CHAPTER 4

ALTERING WAIST PATTERNS FOR FIGURES THAT VARY FROM THE AVERAGE

For a Figure Broader at the Back than at the Front, for Square Shoulders, for Sloping Shoulders, for a Full Bust, for a Small Bust, for Round Shoulders, for an Over Erect Figure

ALTERING A PATTERN FOR A FIGURE BROAD IN BACK IN PROPORTION TO THE FRONT.

Several women may have exactly the same bust measure but the bust size may be distributed in different ways. The first type of figure to be considered in this chapter is the figure that is broad across the back in proportion to the chest measure. Usually this type of woman is hollow-chested. If her back is broader than the average, she has discovered it in making her own clothes.

The alteration for this type of figure is very simple. Slash the back pattern from the shoulder to the bottom on a line with the back edge and separate the pieces as much as is necessary to fit the figure. (Ill. 40.) This will make the shoulder of the back longer than the shoulder of the front. (Ill. 40.)

Half of this difference in width should be sloped off the armhole edge of the back. (Ill. 40.) Half the difference should be filled in at the armhole edge of the front, letting the allowance slope to nothing at the notches. (Ill. 40.) The dotted line in Illustration 40 shows you where to fill in and where to slope off.

ALTERING WAIST LININGS AND WAISTS TO FIT SQUARE OR SLOPING SHOULDERS. Illustration 41 shows how a waist lining will draw across the chest on a square-shouldered figure. The alteration is so simple that it doesn’t have to be made in the pattern but
can be made in the actual waist lining and waist. You cut your waist or lining in the ordinary way by your pattern and put it together according to the Illustrated Instructions. Try it on, pinning the fronts together. (Ill. 41.) You will find that it draws across the chest and needs to be taken up at the shoulder seams at the neck as much as necessary to remove these wrinkles, letting this alteration slope toward the shoulders. (Ill. 42.) Tapering in the shoulder at the neck will make the neck size too small. Slash the neck edge of the lining at intervals until it feels comfortable. (Ill. 42.)

Take off the lining and baste the shoulder seam and trim off the neck edge on a line with the slashes. Try the lining on again to be sure the alteration is right before stitching the shoulder seams. If there are crosswise wrinkles at the back, the back lining can be altered in the same way. The same alteration that is made in the lining should be made in the outside waist.

ALTERING A WAIST TO FIT SLOPING SHOULDERS. Sloping shoulders make the diagonal wrinkle from the neck to the armhole. (Ill. 43.) This alteration, too, can be made in the lining and the waist without altering the pattern. Make up your lining in the usual way and put it on, pinning carefully at the center front. In Illustration 43 the shoulders are very sloping, and in your case the wrinkle may not be as pronounced. The wrinkle is due to the fact that the shoulders are not high enough to take up the full size of the pattern. The extra size must be taken up on the shoulder seams. Take in the shoulders as little as possible at the neck and as much as necessary toward the arm. (Ill. 44.)

Taking in the shoulder seams will decrease the size of the armhole and make it bind. Slash the armhole a little until it feels just right. Do not slash it too much or your armhole will be too large. (Ill. 44.)

Take off your lining, baste the shoulder seams and cut out the armhole on a line with slashes. Try the lining on again to be sure that it is comfortable and then stitch the shoulder seams. Diagonal wrinkles in the back of the lining may be handled in the same way. The same alteration that is made in the lining should be made in the outside waist.

ADAPTING PATTERNS TO A FIGURE WITH AN UNUSUALLY LARGE BUST. This is the case, not necessarily of a large figure, but of a figure in which the bust is
large in proportion to the bust measure. A woman might measure 36 inches at the bust and yet have a narrow back and a very full bust. If the bust is only a little full, the alteration can be made on the underarