the Jacquard loom. The easiest explanation of the loom is that it is controlled by perforated paper patterns similar to player piano rolls, and is capable of producing intricate patterned designs. Floats are inevitable in the Jacquard weave because of the elaborate designs and may affect durability unless the fabric is compactly constructed and of good quality. Damask, brocade, tapestry and matelassé are all Jacquard weaves.

### The Knits

Knitted fabrics are in fashion. They seem to answer a

fabric. The fact that it is formed of loops makes it springy, stretchy and more elastic than woven cloth. These qualities can be both an advantage and a disadvantage. Knits stretch and contract with the body, making them wonderful for active wear. They usually spring back into shape. After long wear, however, they may become stretched and start to "bag."

Knits come in marvelous patterns, in all sorts of weights and in a myriad of textures. They drape well and do not wrinkle easily. However, because of their elasticity they may cling to the body and they do require special handling. Before sewing a knitted fabric be sure to read the special directions on page 99.

### Bonded Fabrics

The oldest method of making cloth is by bonding fibers. Early man pounded the bark of trees and through pressure created a cloth. A French monk placed wool in his sandals to relieve foot pain. He discovered that the moisture, pressure and heat matted the wool fibers, interlocking them to form a sort of wool cloth. Thus, felt was born.

For dressmaking there are only two types of bonded fabrics you are likely to work with: felt and the non-woven shaping materials. There is no elasticity or resilience to these fabrics, and they will tear under stress. The edges will not ravel or fray. They will not drape, but many are thermoplastic, which means they shrink and shape with the application of heat and moisture. This quality is fine if you are making a shaped garment, but it can present problems in pressing.

## FABRIC FINISHES

If you've mastered the fibers, and know about weaves, you have one more step to go. There is another process involved in the manufacturing of fabrics which will have a decided effect on a fabric's action and behavior—the finishing. This includes all those wonderful treatments which make fabrics shrink-resistant, crease-resistant, color-fast, drip-dry, mothproof.

Once more, check the labels. You will discover a

knitted fabrics are in fashion. They seem to answer the demand for clothes that are practical, comfortable and still good-looking. More and more fibers are being turned into attractive knit patterns and made into all types of garments from underwear to evening clothes.

When buying a knit, remember that it is a resilient

Since more, check the labels. You will discover a host of trade names, like Mitin, Zeset, Lanaset, Everglaze. Most of these finishes are patented processes and the only way to discover what the name means and the purpose of the finish is to consult a list, such as the one here. Many of these finishes accomplish

## FABRIC FACTS / FABRIC FINISHES

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several purposes. New finishes appear almost daily, so keep up to date by reading about them in current magazines.

### Drip-dry Finishes

**Belfast** (*Deering Milliken*) A chemical modification of cotton fibers for permanent wash-and-wear qualities. Fabrics can be machine-washed, tumble- or drip-dried.

**Dip 'n Dry** (*Fuller Fabrics*) A finish applied to make fabric fast-drying, easier to iron and crease-resistant.

**Dri-Don** (*Dan River Mills*) A resin finish applied to cottons to increase wash-and-wear properties and add to crease-resistance.

### Crease-Resistant Finishes

**Disciplined** (*Bates Fabrics*) A finish applied to give resistance to creasing, soil, mildew and perspiration.

**Dri-Smooth** (*Cranston Print Works Co.*) A finish applied to cotton fabric for crease-resistance and soil and perspiration control.

**Everglaze** (*Jos. Bancroft and Sons*) A trademark that identifies fabrics treated for crease-, stretch- and shrink-resistance.

**Good Conduct** (*Wamsutta Fabrics*) A finish applied to fabrics to give crease-resistance.

**Perma Pressed** (*Avondale Mills*) A finish applied to make fabric crease-resistant and fast-drying.

**Tebilized** (*Tootal Broadhurst Lee Co. Ltd.*) Trademark applied to cottons, linens, rayons and mixtures indicating permanent crease-resistance and improved hand and drape.

**Wrinkl-Shed** (*Dan River Mills*) A finish which gives crease-, soil- and mildew-resistance, and shrinkage control.

### Shrinkage-control Finishes

**Zeset** (*DuPont*) Process used on rayons and cottons giving wrinkle-resistance, and stability against shrinking, sagging and stretching.

### Water-Repellent Finishes

**Zelan** (*DuPont*) A finish for water- and spot-repellency.

**Cravenette** (*Cravenette Corp.*) A water-repellent finish.

### Mothproofing Finish

**Mitin** (*Geigy Chemical Corp.*) A lasting, non-toxic mothproofing compound applied by the manufacturer when fabric is being dyed.

### Insulating Processes

**Milium** (*Deering Milliken*) A lining fabric with a metal insulating treatment that gives warmth in winter, coolness in summer.

### Texturing Processes

**Lanolized** A process that impregnates fabric with lanolin giving a softer, smoother finish.

**Mercerized** A chemical treatment of cotton giving added luster, strength and dye retention.

**Taslan** (*DuPont*) A process applied to synthetic fibers to produce a bulkier, more textured appearance.

**Ban-lon** (*Joseph Bancroft & Sons*) Fiber bulking process to give textured yarns for knitted and woven fabrics.

### Color-Fast Processes

**Vat Dyed** (*Vat Dye Institute*) A dyeing process used on cotton, washable rayon, and linen fabrics to

Sanforized (*Cluett, Peabody and Co.*) Trademark appearing on woven cottons and cotton blends indicating that the fabric has been treated so it will not shrink more than one per cent when washed.

Lanaset (*American Cyanamid Co.*) Process used to control woolen shrinkage.

used on cotton, washable rayon, and linen fabrics to keep them color-fast to laundering, sun fading, and rubbing.

Avisco Integrity Tag (*American Viscose Corp.*) Rayon or acetate fabrics bearing this label meet standards for color-fastness, strength, shrinkage and chlorine-damage control.

FABRIC FACTS / GLOSSARY OF FAMILIAR FABRICS

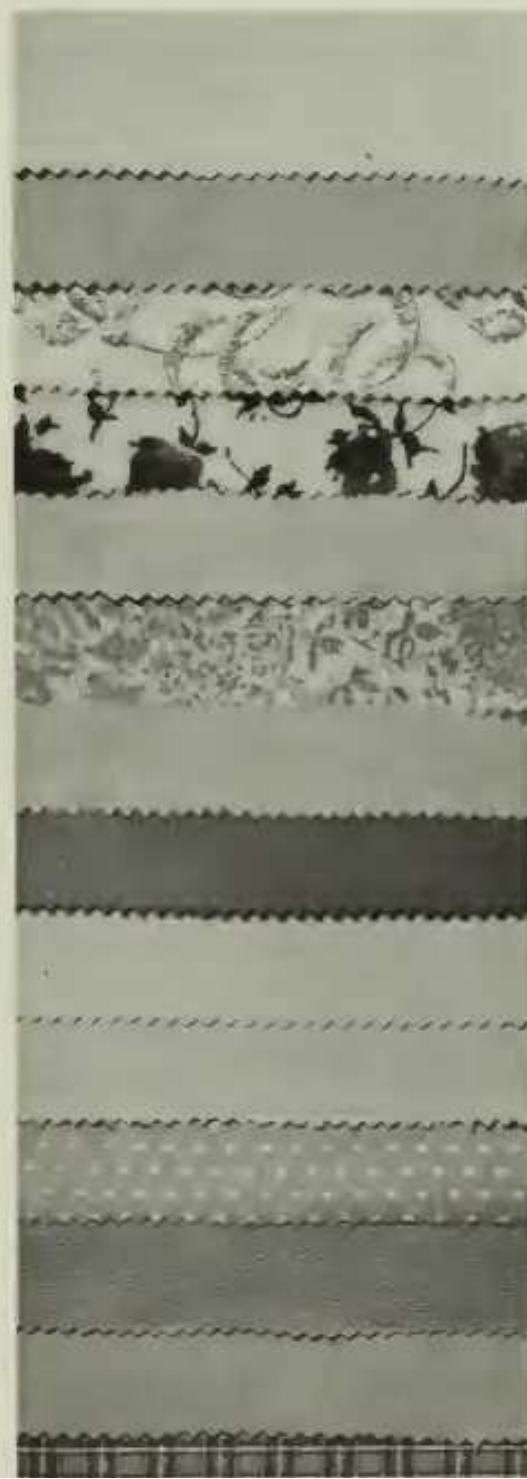
**GLOSSARY OF FAMILIAR FABRICS**

We've talked about fibers, we've talked about finishes, we've talked about weaves, now let's talk about specific fabrics. When you read the list of suggested fabrics on a pattern envelope you should know what is

meant by dimity, voile, madras, corduroy. This glossary has been compiled to help you identify the fabrics which you are most likely to use.

*Barathea* Made of silk or rayon warp with a woolen or worsted filling. Various weaves are used to produce this fine-textured cloth, which is usually of high quality. It comes most often in black.

GLOSSARY OF FAMILIAR FABRICS



Batiste

Broadcloth

Brocade

Challis

Chambray

Chiffon

China silk

Corduroy

Crepe

Denim

Dotted swiss

Faille

Flannel



Lawn

Linen

Moiré

Organdy

Organza

Peau de soie

Piqué

Satin

Seersucker

Shantung

Surah

Taffeta

Terry cloth



Gingham  
Jersey  
Lace



Tricot  
Velvet  
Voile

## FABRIC FACTS / GLOSSARY OF FAMILIAR FABRICS

**Bark Crepe** A woolen or rayon fabric that has rough, barklike surface interest. Used for coats and in upholstery.

**Batik** This is a method of printing cloth, rather than a special weave, fiber or finish. Design areas are covered in wax and color applied. When the wax is removed, the design appears in white on a colored background.

**Batiste** Soft, sheer cotton fabric woven in a plain weave. It comes in white, solid colors and prints, and is very suitable for soft dresses.

**Bedford Cord** A cloth made by using a variation of the plain weave in which cords run the length of the fabric. It can be woven of any of the major fibers, but is generally of wool or cotton. It is used for coats, suits, uniforms.

**Bengaline** Cross-rib material with filling yarn coarser than the warp to produce the corded effect. It is usually made of silk, rayon, wool or cotton in various widths and is used for dresses, coatings and ribbons.

**Bouclé** Usually found in woolens, this cloth is woven with a novelty yarn which has tightly curled loops. It does appear in some cottons and other fibers, and is very popular in knitted fabrics.

**Broadcloth** Usually a plain, closely woven cloth made of wool, cotton or silk, broadcloth may be made in a number of weaves. Cotton broadcloth has a fine cross-wise rib and a lustrous finish.

**Brocade** A decorative fabric which has a raised pattern woven in relief against a background. It is made of a variety of fibers and often has metallic threads forming the raised or embossed pattern. Depending on its weight, it may be used for clothing or upholstery.

**Burlap** A plain-weave coarse fabric made from jute or allied yarns. Comes natural or may be dyed in a variety of colors or prints.

**Butcher Rayon** Rayon fabric with a linen weave.

**Calico** A plain-woven cotton which is printed with small designs. It comes in various qualities depending on the texture and fineness of the yarn used.

**Camel Hair** A coating fabric made from the natural-

hairs of the camel.

**Chambray** Smooth, lustrous fabric made of colored or dyed warp threads, and white or contrasting color threads in the filling, producing an iridescent effect. Usually, it is a cotton fabric, but may be made in a combination of fibers. It is sturdy, launders well, and is easy to work with.

**Cheviot** A heavy-weight twill-weave woolen or worsted with a rough, hairy surface, similar to tweed. Ideal for sportswear.

**Chiffon** Very sheer, light-weight, transparent cotton, silk, rayon or blend of fibers made in a plain weave with fine, highly twisted yarns. It is a dressy fabric, and is often used for soft draping over other heavier firmer fabrics.

**China Silk** A very soft light-weight plain-woven silk, used primarily for linings. It is simulated in some rayon lining fabrics.

**Chino** A sturdy cotton fabric, made in plain or twill weave and fairly lustrous. It is used extensively for summer uniforms and sportswear.

**Chintz** A glazed, crisp cotton of a closely woven plain weave, usually printed with bright and gay colors. It is used a great deal for drapery and slipcovers. In lighter weights, it is very adaptable to gay summer dresses and sportswear.

**Corduroy** A very strong, durable cotton pile fabric with rounded ridges or wales of pile running length-wise. The wales come in various widths. Suitable for casual clothes and sportswear.

**Covert** A twill weave usually made of woolen or worsted yarn but can be cotton, rayon or spun acetate. Fabric woven with yarns of two shades of the same color so that fabric has a speckled effect. Used for coats, suits, sportswear.

**Crepe** Light-weight fabric of silk, rayon, cotton, wool, synthetic or a combination of fibers. It is characterized by a crinkling of the surface, obtained by using either hard-twisted yarns, chemical treatment, special weaves or embossing.

**Damask** Woven designs similar to those of brocade

colored hair of the camel, frequently mixed with wool. It is a soft napped fabric, noted for its warmth and light weight.

*Cashmere* A soft finish fabric made entirely from the hair of goats from Kashmir or from fine wool mixed with the hair widely used in coats, suits, sweaters.

*Challis* A light-weight soft wool, cotton, rayon or combination of fibers made with a plain weave and usually printed with a small design. Usually used for

are found in damask, but the cloth is a finer, thinner construction. It is made of silk, cotton, linen, rayon and some blends of synthetics. Widely used for table linens, damask is available in various qualities at all price ranges.

*Denim* Twill-weave cotton woven with colored warp and white filling yarns. Gives a strong fabric that launders well. Popular for work and play clothes.

*Dimity* Thin sheer cotton fabric with corded stripe

## FABRIC FACTS / GLOSSARY OF FAMILIAR FABRICS

or check effects made by weaving heavier threads in a pattern using a plain weave. Popular for dainty dresses, lounge wear.

*Dobby* Any fabric woven on special doobby looms. Can be of cotton, rayon and silk. Fabrics have small woven designs such as dots, geometric figures, floral motifs. Widely used for shirts, blouses, dresses.

*Doeskin* A fine quality, smooth finish, satin weave wool fabric with a slight nap. Used for coating, suiting or sportswear. Also made in twill-weave rayon napped on one side.

*Dotted Swiss* Sheer cotton fabric made of a lappet or swivel weave, with woven dots in it. Used for blouses, dresses, children's clothes, curtains.

*Doupioni* A silk yarn which is uneven, irregular and of a large diameter. It is used in cloth of the same name, as well as pongee, shantung and other slubbed silks.

*Drill* A durable closely woven cotton fabric of medium weight; when dyed, drill is the basic cloth of khaki and ticking.

*Duck* A closely woven, durable, heavy cotton fabric. Use depends on its weight.

*Duvelyn* A very softly napped wool fabric, or a silk which has a suede-like downy nap. It looks like a compact velvet, drapes well and wears well.

*Faille* Silk or rayon fabric with a flat crosswise rib effect, similar to grosgrain. Used for dresses, suits and coats.

*Fake Fur* Woven or knitted fabrics made of cotton or synthetic fibers to simulate the fur of animals. Used wherever real fur might be used.

*Felt* Bonded fabric created by interlocking threads through moisture, heat and pressure. Widely used in millinery, most felt has wool fiber as the base, but it can be made of almost any fiber.

*Flannel* A soft, loosely woven cloth of either plain or twill weave which the dull finish may conceal. Flannel comes in many weights and textures, is usually slightly napped, and can be made of cotton, wool or rayon. Used for suits, dresses, coats and, in cotton,

on the face of the cloth. It is widely used in suits, coats, sportswear of all kinds.

*Georgette* A light-weight silk crepe with a pebbled effect. Has exceptional stiffness and body for its weight due to the yarn twist in weaving. Can be white, dyed or printed.

*Gingham* Plain-weave cotton of medium weight, which comes in checked, plaid or striped designs. It comes in various grades; better gingham is soft, finely woven.

*Homespun* Usually a plain-weave wool or cotton fabric which looks as if it were hand-loomed. The yarns used are rather thick, producing a fairly heavy-weight fabric.

*Hopsacking* A coarse plain-weave cloth of wool or cotton which is not very closely woven. Some hopsacking may be of a basket weave. It is used primarily for coats and suits.

*Jacquard* Any fabric woven on the looms named for the inventor, Jacquard, which make it possible to weave intricate and fancy designs into cloth. Brocades, damasks and tapestries are all the result of Jacquard weaving.

*Jersey* A smooth, plain-knit fabric of wool, cotton, rayon, or synthetic blends. Usually jersey has a dull surface and excellent draping qualities. Widely used in dresses, shirts, sportswear, underwear.

*Lace* Open-work fabric made with bobbins, needles or hooks. The threads form a design. Can be hand- or machine-made. Used for trimming or for entire garments.

*Lamé* Any fabric in which metallic threads are used in the weaving for decorative purposes. Used mainly for evening wear.

*Laminate* A layer of fabric which has been fused with a layer of foam; currently the term is widely used for fabrics fused with foam rubber. Used to give warmth without weight.

*Lawn* Fine, sheer, crisp-finished cotton or linen of plain weave. It is crisper than voile, less crisp than organdy. Comes in white, solid colors and prints.

for sleepwear and sport shirts.  
*Fleece* A heavy-weight woolen with very long nap used for coats. It is inclined to be bulky, and may be difficult to sew.  
*Foulard* A soft, twilled silk or rayon, usually printed in small figures. It is very popular for neckwear, and is also used for soft dresses, blouses, robes.  
*Gabardine* A sturdy cotton, rayon or wool fabric with a simple twill construction, giving steep diagonal lines

Popular for children's clothes, summer dresses, sleepwear.  
*Linen* Strong, lustrous fabric of plain-weave flax fiber. It comes in three major weights: handkerchief linen, which is very sheer; medium-weight, dress-weight linen; and heavier-suiting-weight for tailored garments.  
*Madras* A plain cotton weave, usually in strongly colored plaids, stripes and checks which will "bleed"

## FABRIC FACTS / GLOSSARY OF FAMILIAR FABRICS

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slightly when washed. Name comes from the section in India, where it was originated. Used for shirts, dresses, blouses.

*Marquissette* A gauze-weave mesh fabric, very light in weight. It is made of cotton, rayon, silk or nylon and is used for curtains or dressy evening fashions.

*Matelassé* Fancy fabric made on dobby or Jacquard looms. The patterns are raised, giving a quilted effect. It is made of silk, rayon, cotton or wool.

*Melton* A dull, non-lustrous wool fabric used for coatings and outer garments. Fabric gives excellent wear since the finishing process covers up all interlacings of the yarns giving a "solid" fabric.

*Mohair* Generally a soft, woolen fabric, made in plain and twill weaves, which is napped with goat hair. Fabric is glossy and lustrous, sometimes formed in loops on the surface.

*Moiré* Any fabric which has a wavy, water-marked finish. Most moiré is taffeta, treated to have a wavy, watery effect.

*Monk's Cloth* A rough basket weave, made of coarse cotton or linen fibers. Used mostly for slipcovers, draperies.

*Mousseline de Soie* Muslin made of silk or rayon with a crisp, firm finish; resembles chiffon. Used primarily for evening wear.

*Muslin* A substantial plain-weave cotton, fairly strong and heavy. It comes in various grades and qualities. Cheap muslin is sized or filled with a starchy substance which washes out; better grades are made of stronger, finer fibers.

*Nainsook* Soft, fine cotton fabric similar to batiste, but of coarser yarn. Light in weight, of plain weave, it resembles a soft-finished dimity. It is durable and launders well.

*Net or Netting* Open-weave fabric with knots coming at each corner of the square. Can be cotton, rayon, silk, or nylon and ranges from very light-weight to heavy fabric.

*Oxford Cloth* Plain-, basket- or twill-weave cotton, often used for shirting. It is fairly heavy cloth in which two yarns travel as one in the warp, and one filling yarn is equal in size to the two warp yarns.

*Paisley* Any cotton, wool, or rayon which is printed with the traditional scroll design which originated in Paisley, Scotland.

*Peau de Soie* The name means "skin of silk" and denotes a soft, good-quality silk satin cloth which has a rather dull, grainy appearance.

*Percalé* Closely woven plain-weave cotton fabric of smooth yarn. Widely used in white and pastels for fine sheets, it may also be printed for dress fabric.

*Pile Fabrics* Any material that to some degree resembles fur in that it has a fairly heavy nap or loops, cut or left uncut, on the face of the fabric, hiding the basic weave underneath. Fur fabrics, terry, velvet, corduroy are all classed as pile fabrics.

*Pima* A very fine quality cotton fiber, strong and lustrous, named after Pima County, Arizona, where it was originally grown.

*Piqué* A medium- or heavy-weight cotton fabric with raised cords running lengthwise. The cords can be of various widths, and several novelty weaves are available, such as waffle and bird's-eye piqués.

*Plissé* Cottons with a puckered effect put in by a special finish. They may be plain or printed in cottons ranging from lawn to organdy weights. Most plissés have permanent puckered effects; in cheaper plissés, puckers may wash out.

*Polished Cottons* Generally, a plain-weave cotton which has a glazed finish, mechanically applied. Many weights and grades of cotton fabric are polished through these methods.

*Pongee* Usually raw silk in a natural tan color which has a rather uneven, crude texture. It also refers to cotton or rayon cloth of similar weight and texture, which comes in solid colors or prints.

*Poplin* A standard dress goods material in which the

*Nonwoven Fabric* Fabric made by bonding fibers together with an adhesive agent or by fusing rather than weaving, spinning or knitting.

*Organdy* Sheer, stiff, transparent plain-weave cotton cloth, which usually is treated for permanent stiffness.

*Organza* Thin, transparent, stiff fabric of rayon or silk used for evening wear.

*Ottoman* A crosswise-ribbed fabric similar to faille or bengaline, but with much heavier ribs, often spaced with finer ribs between. It can be made of wool, cotton, silk or rayon covering cotton cords.

filling is heavier than the warp, producing a somewhat uneven ribbed effect. It can be of wool, silk or rayon, but is most commonly a medium- or heavy-weight cotton fabric.

*Puckered Nylon* A fabric originally made by weaving pre-shrunk and non-shrunk nylon yarns together. Other methods are also used to create permanent puckering, usually in stripes.

*Pure Dye Silk* Silk goods which are not weighted more than 10 to 15 per cent with metallic finishes to give them a heavier hand and stiffness. Too much

## FABRIC FACTS / GLOSSARY OF FAMILIAR FABRICS

weighting reduces the strength of the fabric, making the fibers break.

*Raw Silk* Silk from the cultivated silk worm, before any processing has been done to remove gum.

*Rep* A fabric with a ribbed effect.

*Sailcloth* A very strong, durable canvas. Can be made of linen, cotton, or nylon. Used largely for play clothes and in upholstery.

*Sateen* A cotton cloth woven with the standard satin weave used for silk and rayon satin. It is highly lustrous, used widely for linings in washable garments.

*Satin* Silk or rayon in satin weaves, producing a highly lustrous, slippery fabric used for evening wear and linings.

*Seersucker* A dull-surfaced medium-weight cotton with crinkly stripes on a plain surface, produced by a plain-weave crepe variation. Widely used for summer clothes.

*Serge* Diagonal worsted, wool, rayon or silk in a fine twill weave. It is used as a standard fabric for tailored suits; it is rugged, of high texture and smooth appearance.

*Shantung* A rough silk in a plain weave which has large irregular filling yarns which give it a slubbed effect. Cotton and rayon are often used to simulate this fabric.

*Sharkskin* A medium- to heavy-weight sleek fabric with a slightly lustered and textured weave. It is made in wool, rayon, silk and synthetics. It is very popular for tailored suits, slacks and sportswear.

*Suede Cloth* Plain-weave cotton napped on one side to look like leather suede. Used in jackets and sportswear.

*Suiting* General term used for any fabrics which are suitable for coats, suits. Includes many weaves, textures and various fibers.

*Surah* Twill-weave silk, rayon or synthetic which is suitable for soft, tailored garments. It is available in solid colors, prints, and plaids, and is often used for

mainly for pillow and mattress covers, in recent years it has become a novelty sportswear fabric for shorts, slacks and dresses.

*Tricot* A fine-waled knit fabric, used a great deal for underwear and sleepwear, also for gloves. It is commonly made of rayon, nylon or cotton.

*Tulle* Silk, nylon or rayon sheer cloth with a hexagonal mesh construction. It is a stiff fabric, used for bouffant gowns, bridal veils and for dance costumes.

*Tussah* A sturdy, rough silk fiber sometimes called wild silk. The cloth is very coarse, rough and usually quite loosely woven.

*Tweed* A rough-surfaced fabric, usually woven in two or more colors to obtain some sort of pattern, check or plaid. Originally tweed was a rough homespun of heavy woolen, but today the term covers almost any fabric which is nubby, of variegated colors and has a roughened look. Tweeds are usually woolens; however, cotton tweeds, silk tweeds and synthetic tweeds have become popular in the past decade.

*Velour* Thick-bodied, soft, close-napped fabric, mainly used as a suit or coat fabric. Wool velour is constructed like a broadcloth with an erect nap that is thick and full. Nylon velour is also very popular for dressy at-home fashions.

*Velvet* Pile fabrics with plain or twill back and warp yarns forming the pile. They may be of all silk, rayon, nylon or cotton, but are usually made of a silk or synthetic fiber with a cotton back.

*Velveteen* Cotton velvet with short, thick pile and a dull surface. Widely used for evening fashions.

*Voile* Light, sheer, thin, transparent cloth, which is similar to organdy and lawn. It is less stiff than these, drapes well and tends to cling to the body.

*Waffle cloth* A textured cotton similar to piqué that is woven on a dobby loom in a fine honeycomb weave.

*Wash-and-Wear* Any fabric which can be washed, dried and then worn again with little or no ironing.

*Whipcord* A worsted similar to gabardine but with a



neckwear.

**Taffeta** A closely woven, smooth fabric of plain weave with a crisp finish, and usually with a sheen to its surface. Formerly all taffeta was silk; now, rayon or synthetic fibers compose much of the cloth.

**Terry Cloth** A cotton fabric with uncut loops on one or both sides used extensively for towels since it is absorbent and requires no ironing. It is popular for beach and sportswear as well.

**Ticking** A drill cloth of twill construction which has alternate stripes of white and colored yarn. Used

steeper or more pronounced twill. Dry and harsh to touch, it is a strong, springy fabric preferred for riding clothes and sharply tailored garments.

**Woolens** Woven wool fabrics of short, fuzzy fibers which have not been highly twisted.

**Worsteds** Popular class of wool cloth made of choice wool fibers which are smooth, strong and more highly twisted than the woolen fibers.

**Zibeline** A wool coating fabric with a long, rather wiry, lustrous nap of straight fibers laid over in one direction.

## CHAPTER 5

# THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE

*A pleasant place to work and the correct tools are a "must" for sewing enjoyment. Try to establish a sewing center in your home. It will make it possible for you to sew efficiently and to utilize moments snatched from a busy schedule.*

## A PLACE TO SEW

Years ago a special room was set aside for sewing. Equipment was always ready to be used and sewing could be left in place for future work. Today few women are lucky enough to have this ideal arrangement. Usually, sewing and equipment must be packed away between sewing sessions. However, if you give this matter careful thought, perhaps you can find a tiny space in a closet, a hall, a corner of the kitchen or a guest room which can be fitted for sewing. Use your ingenuity and design a sewing nook for yourself.

Be sure the area where you sew is well lighted. Don't depend on machine lighting alone. Select a straight-back chair without arms. It should fit your back adequately, so that you will be comfortable for long sewing sessions. A full-length mirror convenient to your sewing area is a must.

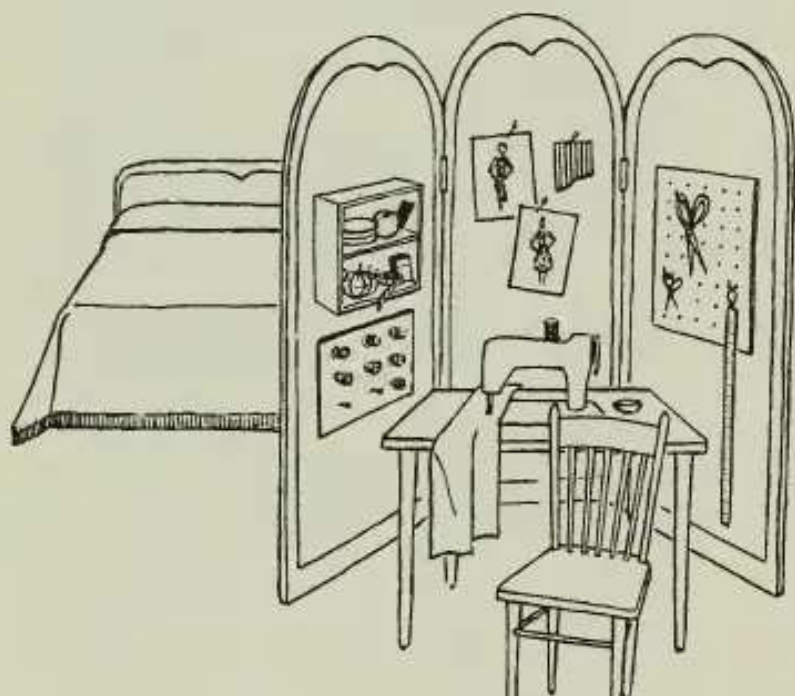
If you can arrange a three-way mirror it will be even better. The mirror panel needs to be only wide enough to take in your figure, but it must be long enough so you can stand quite close and see yourself from the top of your head to your toes. Then you will be able to judge the entire effect of your garment and make the necessary adjustments in length or placement of details easily and accurately.

## ESSENTIAL TOOLS

The equipment you need depends on the amount and type of sewing you do. Each year new devices appear on the market. Watch for these on notions counters of your local stores. Often you will find an inexpensive item that can save hours of sewing time and help create a more professional look.

Not every seamstress needs every piece of equipment. However, these items are essential to successful and easy sewing:

- Sewing machine.
- Attachments—adjustable zipper foot and seam guide.
- Dressmaker's shears—bent handles, 6½ to 8 inches



Organization and planning are the keys to good results in a limited space. Utilize as many portable aids as possible. A sewing screen placed in a corner of a room can be decorative on one side but very functional on the other. Put pegboard on the back with hooks to hold yardsticks, tapes and small shelves for boxes and tools. Hide your sewing table, machine and pressing equipment behind the screen. Although the equipment is out of sight, it will always be handy for using.

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- long.
- Scissors—sharp points, 3 to 6 inches long.
- Tape measure—folded, 60 inches long, reversible.
- Yardstick.
- Ruler—transparent with 1/8-inch markings, 6 inches long. Also one 12 inches long.
- Tracing wheel.
- Dressmaker's carbon paper (tracing paper).
- Tailor's chalk or chalk pencil.
- Dressmaker or silk pins.
- Thimble.
- Pin cushion.

## THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / ESSENTIAL TOOLS

- Needles—assorted sizes.
- Thread—various types and colors.
- Pressing equipment—iron, ironing board, pad, cover, sleeve board, press cloth, tailor's ham, sponge.
- Full-length mirror.

In addition to the necessary equipment, there are many other sewing aids which are useful. The items below do not comprise a complete list of available equipment but are among those you may find most helpful.

- Sewing machine attachments other than those listed above.
- Pinking or scalloping shears.
- Buttonhole scissors.
- Seam ripper.
- Thread clips.
- Cutting board.
- Hem marker.
- Hem gauge.
- Emery bag.
- Needle threader.
- Loop turner.
- Bodkin.
- Stiletto.
- Tweezers.
- Seam roll.
- Clapper.

- Point presser.
- Needle board.

Keep your small equipment neatly arranged in a handy sewing box or basket. If you do not have a specially designed one, divide the area with smaller boxes to insure tidiness. Be sure thread ends are caught in the notch on each spool.

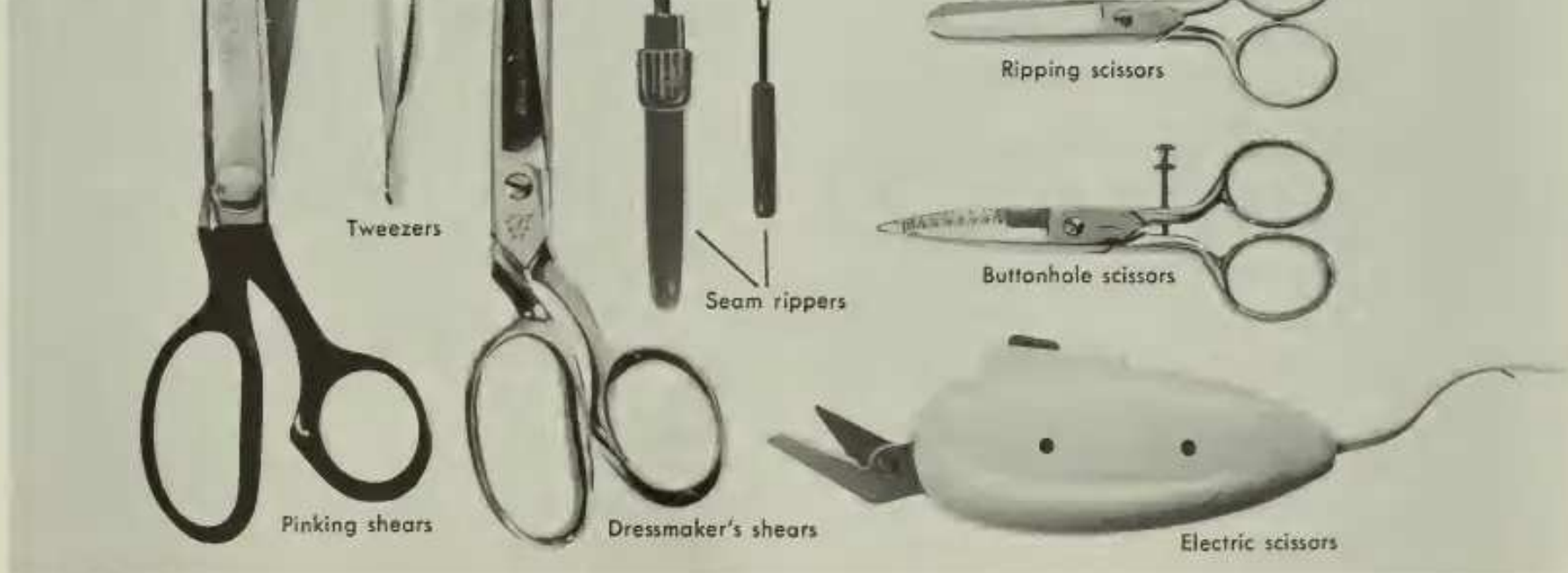
Whenever you purchase equipment, check the quality. Buy good tools and give them excellent care. They are a form of investment which should pay dividends in length of service and performance. To help you shop wisely, here are some helpful suggestions for selecting various types of equipment.

### Cutting Tools

Look for shears and scissors made of steel by the hot-drop forge method, which insures a sharp cutting edge that can be reconditioned. The manufacturer's literature accompanying the cutting tool will give this information. Take along a few scraps of fabric when purchasing shears or scissors. Cut with the entire length of the blades and release the fabric. If a thread of the fabric is caught, the cutting edges of the blades are imperfect. Check the points. Select cutting tools joined with a bolt or screw rather than rivets, which may loosen and cannot be tightened.

CUTTING TOOLS





## THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / ESSENTIAL TOOLS

Shears and scissors do require some care. Handle them as you would surgical instruments. Lay them down; don't drop them. Keep them dry and occasionally oil them at the screw. Reserve them only for your sewing; don't use them for cutting paper or other general household tasks. When they become dull, have your cutlery repair shop sharpen them.

**DRESSMAKER'S SHEARS.** Select bent-handled shears that have a small ring handle for the thumb, a large ring handle for the second and third fingers. Do not buy straight-handled shears; the blades won't rest flat on the table when cutting, and you will not get as accurate a cutting line. Choose a length of 6½ to 7 or 8 inches; these will be better than the shorter 6-inch length. Left-handed sewers should take advantage of the left-handed shears which are available in the 7½-inch length.

**SCISSORS.** In contrast to shears, scissors are straight and have identical rings for handles. Select scissors 3 to 6 inches long with double sharp points. Keep your scissors handy at the machine for trimming, clipping threads and light cutting.

**PINKING OR SKALLOPING SHEARS.** Pinking shears have zigzag edges, and scalloping shears scalloped cutting edges. They are excellent in finishing seams to prevent raveling of fabric edges. Pinking shears are available in lengths from 5½ to 10 inches. The 9- and 10-inch lengths will give a deeper zigzag than the standard 7½-inch size. Skal-

**SEAM RIPPER.** This inexpensive item is used for ripping seams and can sometimes be used as buttonhole cutters. Although it is efficient, it should be used with great care. Otherwise you may find yourself cutting the fabric.

**THREAD CLIPS.** A real time-saving little clipper that can be used effectively for snipping threads and making the small clips needed for marking or for curved seams. It has one ring which fits over the little finger, and is operated by squeezing with the palm of the hand.

**ELECTRIC SCISSORS.** This is a relatively new and expensive item. It is valuable to sewers who may have arthritis or find some difficulty in manipulating shears for long periods of time. For general sewing, electric scissors really are not a necessity, but may be a useful luxury. They operate on AC current; cut thin or heavy fabric.

**SCISSOR CUTTING GAUGE.** When long strips of fabric need to be cut, this gauge is a tremendous help. It fits on the point of the scissors and may be adjusted to various widths. It insures even widths of cloth and facilitates cutting a large quantity of material in a short time.

**CUTTING BOARD.** A real boon to the person

loping shears come only in 7½- or 9-inch lengths.

**BUTTONHOLE SCISSORS.** A handy item if you make a lot of garments with machine-made buttonholes, these are designed to cut open buttonholes accurately, and can be adjusted for different buttonhole lengths.

**RIPPING SCISSORS.** With care you won't be subjected to much ripping, but if you must, these will be helpful. The blunt point cuts open stitched seams without cutting the fabric. They hold and pull the threads as you cut the seam stitches.

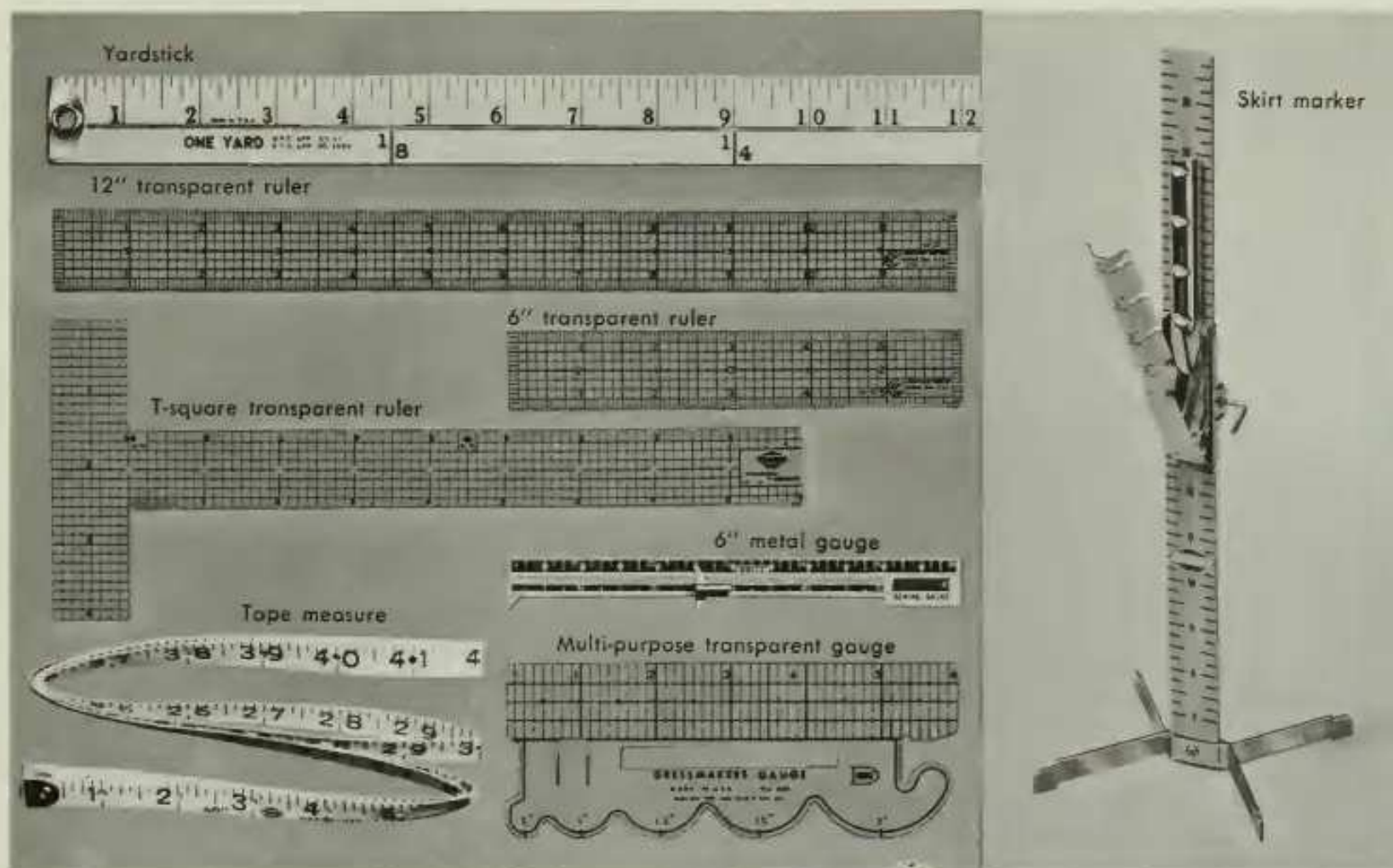
with no cutting space. The board folds easily for storage, and is marked with inches in each direction to allow for accurate placement of fabric. Material can be pinned right to the board. It measures 40 by 72 inches and folds to a mere 12½ by 40 inches for storage.

## Measuring Tools

Custom fit in garments requires custom measurements of body, pattern and fabric. Accurate measuring tools are essential for accurate sewing so be sure you have the ones you need.

### THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / ESSENTIAL TOOLS

#### MEASURING TOOLS



**TAPE MEASURE.** Select an oilcloth or plastic tape measure; paper ones may tear and linen ones may stretch. The fold-up type is the easiest to use and

the flexibility makes it possible to measure slight curves. Buy those with ⅛-inch markings, since sewing directions are given in ⅛-inch measurements;

store. You'll need one which measures 60 inches and has the numbers clearly printed on both sides of the tape. Metal tips on either end will help the tape to lie flat and keep ends from fraying.

**YARDSTICK.** The best yardsticks are made of maple or hickory and finished to a satiny smoothness which will not catch on even the most delicate fabrics. Since they are inexpensive, take time to find a good one. You'll need your yardstick for checking grain lines and for other general marking purposes.

**RULERS.** Transparent, flexible rulers are best. You can see to mark details such as buttonholes, and

you need a 12- or 18-inch ruler and a short 6-inch one. A little metal gauge with a sliding marker is also handy. It may be adjusted to fractions of an inch and is useful for measuring tucks, spacing buttonholes and other small construction details.

**SKIRT MARKER.** If you do a lot of sewing for others, or have to do your own hem marking, you'll find this instrument more than worth its weight in gold. It provides a much quicker and more accurate method of marking hems than when a yardstick is used. Skirt markers come in various types—pin markers, chalk markers, and combination pin-chalk markers. The pin marker gives a more accurate marking. Chalk marks tend to be too thick, and the chalk does not come out of some fabrics.

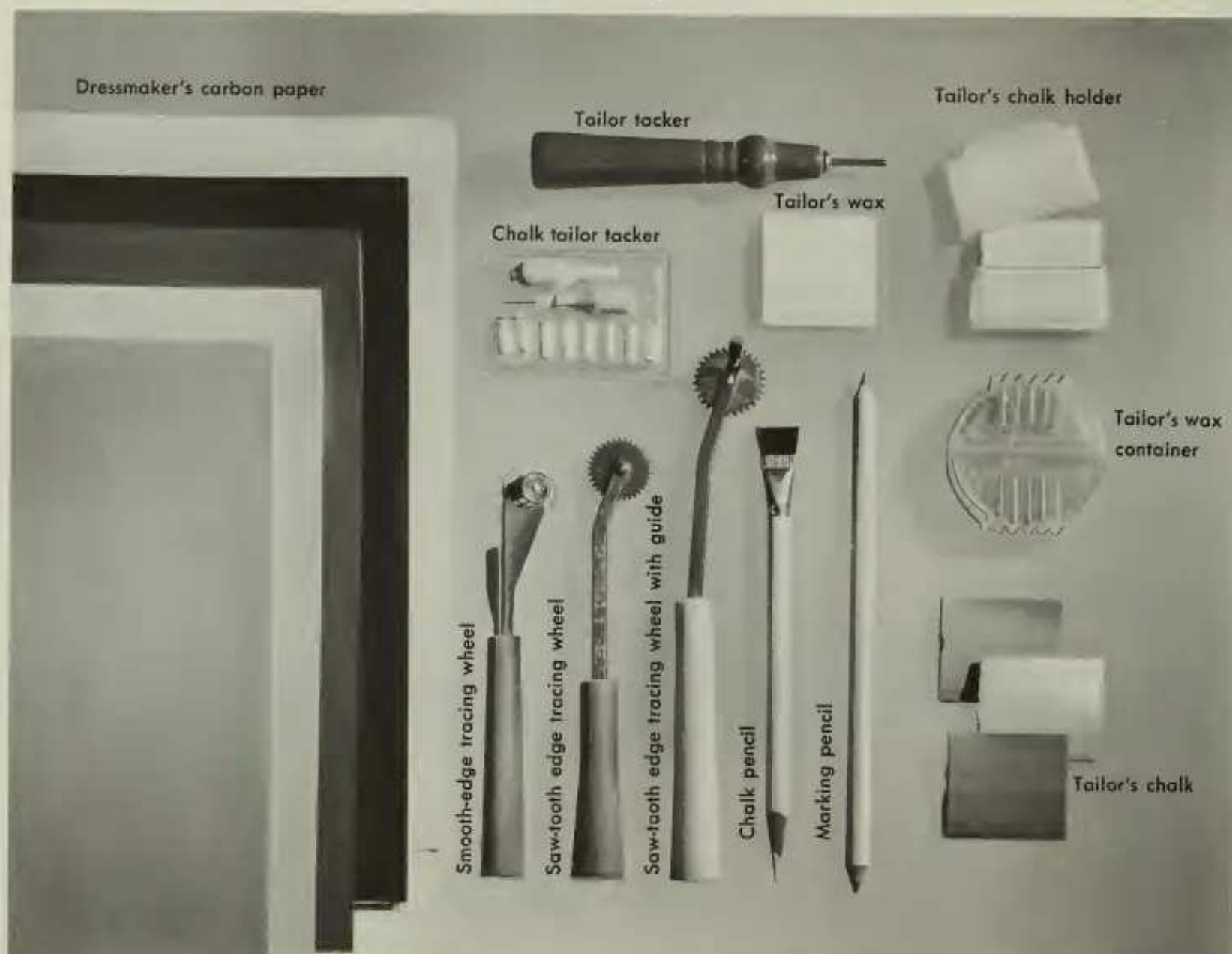
## THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / ESSENTIAL TOOLS

### Marking Tools

Because of the many types of fabric you use, you may need several different devices for marking pattern

**DRESSMAKER'S CARBON.** The dressmaker's carbon comes in packages of one color or assorted colors. It is wisest to buy the assorted packs and use

#### MARKING TOOLS



symbols. Not all fabrics can be marked in the same way, just as they can't be cut and stitched in the same way.

**TRACING WHEEL.** The tracing wheel is available in needle-point and saw-tooth edges as well as with a smooth edge. The needle-point style is used for marking heavy fabrics; the saw-tooth style for most light- and medium-weight fabrics.

The newest tracing wheel has a smooth edge, allowing the pattern tissue to remain intact. The wheel rolls along pattern markings and transfers them through the dressmaker's carbon to the wrong side of the garment fabric. (Complete instructions for marking appear in Chapter 7.)

the color closest to your fabric color when tracing. Carbon markings may show through very sheer fabrics, so always test a scrap of fabric before tracing on the garment pieces.

**TAILOR'S CHALK OR CHALK PENCIL.** Chalk is used on fabrics which cannot take the carbon, or for marking which will later be removed (trims, grainlines, etc.). It rubs off very easily when the marking is no longer needed. Tailor's chalk is made in flat 2-inch squares in white, black, red and blue. White and blue are least likely to stain fabric. You should have both of these colors. The chalk pencil gives a thinner, more accurate mark. It is easier and less messy to handle.

## THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / ESSENTIAL TOOLS

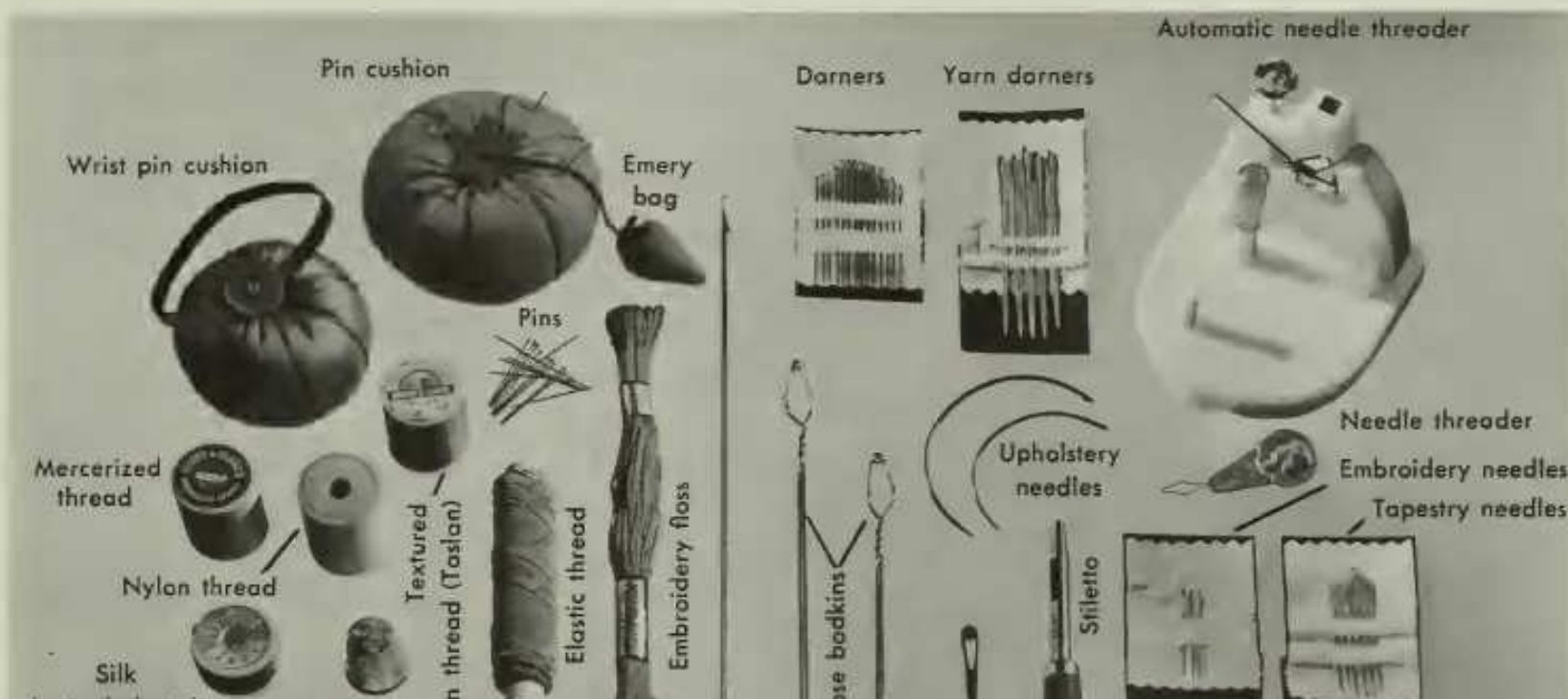
**TAILOR'S WAX.** Use this with caution; it does not wash out and may not disappear with dry-cleaning. The wax is clear or white in color and should be used only on woolens which will not take the softer chalk. Be sure you mark only on the wrong side of the fabric.

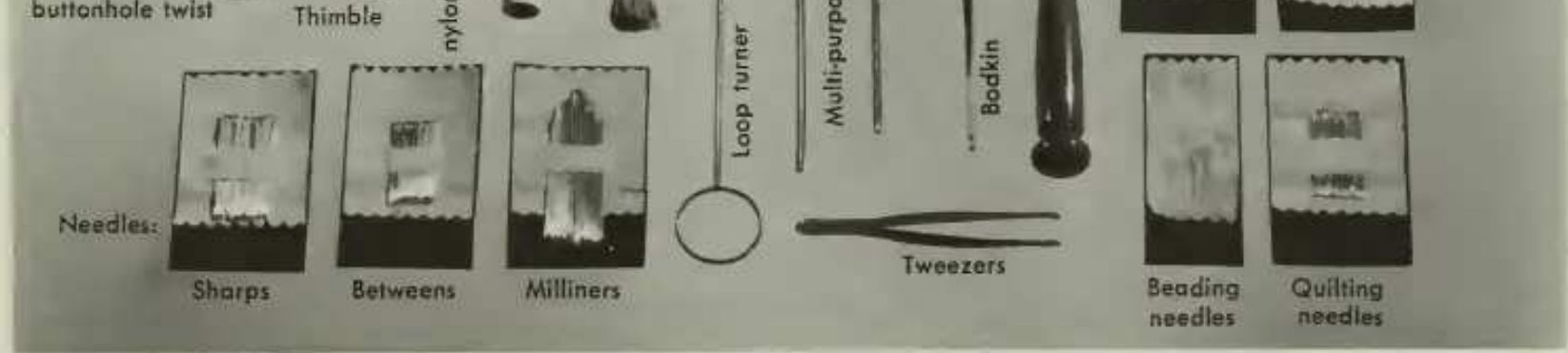
**TAILOR TACKER.** This metal tool marks both sides of the fabric through dressmaker's carbon. Dots are marked by placing the point sharply down on the fabric; straight lines by drawing the tool along. The tracing wheel is actually easier to use.

packages of 100, but if you're going to do a large amount of sewing, buy them in the large economy one-pound box. For very heavy fabrics, there are coarser pins, size 14 and lower numbers for upholstery work.

**NEEDLES.** Buy the big assorted packages of needles that have all of the 10 sizes you'll need. Generally "sharps" of medium length are used for sewing; 9 or 10 for sheers; 6 or 8 for medium-weight fabrics; 1 to 5 for heavy materials. For very fine hand sewing use "betweens," which are short needles. For basting and millinery, select "milliners," which are no longer than sharps. "Calyx-eyed sharps" have large eyes,

### SEWING EQUIPMENT





## Sewing Equipment

Sewing is a meticulous craft, so select your tools with care. Many a fine dress has been marred by such a small item as a wrong pin or needle.

**PINS.** Select only the sharpest and the finest rust-proof dressmaker or silk pins. Numbers 15, 16 and 17 are suitable for most fabrics. You may buy small

making them easier to thread. When sewing on delicate silks, you may wish to purchase enough very fine needles to use in place of pins.

**SPECIAL NEEDLES.** Special tasks require special needles:

□ Embroidery—long, sharp, large-eyed crewel needles. Similar to “sharps,” these have a large eye

## THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / ESSENTIAL TOOLS

for easy threading of embroidery yarn or thread.

- Upholstery—large, curved needles which are designed to slip in and out of heavy fabric easily.
- Darning—long, coarse needles with large eyes.
- Leather and Fur—three-cornered pointed needles called “Glover’s needles.”
- Beading—needles which are very fine and long, especially designed for beading.
- Quilting—short, between-type needles.
- Millinery—long, thin needles used for millinery tacking.

**NEEDLE THREADER.** If you have an eyesight problem, or just find threading needles a chore, use a needle threader.

**THIMBLE.** You should always use a thimble for hand sewing. Your sewing will be more comfortable, and the results more perfect. The metal ones are more durable than the plastic type. Find one which fits the middle finger of the hand holding the needle. Look for a firm, snug fit. If the thimble seems to slip off easily, wet the end of your finger. The moisture creates suction and holds the thimble in place.

**PIN CUSHION.** If you want a purely decorative pin cushion, then select at random the one which you find the most attractive. If you want real service, then use the wrist type. A plastic or elastic wrist band keeps it in place. It never slips away or gets hidden

**Mercerized Cotton Thread.** Most often used for general sewing.

**Silk Thread.** May be used on fine woolens and silk fabrics, since it produces a finer stitching line. When working on fine fabrics, silk thread is an excellent choice for basting because it slips in and out of fabric easily and can be pulled out without marring the fabric. It’s also good for basting pleats because it does not mark fabric when pressed.

**Synthetic Thread.** Should be used on synthetics and their blends. Never use a synthetic thread on cotton or linen which will have to withstand high temperatures in pressing. Synthetic threads usually require a looser upper and lower tension on the machine, and a fine needle.

**Elastic Thread.** Used for gathering or for shirred effects which are either machine- or hand-stitched. It is used only as bobbin thread.

**Buttonhole Twist.** Silk thread (Size D) comes on 10-yard spools. Use it for decorative stitches, handworked buttonholes, sewing on buttons and as the bobbin thread when gathering large sections of fabric. It is stronger than cotton thread and slips easily through the fabric, making gathering a much easier task.

among patterns and fabric just at the time you need it. The cushion is usually sponge rubber or sawdust.

**EMERY BAG.** You may find one on your pin cushion. This is a small bag with an abrasive inside which removes rust from pins and needles. You can also purchase them separately. Use it to keep pins and needles clean and free from rust.

**THREAD.** Thread, like fabric, is made of various fibers and in various weights suitable for certain types of sewing. Always select the one best for your fabric.

Thread is made in almost as many colors as fabrics are. Select a color slightly darker than the cloth with which it is to be used. The thread sews in lighter than it appears on the spool. Use a contrasting color for basting—one which is easily seen when it is time to remove the stitches.

**Embroidery Floss.** Used for decorative stitches and most embroidery. It comes in 6-strand twists; your pattern will indicate the number of strands to use in embroidered designs.

## Needles and Thread

Thread and needle should be considered together. The weight of the fabric determines the size of needle and thread. To help you find just the right size, a special chart is shown here. In using the chart, remember that fabrics of the same general description may vary. You should always test the thread on a scrap of the fabric you are using. You will notice that on the chart there is a column showing the approximate number of machine stitches to the inch. Use this guide for fine sewing.

WEIGHT OF FABRIC

TYPES OF FABRICS

THREAD

NEEDLES

HAND

MACHINE

MACHINE

WEIGHT OF FABRIC	TYPES OF FABRICS	THREAD	HAND	MACHINE	MACHINE
Very Sheer	Batiste, chiffon, fine lace, marquisette, organdy, net	mercerized cotton silk white and black six cord—100,120,150	10	Fine 9	16 stitches to inch
Sheer	Dimity, dotted swiss, handkerchief linen, lawn, sheer crepe, voile	mercerized cotton silk white and black six cord—100,120,150	9	Fine 9-11	14-16 stitches to inch
Light Weight	Chambray, gingham, percale, taffeta, satin, sheer wools, challis	mercerized cotton silk white and black six cord—60,70	8,9	Fine 9-11	12-14 stitches to inch
Medium	Muslin, chintz, dress linen, piqué, flannel, jersey, broadcloth, corduroy, crepe	mercerized cotton silk heavy-duty cotton white and black six		Medium	



		cord—50,60	7,8	11-14	10-14 stitches to inch
Medium Heavy	Denim, velveteen, terry cloth, tweeds, drapery fabrics, twill, gabardine, coatings, fleece	mercerized cotton silk heavy-duty cotton white and black six cord—36,40		Medium Coarse 14-16	
Heavy	Upholstery fabric, sail-cloth, ticking, heavy denim	heavy-duty cotton white and black six cord—24,30,36	6,7 4,5	14-18	10-12 stitches to inch 8-10 stitches to inch
Very Heavy	Canvas, duck, awning fabric	white and black six cord—8,10,20	1,2,3	Coarse 16-18	6-8 stitches to inch

### Miscellaneous Equipment

The more you sew, the more uses you will discover for various other pieces of equipment. A few which are most helpful are:

- Loop turner to help in turning tubing to the right side.
- Stiletto for punching eyelets and holes in fabric and leather.

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## THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / THE SEWING MACHINE

- Bodkin for threading elastic, fabric and tape through casing.
- Tweezers for removing threads from ripped seams.

### Sewing Machine

With the many brands and models available, it may be difficult for you to select a new machine and be confident you have purchased the best machine for your money and one which will meet your needs for years to come. Visit the dealers in your area and request demonstrations of their machines. Consult consumer reports. After you have narrowed your selection down to one or two machines, you may find it advisable to rent a model so you can test its performance.

In making your decision, you will have to decide between a straight-stitch and a swing-needle (zig-zag) machine and between the cabinet and portable models. The type and amount of sewing you do, the space you have for a machine and your budget will influence your choice.

If you use the machine only for plain sewing, patching and mending, you may find the straight-stitch sewing machine satisfactory. This type sews forward and backward and usually can be released for some free-motion darning. The needle moves up and down in a straight line. Usually some attachments are available for the various machines.

The more versatile swing-needle or zigzag machines have a needle that moves from side to side as well as

furniture style, and can be a decorative piece of furniture. Usually the cabinet model machine is a heavier machine, capable of handling heavy and bulky fabrics.

When space is limited, budgets limited, or the machine must be moved frequently, the portable is a more practical purchase. Take care to select a portable that is capable of handling fairly heavy and bulky fabrics. Inexpensive, light-weight portables may be too light to handle any but light- or medium-weight fabrics and will "slip" around the table when in operation. Beware of second-hand portables that are merely the regular heavy sewing head set into a cheap, unwieldy carrying case. These may be inadequately wired, and have a cheap motor attached that cannot be efficiently controlled.

Before you purchase your machine, test and check the construction and performance. A diagram of a standard model machine with the major parts identified is shown here. Become familiar with all the parts, then use the following questions as a checklist for judging the quality of a machine.

### Long-Life Design

- Is the wiring located where it will not be pinched, and is it protected against wear and oil drip?
- Are service parts carried in stock and is repair service readily available?
- Is the cabinet well constructed; hinges sturdy; legs well braced; leaf well supported and level when opened?

up and down, making it possible to do many of the finishing details and decorative stitches without the use of attachments. The swing-needle or zigzag machines vary greatly in the amount of decorative stitching they will do. Some machines are built to use templates, which produce distinctive patterns; others require just a twist of a knob. If you plan to purchase a zigzag machine consider the difficulty of operating the decorative controls in case you expect to do specialty stitching. If you are not mechanically inclined, choose a machine that is easy to set.

Some machines are constructed with slanting needles, allowing for better visibility. Both straight-needle and swing-needle machines can be obtained with this type of needle.

Your next decision will be whether to select a cabinet or portable model. The cabinet model costs more, but it does provide extra work space, a convenient storage space for your equipment, and is easier for quick use. Cabinets are available in all periods of

□ Is a guarantee offered on the machine?

### **Easy-to-Use Features**

- Are the upper tension setting and stitch-length controls easy to see and read?
- Is the lamp well placed to throw light where needed?
- Are there adjustable lock positions for the forward and reverse stitching controls?
- Does the machine stitch forward and backward, plus have a quick release mechanism for darning and embroidery?
- Is the foot or knee speed control comfortably placed?

### **Good Operation**

- Is the machine quiet and free from objectionable noise and vibration?
- Is the machine easy to start and stop, and does it run smoothly at all speeds?

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## THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / THE SEWING MACHINE

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- Are the needle and bobbin easy to thread?
- Do two pieces of fabric stitched together travel between the foot and feed dog evenly at the same rate?
- Is the bobbin winder easy to use and does it fill the bobbin evenly?

### **Easy-to-Care-for**

- Are the coverplates easily removable and all parts readily accessible for cleaning, oiling and greasing?
- Is the light bulb easy to replace?
- Is the machine easy to dust and wipe clean?

After you purchase your machine, it is important that you learn to operate and care for it efficiently. All new machines have accompanying instruction manuals which illustrate the parts of the machine and give full instructions for all phases of operation and care. If you buy a second-hand machine and receive no manual, contact a dealer in your area who handles the brand machine you purchased. He will either be able to provide a manual or demonstrate the operation of the machine. Remember that each machine may vary in the placement and type of parts, so no matter how many machines you have operated in the past, study the manual before attempting to operate one that is unfamiliar.

### **Winding the Bobbin**

Wind the bobbin using thread which is identical to upper thread. It must be wound evenly and should

the machine head, then through a thread guide to the tension mechanism, through another thread guide to the take-up lever, through another thread guide, and inserted into the needle. Be sure that the thread is placed through the needle in the correct direction. After the machine is threaded, draw about 5 inches of thread through the needle.

The bobbin should be placed in the bobbin case carefully, so that the bobbin will move in the correct direction. Follow the directions in the manual for the machine you are using. It is important that the bobbin thread be placed in back of the presser foot before stitching begins. To draw bobbin thread up through the needle hole, insert the bobbin in the bobbin case, leaving about 3 inches of bobbin thread outside the bobbin, as shown in your manual. Close the bed plate. Raise take-up lever to its highest point. Turn the wheel by hand until the needle goes down and up so take-up lever is again at its highest point. Pull the end of the needle thread and a bobbin thread loop will appear through the needle hole. Pull end of bobbin thread through needle hole with scissors, and place both bobbin and needle threads diagonally back and under the presser foot.

### **Inserting the Needle**

You will have to change needles in your machine when one breaks or when you need a different size for various weights of fabric.

never be so fully wound that it is tight in the bobbin case. If the bobbin has thread on it, remove it before winding new thread, or the new thread will not wind evenly or feed easily when stitching. Bobbins wind differently on the various machines, but generally there is a spool pin for the thread located below the balance wheel. The thread is placed on the spool pin, run through a bobbin tension disc, and then to the bobbin which is placed on a spindle. Always release the stop-motion screw on the balance wheel by turning it toward you. Raise bobbin winder and press it against the handwheel. Hold thread end to start winding, and wind until the bobbin is full.

## **Threading the Machine**

Always check your instruction manual for proper threading. Your machine simply won't work if it isn't threaded exactly according to plan. Although upper threading of machines may vary according to the placement of the parts, it does follow a general pattern. The thread is placed on the spool pin on top of

Generally size 14 needles are used for normal sewing, but various fabrics may require a heavier (size 16) or a finer (size 11) needle. If you are in doubt about what needle size to use for your fabric, check the chart on page 67. In case a different numbering system is used for the needles on your machine, the manual will give you the necessary information.

Every sewing machine needle has a short groove at the eye on one side, and a long groove on the other. When inserting a needle in a machine, the long groove must always face the side from which the machine is to be threaded. On most machines, the last thread guide will indicate the direction in which the thread must enter the needle. Be sure the flat side of the needle is facing in the direction opposite to the thread. Raise the take-up lever to its highest point, and insert the needle upward into the needle clamp as far as it will go and tighten needle clamp screw.

## **Stitching**

Test the stitching on a scrap of fabric. Never operate

## **THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / THE SEWING MACHINE**

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a threaded machine without fabric. The threads will become tangled and the feed will be damaged.

To stitch, raise the take-up lever to its highest point, place the needle and bobbin threads diagonally back and under the presser foot. Place the larger amount of fabric to the left of the head and the part to be stitched to the right. Lower the needle into the fabric by turning the balance wheel toward you. Lower the presser foot and start stitching with a slow, even speed. Place your hand so your fingers are guiding the fabric lightly. Be sure the weight of the left arm is not resting on the fabric causing uneven feeding. Guide the fabric, but do not force or pull it through the machine.

When you have completed the stitching, raise the take-up lever to its highest point by turning the balance wheel toward you so the tension is released. Raise the presser foot; remove the fabric by drawing it to the back and left of the needle; cut threads.

There are various types of seam guides to help you stitch in a straight line. Lines on bed plate, a special attachment, or tape placed on bed plate can be used.

### **Correct Tension**

After you have stitched your scrap of fabric, check it for correct tension. If the tension is correct, the stitch will be perfectly locked in the fabric and the needle and bobbin threads perfectly balanced so that the

higher numbers; to decrease toward the lower. Never move more than two numbers at a time, then recheck the tension by stitching a scrap of the fabric.

Adjusting bobbin tension is more difficult, and should only be attempted if tension cannot be corrected with an upper tension adjustment. The bobbin case has a small tension screw which, when turned in the correct direction, will increase or decrease tension. Be sure to check your manual or ask your dealer to find the proper bobbin tension screw and direction for increase or decrease.

### **Correct Pressure**

The amount of pressure influences the ease with which fabric will flow through the machine when stitching. Pressure should be heavy enough to keep two thicknesses of fabric traveling at the same rate; light enough to keep fabric from being marred by the feed dog. The surface finish, weight and texture of the fabric will determine the amount of pressure needed. To test for correct pressure, feed a double thickness of fabric through the machine and adjust the thumb screw until the fabric moves under the presser foot easily and shows no feed marks.

The pressure thumb screw is located on the top of the machine head and controls a spring which connects with the presser foot mechanism. It can be raised and lowered either by turning or a press-release mech-

stitch appears the same on both sides of the fabric. When tension is incorrect, with either the needle or bobbin thread too tight or too loose, stitching will not appear the same.

Inspecting the line of stitching is the only way to check tension. It is important that the tension be checked on each type of fabric used, since tension requirements vary for some fabrics. If your stitching on the test scrap does not appear exactly alike on both sides of the fabric, then determine if the needle or bobbin thread needs adjusting. To do this, stitch diagonally across a square of your fabric, folded on true bias. Hold the stitching tightly at each end between thumb and forefinger and pull with an even gradual force until the thread breaks. The broken thread is always the one with tight tension. When the tensions are balanced, both threads break together and require more force to break.

If tension does need adjustment, it is better to try to adjust the upper tension. Most machines have a numbered tension dial with numbers ranging from 0 to 9. To increase turn upper tension toward the

anism. Check your manual or with your dealer on the correct operation of pressure control.

## Stitch Length

There is no test for checking the correct stitch length for various fabrics. However, the chart on page 67 prescribes the proper stitch length for most fabrics. Generally, a shorter stitch (16 to an inch) is needed for sheer, fine fabrics; a medium stitch (12 stitches per inch) for medium weights; a long stitch (8 to 10 to the inch) for heavy, coarse fabrics. There are also certain specialty stitches used for basting, gathering, reinforcing which require different lengths of stitches.

The stitch regulator is usually placed on the right side of the machine. It lists numbers from about 7 to 20. A bar is placed in the center of the numbered plate and stitch length is regulated by moving the bar to the number indicating the number of stitches desired. The stitch regulator also controls the forward or backward motion of the feed dog. Usually by raising the stitch regulator to the highest point, you are able to stitch backwards.

## THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / THE SEWING MACHINE

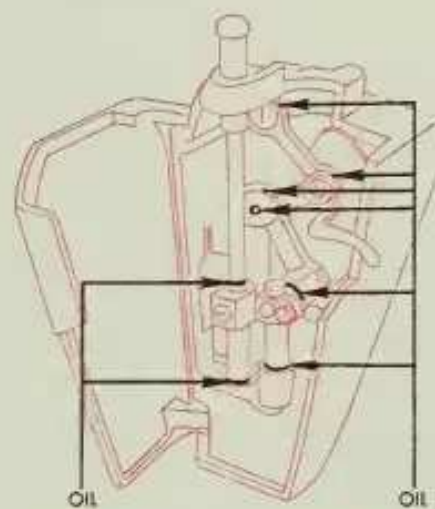
### Care of the Machine

A sewing machine, like any piece of equipment, needs some care and cleaning. When not in use, keep your machine covered to prevent dust from settling on it. Also, fabric will leave deposits of lint around the feed dog and bobbin case, which must be removed fairly often.

You should have a lint brush especially designed for cleaning sewing machines, and a piece of cheesecloth or lintless cotton. If a brush was not provided with your machine, you can purchase it at most sewing notions counters. To remove lint deposits, remove the throat plate of the machine and brush the lint and dust from the bobbin case and feed mechanism. Following the instructions given in your manual, remove the entire bobbin case if possible, and remove all lint, fluff and loose threads or foreign matter which has collected. Dust the entire machine, using the cloth, and brush out hard-to-get-at crevices.

Periodically, it is necessary to oil and lubricate the machine. If you use it every day, do this about every six weeks. If you use it infrequently, then every three to four months should be sufficient. Use only regulation sewing machine oil. Apply it sparingly, using only one drop of oil for every oiling point. Although machines vary greatly, the places which require oil on

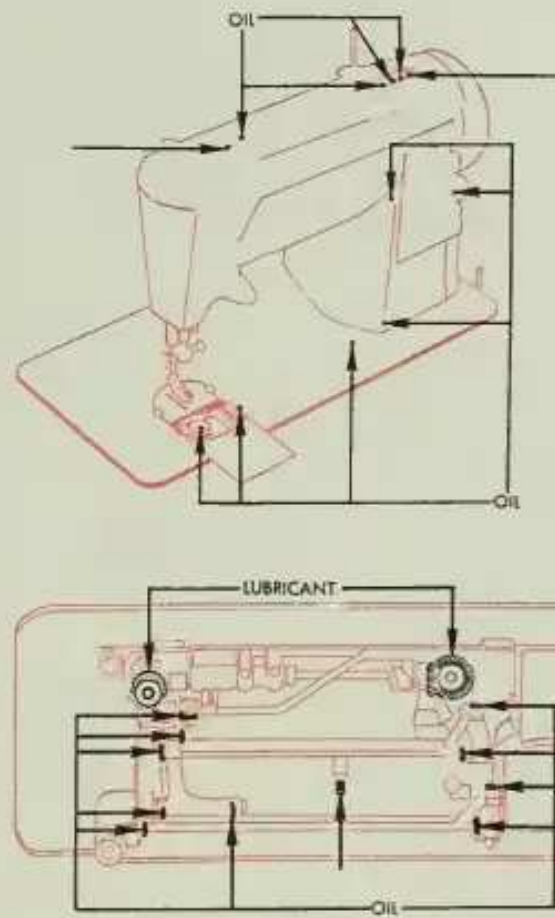
When the machine has been thoroughly oiled, run it slowly for several minutes to allow the oil to work into the moving parts. If you do not plan to use the machine immediately, place a scrap of fabric under the presser foot and lower the needle. The fabric absorbs the excess oil that might drain down through the machine. The machine will be ready to use when you take it out again and there will be no danger of getting oil spots on your garment.



### Repairing Tips

There is nothing more frustrating than to be in the middle of constructing a garment and have the machine start to "act up." Although major repairs should only be made by qualified repair men, there are certain

most standard models are noted in the illustration here.



minor adjustments you can make yourself when a machine operates improperly. If your machine develops one of these common ailments, check the possible causes suggested. If these remedies do not correct the trouble, then call your service-repair man.

### Breaking of Needle - Causes:

- Improper size of needle for thread and material (see chart, page 67).
- Needle bent.
- Pulling of material when stitching.
- Needle striking improperly fastened presser foot or attachments.
- Crossing too thick a seam using too small a needle.

### Breaking of Needle Thread - Causes:

- Knot in needle thread.
- Improper threading.
- Upper tension too tight.
- Needle not inserted in needle clamp as far as it will go.

## THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / THE SEWING MACHINE

- Needle blunt or bent.
- Needle in backwards.
- Thread too coarse for needle.
- Roughened hole in throat plate.
- Improper arrangement of thread when starting to sew.

### Breaking of Bobbin Thread - Causes:

- Improper threading of bobbin case.
- Bobbin thread tension too tight.
- Knot in bobbin thread.

### Skipping of Stitches - Causes:

- Needle not inserted in needle clamp as far as it will go.
- Needle in backwards.
- Needle threaded incorrectly.

- Needle blunt or bent.
- Needle too small for thread.
- Needle too short.

### Puckered Seams - Causes:

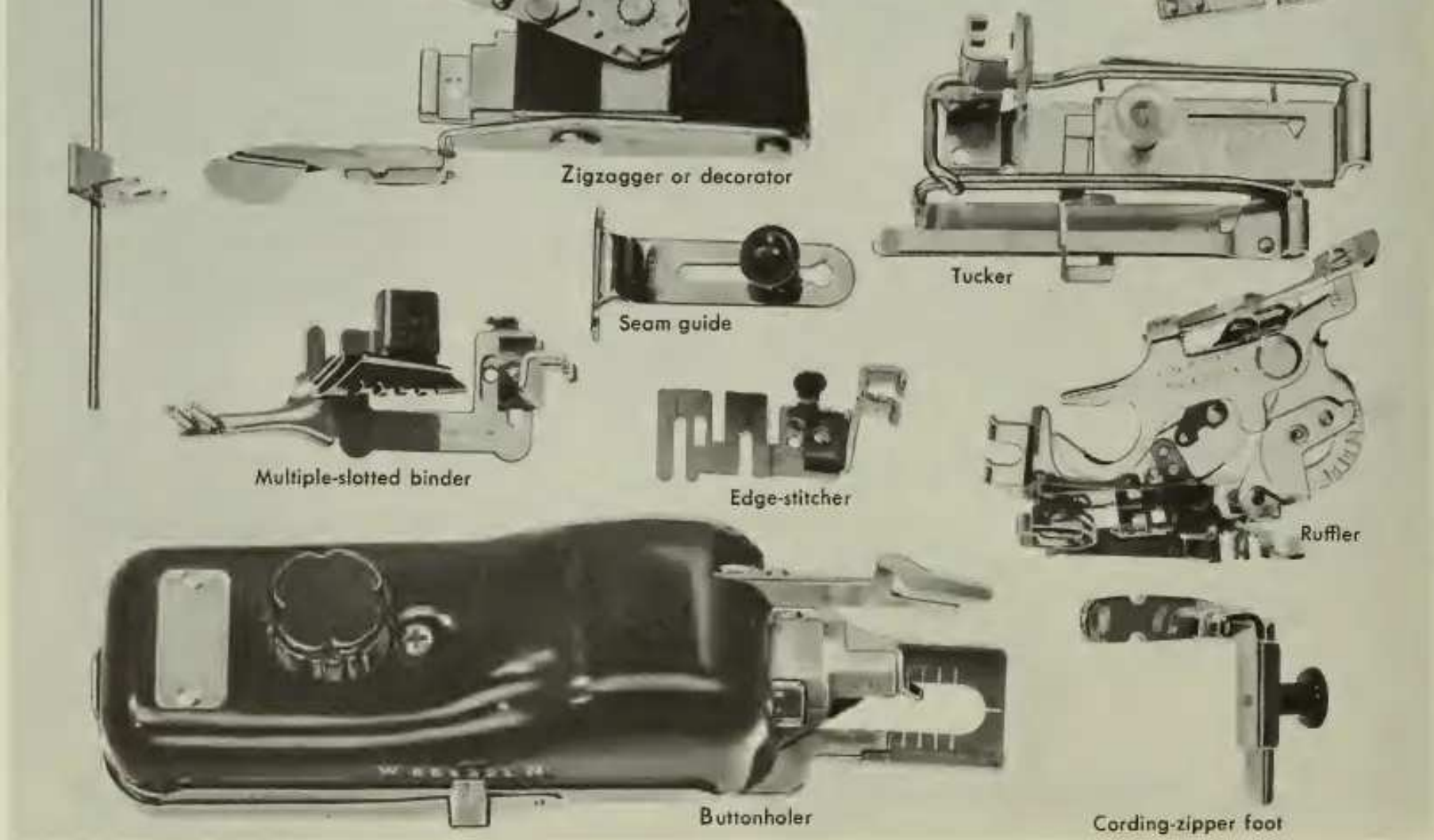
- Tension too tight.
- Stitch too long for material being sewn.
- Wrong presser foot. Use only the presser foot provided for each particular machine; they are not interchangeable.

## Sewing Machine Attachments

When you purchase your new machine, check the attachments included in the price of purchase, and those which are available at additional cost. Attachments make sewing easier and provide opportunities for decorative sewing. Don't neglect them; learn to use them effectively. They not only save time, but make sewing a more creative and interesting experience.

### MACHINE ATTACHMENTS





## THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / ATTACHMENTS

Before purchasing any additional attachments, talk to your dealer about the work each will do and have him demonstrate the operation of each. Decide which of the attachments will be practical for your needs. If you make only simple garments with few decorative details, then you will probably use only a few of the attachments. However, if you enjoy making garments with your own original ideas for trimming, you will use many of them. In selecting attachments, be sure that they will fit your make and model machine.

The zigzag machines require fewer attachments than the straight-stitch type, while the automatics vary widely in the amount of work they do without attachments, so that no accurate list can be made to apply to all automatics. However, listed below are the ones most frequently used on the straight-needle machines, what they do, how to use them and whether they are necessary or optional equipment.

**CORDING-ZIPPER FOOT.** The cording-zipper foot is designed for stitching close to a raised edge and can be adjusted to either the right or left side of the needle. The hinged feature of the foot insures even feeding over pins or heavy layers of fabric formed by crossed seams. It is used for covering cord, applying

even, attractive buttonholes, you'll definitely need this attachment. The buttonholes are not only quicker to make than the hand-worked type, but they're stronger. For best results, use two rows of stitches.

**ZIGZAGGER OR DECORATOR.** A variety of decorative as well as straight stitches can be made without removing the attachment from the machine. The attachment is equipped with stitch patterns, or cams, which can be changed according to the design of the stitch desired. There is a dial which adjusts the bight (width) of the stitch, and a stitch length regulator which may be used to produce variations on the basic stitch design. The attachment offers many ways to do decorative work such as border trims, appliques, decorative tuck edgings. It also is most useful for zigzag seam finishes, and for sewing seams on stretchy fabrics.

**NARROW OR FOOT HEMMER.** The attachment forms and stitches a perfectly turned hem, without previous basting or pressing. The hem formed is about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch in width, and is very useful when finishing the edges of ruffles, and for applying lace, rickrack or any finished trim to an edge in one operation. Hem-

cording into seams, and most frequently for zipper application. It is essential to have one, since no zipper can be successfully applied by machine without it.

**SEAM GUIDE.** Seam guides help insure more accurate seam widths on both straight and curved seams, as well as provide a guide to accurate top-stitching. Most new machines have the seam markings on the plate of the machine, but if yours does not, you can purchase an inexpensive type which attaches to the machine bed, or you can make your own simply by placing cloth adhesive tape across the bed of the machine, with accurate markings on it,  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch and  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch from the needle. In stitching, keep your eyes at the edge of the seam guide or marking on the tape to direct the fabric correctly.

**BUTTONHOLER.** Standard models have templates which are inserted in the buttonholer and guide the machine in making various sizes of buttonholes from  $\frac{5}{16}$  to  $1\frac{1}{16}$  inches. There is also a special template for eyelets. Each buttonhole attachment has a dial which makes it possible to adjust the bight (width) of the stitch used. Both straight and keyhole buttonholes can be made. The buttonholer is easy to operate and works well on most fabrics. If you wish to make

mers which make wider hems are available for some machines.

**RUFFLER.** This attachment is capable of making uniform gathered or pleated ruffles, and will make and apply ruffles to another section at the same time. Some models are also equipped to apply piping to a ruffle, or to make a ruffle and attach it with a facing in one operation. It is a relatively simple attachment to operate, and is most valuable in making household items such as curtains, slipcovers and bedspreads which require long lengths of ruffling. It is also useful in making children's clothes which have gathered skirts with ruffled trims and petticoats.

**MULTIPLE-SLOTTED BINDER.** Excellent for applying various widths of commercial or self-fabric bias binding to a straight or curved edge, the binder ensures uniform application and eliminates tedious pinning and basting of binding. It is most often used to add decorative bound edge-trims and to bind seams on fabrics which ravel a great deal. It is particularly useful for making household items such as café curtains with bound edge-trim, aprons, toaster covers, and for adding neat, bound finishes to all types of garments.

## THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / ATTACHMENTS / PRESSING EQUIPMENT

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**GATHERING FOOT.** Do not confuse this attachment with the ruffler. The gathering foot does what its name implies—gathers fabric as it is stitched. It will produce uniform rows of shirring with the fullness locked in every stitch.

**EDGE-STITCHER.** This has five slots that serve as guides when stitching must be uniform and accurate on the edge of the material. It is most helpful when sewing together bands of lace, making lace insertions, making French seams, piping edges, or for making pin tucks up to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch deep.

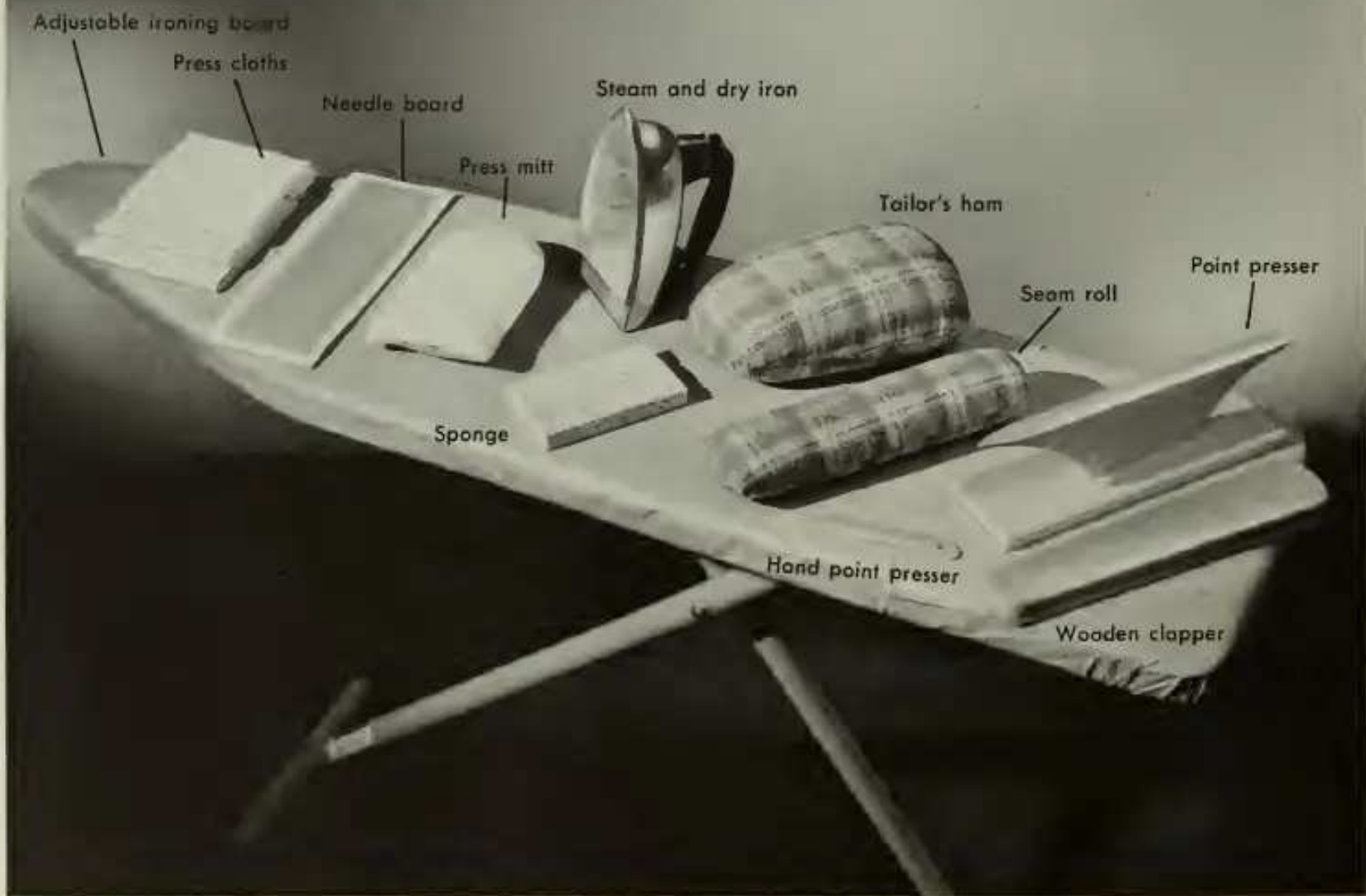
**TUCKER.** Used for making uniform tucks from  $\frac{1}{8}$  to 1 inch in width; the tucker is equipped with two scales: one regulates the width of the tucks, the other ensures equal spacing between tucks. It can be used

effectively for creating cross tuck effects, pin tucks or regular tucks.

**QUILTER.** The quilter has a short open foot and an adjustable or removable space guide that may be used to the right or left of the needle to guide the quilting stitches in even rows. It is especially useful for quilting padded fabrics, and some models are adaptable as an embroidery foot which permits following curved lines with ease and accuracy.

## PRESSING EQUIPMENT

Expert pressing is as essential to the good looks of a garment as expert sewing. Keep pressing equipment as handy as the sewing machine; it should be used almost as often as the machine. For tips on how and when to press, check Chapter 8.



THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE / *PRESSING EQUIPMENT*

**Iron**

A combination steam-dry iron is best; one with a temperature control essential.

**Ironing Board**

Obtain an adjustable one. They are most comfortable because you can adjust them to your height. Metal boards are more durable than wooden ones and do not warp.

**Ironing Board Pad and Cover**

Select a pad that will last. The foam rubber or plastic foams are quite durable. Heavy cotton padding is inclined to wear more quickly and scorch easily. The best covers are the silicone-coated ones or the asbestos type, since they do not become scorched as easily as the cotton drill or duck ones. Be sure that the cover and pad you select fasten securely to the board and fit it well.

**Tailor's Ham**

This is a ham-shaped cushion also used for pressing curved and shaped details. It is essential if you plan to do any sort of tailoring. Inexpensive hams are available commercially, or you can make your own. Cut two oval pieces of firmly woven cotton or light-weight wool about 8 by 12 inches. Sew the ovals together and leave an opening. Turn right side out and stuff firmly with wool scraps, kapok or sawdust. The secret of a successful ham is packing it firmly. For best results soak the scraps and stuff them into the ham while still wet. Shape it as you pack and pack until it is solid. Then sew the opening closed with an overhand stitch.

**Seam Roll**

This is a padded rolled cushion to place beneath the seam when pressing. It will keep ridges from forming along the seam line. Commercial ones are available.



## Press Cloths

The commercially treated cloths are very inexpensive. Closely woven cheesecloth also makes an excellent press cloth. The open texture allows the steam to go through but the weave keeps fabric surface from shining. A dry wool press cloth under a damp cheesecloth is helpful for problem materials that shine.

## Sponge

Used to dampen fabric as you press. It gives an even amount of moisture to an area.

## Press Mitt

If all garments were composed of straight or angled pieces, these wouldn't be essential. Since garments curve as often as they lie straight, you need a curved cushion to press and shape the curved detail. The mitt is a small padded mitt that slips over the hand.

## Wooden Clapper

When tailoring garments, purchase the clapper. It is a shaped wooden block which is pounded against steam-dampened fabric for the purpose of flattening edges and pressing seams flat.

## Point Presser

Again, this item is mainly used for tailoring, but is useful for almost any garment making. It is a thin, shaped wooden board used to press open the seams in corners, points and other difficult areas.

## Needle Board

To prevent the pile of velveteen, velvet and other pile fabrics from matting, use the needle board. The fabric is placed face down on the needles so that the pile fits between the needles and can be pressed without marking.

## CHAPTER 6

# THE EASY RULES OF PATTERN ALTERATION

*If you have purchased your pattern in the correct figure type and size for your type of figure, most of your pattern worries should be over. However, the pattern is made for the average person, and since everyone differs in contour, you may find that your figure deviates slightly from the average. This makes it necessary to make a few adjustments to the pattern to achieve a custom-made look. Having a garment that is custom-cut and custom-fitted to your individual figure is half the joy of sewing.*

*Knowing exactly what alterations to make in your pattern to achieve this perfect fit comes with experience . . . sometimes sad experience. Often a beginner will blithely cut a pattern in expensive fabric, only to find, when it is completed, that the garment just doesn't fit properly. It may be too late, then, to do anything about it. This will never happen if you become familiar with your own individual contour and learn the simple adjustments to make in your tissue pattern so that you can cut correctly for a perfect fit.*

## A BASIC PATTERN

If you truly want to make clothes with a custom fit, you should first make a basic pattern. Although this takes time in the beginning, it will save a great deal of time and even money as you continue to sew. No longer will your sewing be experimental. It will have a professional look.

The basic pattern can be made in two ways: by using inexpensive fabric for a slim skirt and a standard bodice with set-in sleeves; or by using the McCall's Try-on pattern made of non-woven material. Naturally the Try-on will be easier to use because it is designed especially for this purpose. All the pattern markings are printed on the pattern. The pattern can be cut, adjusted to the figure, stitched and used again and again as a guide for altering other patterns of a

similar silhouette. Try-on patterns are available in Misses' and Junior sizes, Number 300; Half sizes, Number 400. They can be ordered through any McCall's pattern dealer.

One big advantage in purchasing the Try-on is the instruction booklet which accompanies it, giving directions for altering the pattern for various figure irregularities.

However, if you decide you would rather make your basic from cotton fabric, buy a tissue pattern of a simple, basic dress in your figure type and size. Use firmly woven fabric such as percale or muslin. Lay out the pattern and cut. Transfer all pattern markings to the fabric.

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### THE EASY RULES OF PATTERN ALTERATION / A BASIC PATTERN



ence the ease allowance. A garment with the sleeve and bodice cut in one piece will have more ease through the bodice than a fitted garment with a set-in sleeve. A blouson style will have more length than a fitted bodice. This is known as design ease and changes with fashion.

**ADJUSTMENTS.** Trying to measure pattern pieces and decide whether the ease allowance is correct for you is a difficult and uncertain task. The use of a basic pattern avoids this confusion because it can be adjusted until it fits perfectly. After the basic has been fitted, identical alterations can be made on each pattern you use. If you add  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch to the waist length of the basic, then you will add  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch to the length of other bodice designs, such as blouson, a dropped waistline, an Empire line, in order to retain the same proportions the designer intended. The same thing applies to horizontal or around-the-figure measurements.



## Using the Basic Pattern

**EASE.** In order to use a basic pattern successfully you must understand the meaning of "ease." Ease is the amount of fullness built into every pattern to allow room for a person to move. It is the amount added to body measurements so that a garment isn't skintight. Even a very fitted sheath has ease.

Although body measurements are standardized, the amount of ease isn't. Each pattern company decides how much ease is needed in its patterns. This is the reason why the fit of a garment in one brand of pattern is not identical with another although the size is the same.

The standard amount of ease in a McCall's pattern is:

Bust—3 inches in a basic bodice. Evening bodices which are designed to fit snugly may have less.

Waist— $\frac{1}{2}$  inch.

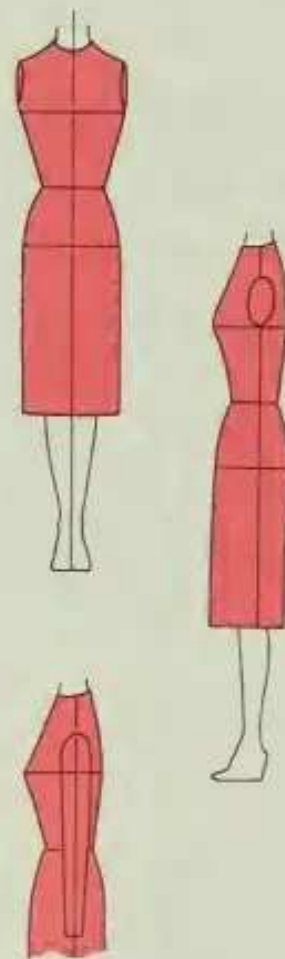
Hip—Approximately 2 inches in slim skirts.

Back Waist Length— $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch.

You may want a little more or less, depending on how tight you wear your clothes; however, these are average amounts of ease for today's fashions.

The style and the design of the pattern also influ-

**FITTING.** Assemble the basic garment by machine-basting the seams together. Then the stitches may be pulled out easily to make adjustments. It is impossible to fit a garment accurately if it has been pinned or hand-basted together. Try the garment on and check



POSITIONS OF GRAINLINES

## THE EASY RULES OF PATTERN ALTERATION / ADJUSTING YOUR PATTERN

these points to determine if the basic pattern fits:

- Grainlines at chest, bust, waist, hip and upper arm are straight and parallel to the floor.
- Grainlines at center front and back are perpendicular to the floor.
- Garment hangs gracefully and smoothly when you are standing straight.
- Garment has sufficient fullness throughout for movement in sitting, bending and walking.
- Bodice length is correct both above and below the grain line at front and back bustline.
- Skirt is correct length.
- Sleeves are correct length above and below the elbow.
- Neckline fits smoothly, without gaping or pulling.
- Center front and back seams are in the center of the figure.
- Side seams lie halfway between front and back, perpendicular to the floor.
- Shoulder seams lie straight across the shoulder.
- Sleeve seams lie across the tip of the shoulder for

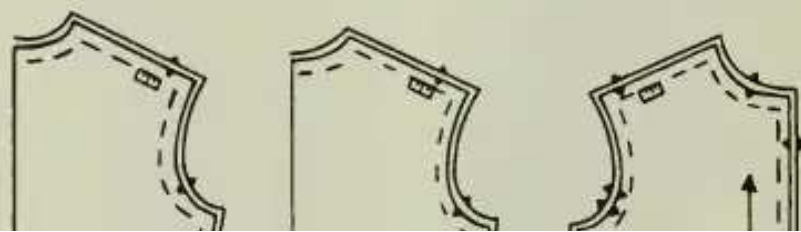
### Length

### Problem

*Too Long* If the bodice is too long, it will fold over at the waistline. If the skirt is too long, the whole garment looks large.

### Adjustment

*Shorten* If you need to shorten a pattern, crease tissue on the line marked on Easy-Rule guide. Using the printed ruler, fold a pleat taking up the necessary amount. Tape in place. Redraw seams and construction markings to retain the original shaping of pattern.



normal unpadded shoulder. As amount of padding increases the sleeve seam moves out on the shoulder.

- Bodice darts point directly to the fullest part of the bust.
- Hip darts end just above fullest part of the hip.
- Elbow darts are even, with center dart pointing directly to point of elbow when arm is bent.

## ADJUSTING YOUR PATTERN

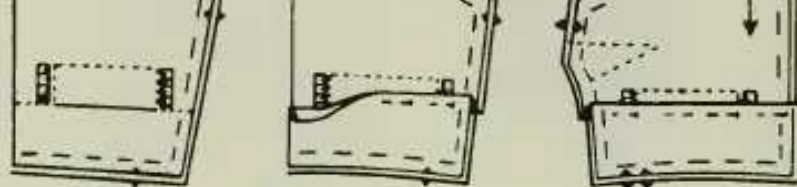
Whether you are using a tissue paper pattern or altering your basic pattern, the adjustments will be made in the same way. To help you solve your adjustment problems, below are described the most common fitting ailments that women have, and the pattern adjustments which will remedy each situation.

Since many of these adjustments suggest the use of the McCall's Easy-Rule Guide, you should understand how it is used to shorten and lengthen pattern pieces.



This simple device ensures accuracy.

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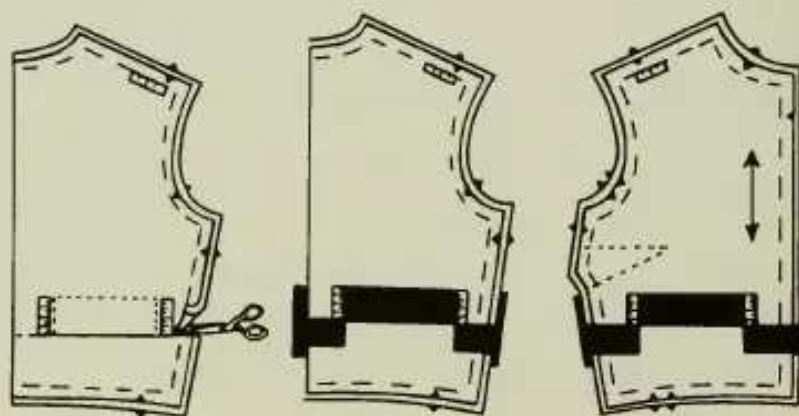


### Problem

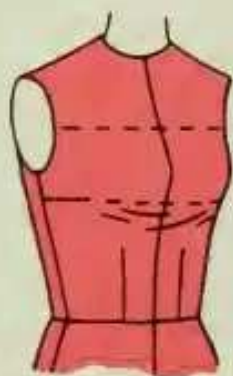
*Too Short* If the bodice is too short, it will ride high and look skimpy. If the skirt is too short, the whole garment looks too small.

### Adjustment

*Lengthen* To lengthen a bodice or skirt pattern, cut apart on dotted lines of Easy-Rule guide. Using the printed ruler as a guide, spread the pattern the amount to be lengthened. Tape over paper. Redraw seams and construction markings to retain original shaping of pattern.



## THE EASY RULES OF PATTERN ALTERATION / ADJUSTING YOUR PATTERN



### Problem

*High Bust* Bodice fullness for bust falls below bust so that bodice is too tight at actual bustline and too full below bustline; bust darts too low.

### Adjustment

*Raise Bust Dart* Draw lines through center of each dart. The lines will cross at bust point of tissue pattern. Mark the position of point of your bust on pattern.

### Bustline

The bust area of the bodice should fit smoothly with enough ease to move comfortably. Darts should point toward the fullest part of bust.



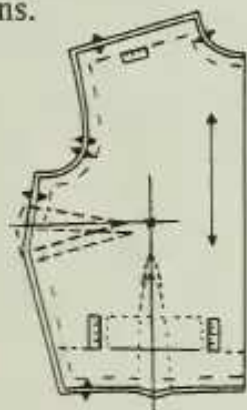
### Problem

*Low Bust* Bodice fullness for bust is above bust; bust darts too high.

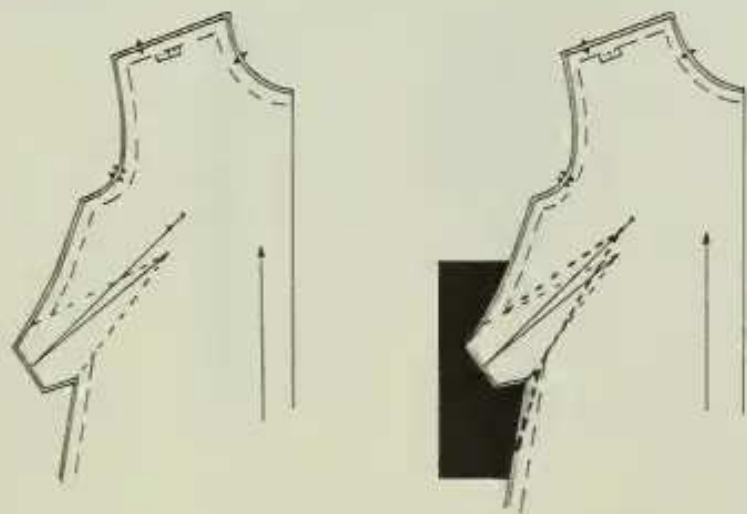
### Adjustment

*Lower Bust Dart* Mark bust point of pattern and position of point of your bust on pattern same as for raising dart. Measure distance between two points to

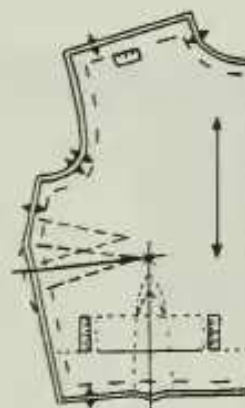
Measure the distance between original bust point and new bust point. This is the amount for dart to be raised. Raise side dart, keeping it parallel to original dart. Raise point of waistline dart same amount. Redraw darts and side seams.



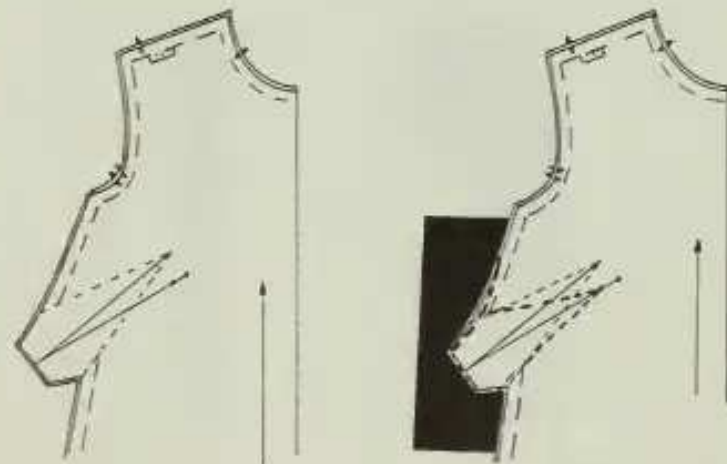
**Raise French Dart** Mark new bust point on pattern. Draw a line from mark to center fold line at base of original dart. Measure back  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch on this line and mark point of new dart. Redraw new dart from this point to stitching line at base of original dart. Fold and pin new dart. Redraw side seam on right and wrong side. Unpin dart and you have the correct angle at base of dart.



determine amount to lower dart. Lower side dart, keeping it parallel to original dart. Lower point of waistline dart same amount. Redraw dart and side seams.



**Lower French Dart** Mark new bust point on pattern. Draw line from mark to center fold line at base of original dart. Measure back  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch on this line; mark point of new dart. Redraw new dart from this point to stitching lines at base of original dart. Tape over paper. Fold and pin new dart. Redraw side seam same as for raising French dart. Unpin dart.



## THE EASY RULES OF PATTERN ALTERATION / ADJUSTING YOUR PATTERN



**Problem**

**Large Bust** Wrinkles pulling across bust; dart fitting not sufficient for curve of bust; grainline of fabric pulls up at bust.

### Adjustment

**Larger Than Average Bust** Slash pattern as directed for the small bust. Spread the pattern on vertical slash at bust point, one half the needed amount, tapering from bust line to waistline. This will automatically



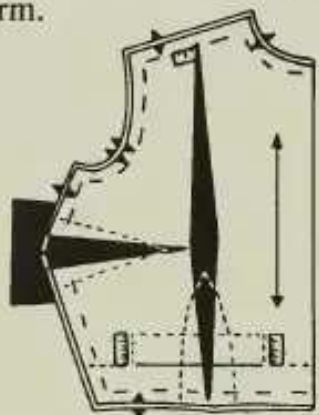
**Problem**

**Smaller Than Average Bust** Folds falling across bust; dart fitting too full for curve of bust; grainlines of fabric droop at bustline.

### Adjustment

**Smaller Than Average Bust** Draw line through center of underarm dart and waistline dart until the two lines meet. This marks the point of bust. Draw a line from point of bust to shoulder half the needed amount

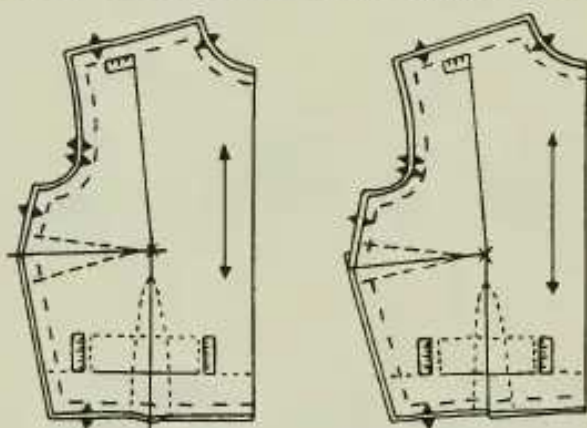
from shoulder line to waistline. This will automatically spread the underarm slash. Tape over paper. The underarm and waistline darts have been increased which is desirable as a large bust needs additional dart shaping. Mark new point of dart ends in center of slashes. Redraw the darts from new point to the waistline and underarm.



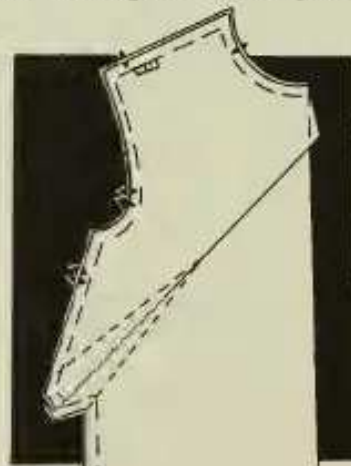
**Larger Than Average Bust With French Dart** Draw line through dart and slash same as for smaller than average bust. Spread dart half the necessary amount, keeping neck edge on original center front. Tape over paper. Mark new bust point in center of slash. Redraw dart from new point to original stitching lines at base. Redraw center front line.



from point of bust to shoulder, halfway between shoulder and neck edge. Slash from waistline edge along the vertical line to within 1/8 inch of shoulder seam. Slash on horizontal line to within 1/8 inch of bust point. Lap cut edges of vertical slash at bust point the needed amount, tapering slash from shoulder line to waistline. This will lap the underarm slash edges automatically.



**Smaller Than Average Bust With French Dart** Draw a straight line on center fold line of dart, extending to center front. Slash on this line. Lap edges of dart half the necessary amount, keeping neck edge on original center front. Tape in position. Redraw center front line. Redraw dart from point of original stitching lines at base.



## THE EASY RULES OF PATTERN ALTERATION / ADJUSTING YOUR PATTERN



### Problem

**Sloping Shoulders** Wrinkles slope from neckline to armhole and fall in folds; fabric grainline drops at armhole in both bodice front and back.

### Adjustment

**Sloping Shoulder** Determine amount you will need to lift shoulder. Armhole must be lowered same amount.

### Shoulder

As soon as the correct bust dart position and amount of ease are established, proceed to the shoulder area. The area between bust and shoulder should be free of wrinkles. The shoulder should conform to slant and width of your shoulder.



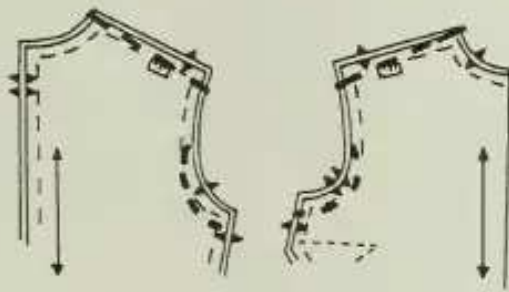
### Problem

**Square Shoulders** Bodice has wrinkles pulling from the shoulder to bust and shoulder blades; fabric grainline pulls up at armhole in front and back.

### Adjustment

**Square Shoulder** Determine amount shoulder must be released. Armhole must be raised same amount.

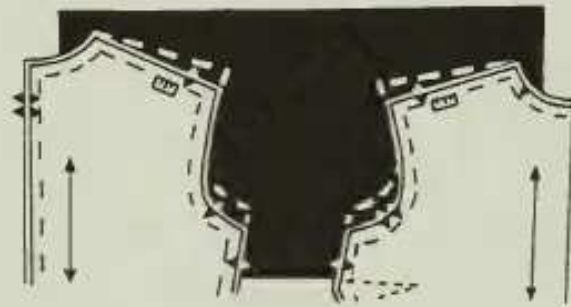
fit shoulder. Armhole must be lowered same amount. Measure down this amount from armhole edge of shoulder and mark. Measure down from armhole at side seam; mark same amount. Redraw shoulder seam, tapering from mark to neckline. Redraw armhole, tapering from mark to notches. Size and shape of armhole have been retained so sleeve will fit.



*Sloping Shoulder on a Raglan Sleeve* Determine the amount you will need to lift shoulder. Starting at original dart stitching line at neck edge, redraw a new line making dart longer and deeper over tip of shoulder. The amount dart is lengthened depends on the amount it was increased in depth. Dart must be tapered to a gradual point. If you take the dart deeper and then curve it back to the end of original dart, you will get an unsightly bulge on the sleeve at end of dart.



be released. Armhole must be raised same amount. Tape pattern over paper. Measure up this amount from armhole edge of shoulder and mark. Measure up from armhole at side seam; mark same amount shoulder was released. Redraw seams from mark to neckline and armhole, from mark to notches.



*Square Shoulder on a Raglan Sleeve* Determine the amount you will need to drop shoulder. Starting at original dart stitching line at neck edge, draw a new line making dart more curved over tip of shoulder and more shallow. Taper to end of original dart. Curving of the dart stitching line gives the greatest possible amount of fabric at tip of shoulder in this type of sleeve.



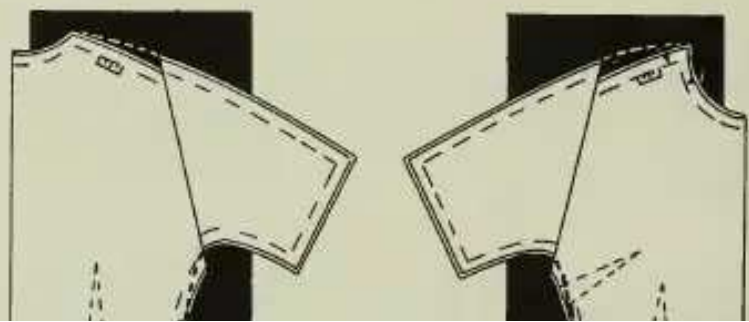
## THE EASY RULES OF PATTERN ALTERATION / ADJUSTING YOUR PATTERN

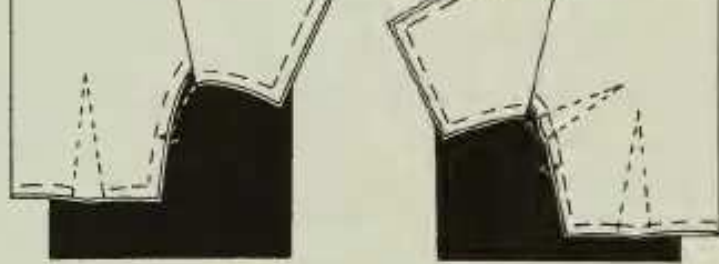
*Sloping Shoulder on a Kimono Sleeve* The point at which alteration is made is determined by width of shoulder. Hold pattern up to you, matching center front to center front of your body. Mark tip of your shoulder on shoulder seamline of bodice front.

Draw a diagonal line from mark indicating tip of your shoulder to high point of underarm seam. Slash pattern on this line. Lower sleeve section the amount that must be removed from shoulder, keeping slash edges even. Tape over paper. Redraw shoulder line from top of sleeve section to neckline. Redraw underarm seam from bottom of sleeve tapering to waistline.



*Square Shoulder on a Kimono Sleeve* Locate tip of shoulder same as for sloping shoulder. Draw a diagonal line from mark, indicating tip of your shoulder, to high point of underarm seam. Slash on this line. Raise sleeve section the amount that must be added to shoulder, keeping slash edges even. Tape over paper. Redraw shoulder line from top of sleeve section to neckline and underarm seam from bottom of sleeve tapering to waistline.



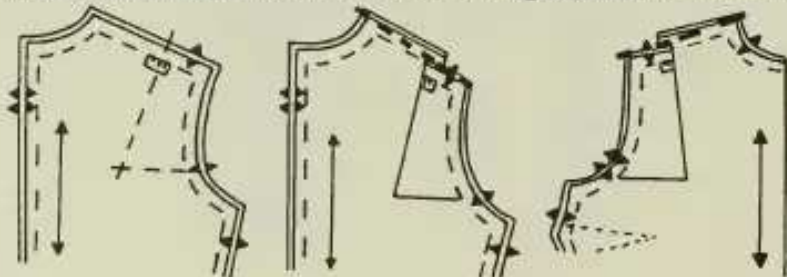


### Problem

*Narrow Shoulders* Seamline extends beyond tip of shoulder; sleeve seam falls over edge of shoulder.

### Adjustment

*Narrow Shoulder* Measure amount that seamline drops off tip of shoulder. This is the amount shoulder seam must be shortened on bodice front and back. Draw a line through Easy-Rule to a point even with armhole notch and another line from this point straight across to armhole seamline. Slash on line. Lap shoulder seam edges to shorten needed amount. Tape in place. Redraw shoulder seam from neck to armhole. Size of armhole has not been changed; sleeve will fit.

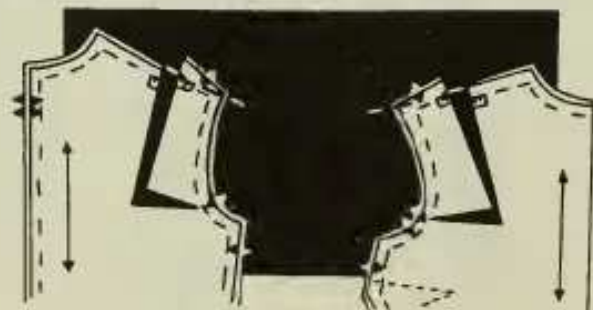


### Problem

*Broad Shoulders* Bodice pulls from armhole to shoulder seam; shoulder seamline does not reach tip of shoulder and sleeve cap rides up.

### Adjustment

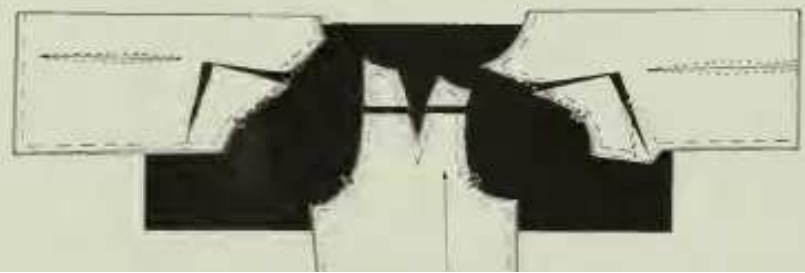
*Broad Shoulders* Measure from armhole seamline to tip of shoulder. This is the amount shoulder seam must be lengthened on bodice front and back. Cut pattern as directed for narrow shoulder. Spread slash to lengthen needed amount. Tape over paper. Redraw a straight shoulder seam from neck to armhole. Shoulder is now long enough to allow seamline to reach tip of shoulder.



## THE EASY RULES OF PATTERN ALTERATION / ADJUSTING YOUR PATTERN

*Narrow Shoulder on a Raglan Sleeve* Draw a line across center of shoulder dart, perpendicular to grainline of sleeve. Pin bodice front and bodice back to corresponding sleeve seams, neck edges and matching notches. Mark bodice pieces at point at which line on sleeve touches bodice seam. Unpin sleeve. Draw a line on bodice front from mark to point of bust, then across fold line of bust dart to underarm seamline. Draw a line on bodice back from mark, down and across to underarm seamline, in same position as on front. Slash along line on sleeve and on bodice pieces from diagonal seam to underarm seamline.

*Broad Shoulder on a Raglan Sleeve* Draw lines and slash pattern pieces same as for narrow shoulder on a raglan sleeve. Spread slash edges of sleeve to lengthen needed amount. Tape over paper. Redraw seams. Spread diagonal seam edges of bodice front and back same amount as sleeve. Tape over paper. Redraw diagonal seams from neck edges to notches.



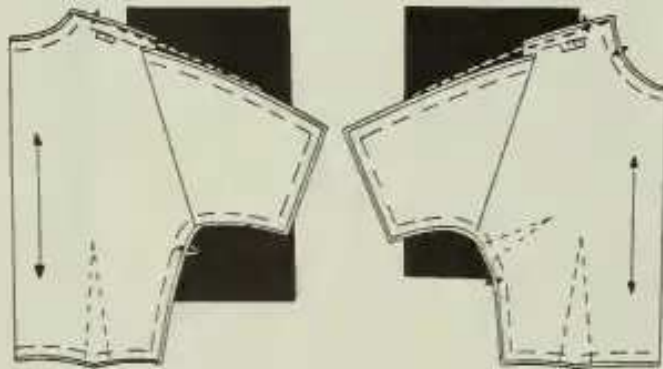
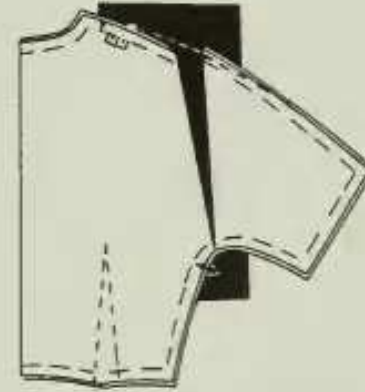




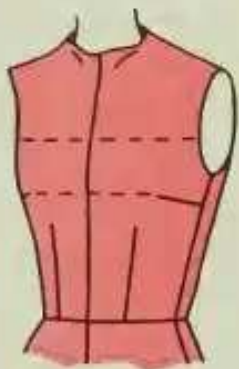
Lap slash edges on sleeve to shorten the needed amount. Tape in place. Redraw seams. Lap diagonal seam edge of bodice front and back same amount as sleeve. Tape in place. Redraw diagonal seams from neck edges to notches.

*Broad Shoulder on a Kimono Sleeve* Locate tip of your shoulder on pattern same as for sloping shoulder. Draw a diagonal line from mark indicating tip of your shoulder to high point of underarm seamline. Slash on this line. Spread slash to lengthen needed amount. Tape over paper. Redraw shoulder seam.

*Narrow Shoulder on a Kimono Sleeve* Locate tip of your shoulder on pattern same as for sloping shoulder. Draw a diagonal line from mark, indicating tip of your shoulder, to high point of underarm seamline. Slash pattern on this line. Lap shoulder seam edges to shorten needed amount. Tape in place. Redraw shoulder seam.



## THE EASY RULES OF PATTERN ALTERATION / ADJUSTING YOUR PATTERN



### Problem

*Thin Neck* Neckline falls away from neck and falls in folds.

### Neckline

Necklines should fit smoothly and hug the body closely. If alterations are made on the neckline, the same alterations are made on the facings.

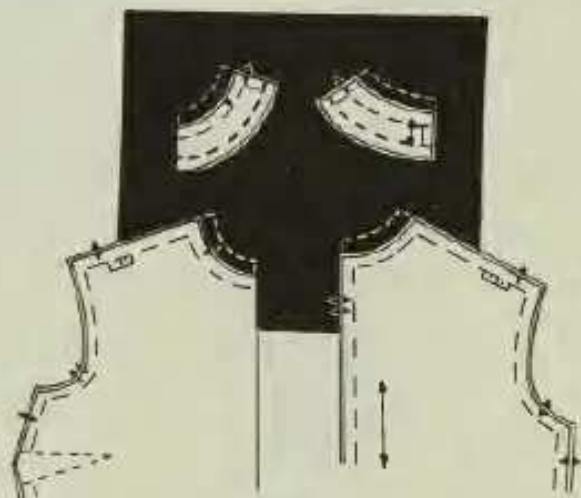


### Problem

*Full Neck* Neckline pulls and wrinkles around neck and is too tight.

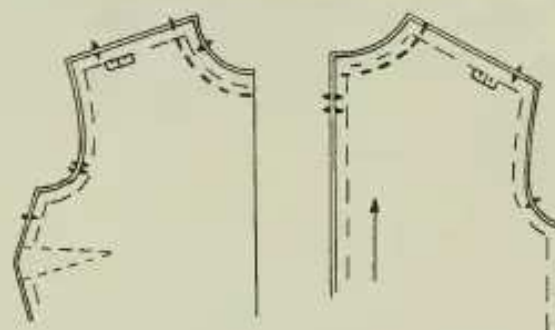
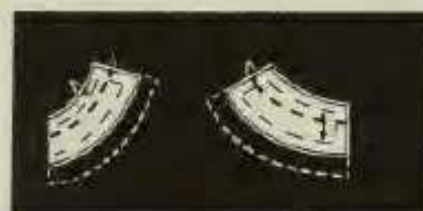
## Adjustment

*Thin Neck* Tape paper under the neckline edge. Build up the neckline the desired amount. Add the same amount to bodice front and back. Alter the facing in the same manner and restore the original width of the facing.



## Adjustment

*Full Neck* Cut out neckline of bodice front and back the necessary amount to fit neck smoothly. Alter facing in the same manner and restore the original width of the facing.



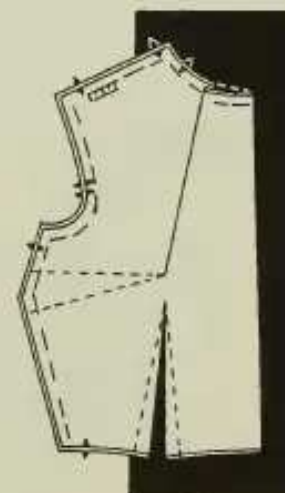
## Problem

*Open Neckline That Gaps* Neckline is too big and hangs away from the neck.



## Adjustment

*Gapping Neckline* Slash from neckline down to point of bust. Then slash from waistline up to point of dart along center fold line. Lap pattern half the necessary amount at neckline edge. The waistline dart will be deeper because you are transferring the extra fullness from neckline to the dart. Redraw neckline curve. Stitch dart on the original stitching line. Slash facing pattern and lap same as for neck edge of bodice. Redraw neckline curve of facing.



## THE EASY RULES OF PATTERN ALTERATION / ADJUSTING YOUR PATTERN

### Back

Many times the pulling and wrinkles in a bodice are caused by too little ease in the bodice back.



line. Draw a horizontal line from first line across to high point of underarm seam. Slash pattern on this line. Spread pattern half the needed amount on vertical slash. Tape over paper. Make a dart at shoulder seam about 2½ inches long and the width of amount added at shoulder seam. Redraw underarm curve.



## Problem

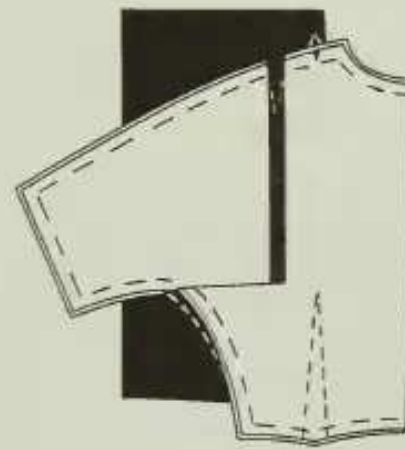
*Broad Back* Bodice pulls across back, restricting movement.

## Adjustment

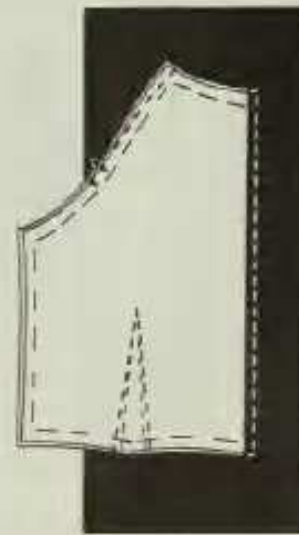
*Broad Back* Slash the pattern from shoulder seam straight down for about 10-12 inches. Spread the pattern half the desired amount to be added. Bring shoulder edges together, forming a small dart on side of slash nearest armhole. Clip seam allowance of armhole to allow the pattern to lie flat. Tape over paper. Redraw shoulder seam.



*Broad Back on a Kimono Sleeve* Measure 2 to 2½ inches from neck edge on shoulder seam and mark. Draw a line straight down from mark, parallel to grain-



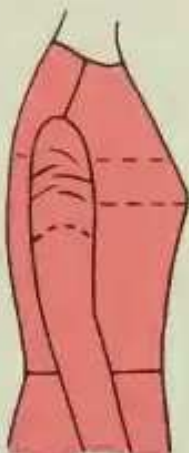
*Broad Back on a Raglan Sleeve* It is possible to add as much as ½ inch to back of a raglan sleeve bodice but more than that will not be satisfactory. Tape bodice back over paper. Add as much as ¼ inch to center back from neck to waistline. This makes neckline and waistline larger. Decrease neckline by ¼ inch at edge joining sleeve. Taper to nothing on diagonal seam from neck to underarm. Increase dart ¼ inch to bring waistline back to original size.



## THE EASY RULES OF PATTERN ALTERATION / ADJUSTING YOUR PATTERN

### Sleeve

If sleeve pulls and wrinkles across the upper arm, the sleeve should be made larger.



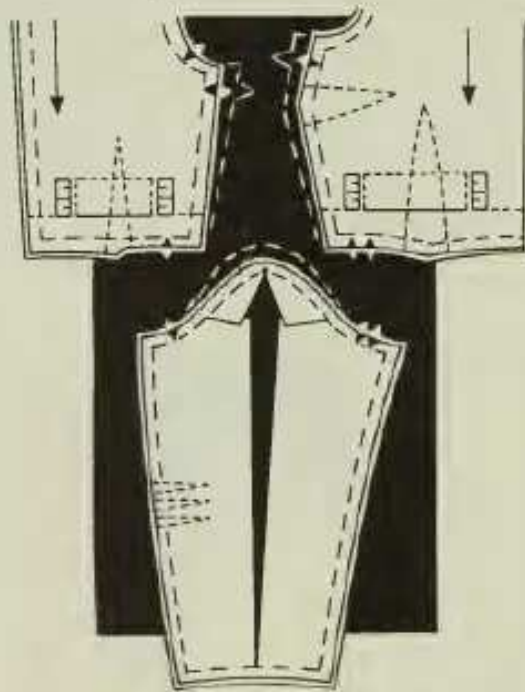
*Large Upper Arm on a Kimono Sleeve* You may enlarge a kimono sleeve up to 1½ inches; any more than this is not satisfactory. Divide the amount to be added by four. Add this amount at shoulder and underarm of sleeve. Taper from shoulder to lower sleeve edge and to original seam allowance at neckline. Taper from underarm to lower edge of sleeve and to original seam

## Problem

*Large Upper Arm* Sleeve pulls and wrinkles across fullest part of sleeve; fabric grain pulls up at the center of sleeve.

## Adjustment

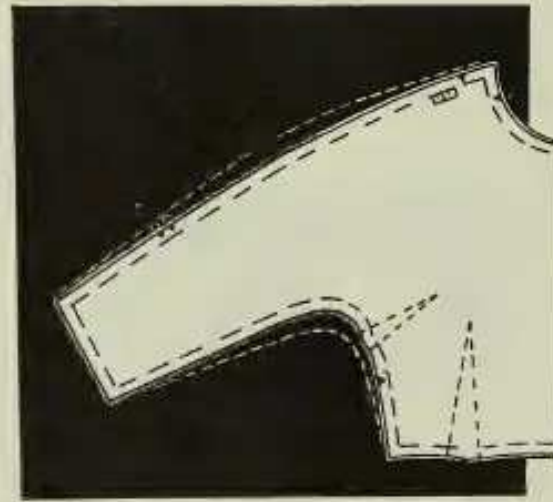
*Large Upper Arm* Slash sleeve pattern through center from circle at cap to lower edge. Slash straight across sleeve cap from seamline to seamline. Spread pattern on vertical slash, increasing sleeve necessary amount at widest part. Tape over paper. This has automatically lapped edges of the horizontal slash on sleeve cap. Measure amount sleeve cap was shortened by the lapping of edges of the horizontal slash. Add this amount to sleeve cap to restore it to its original length. Redraw curve of cap.



Bodice front and back side seams must be altered so sleeve will fit with normal ease allowance. Add half the amount of the increased width of sleeve to underarm side seams, tapering to nothing at waistline.

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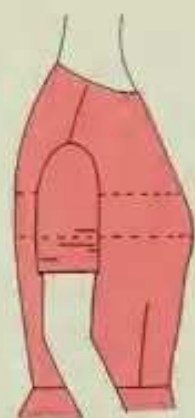
allowance at waistline. Make same alteration on bodice back.



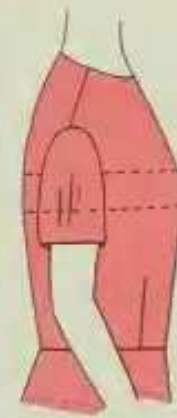
*Large Upper Arm on a Raglan Sleeve* Draw a line parallel to grainline from lower edge of sleeve to point of shoulder dart. Draw another line across sleeve from underarm to underarm. Slash on line from lower edge of sleeve to the point of dart. Then slash on line across widest part of sleeve between underarm seamlines. Spread pattern on vertical slash, increasing sleeve necessary amount at widest part. This automatically laps edges of horizontal slash. Redraw dart.



## THE EASY RULES OF PATTERN ALTERATION / ADJUSTING YOUR PATTERN



Problem



Problem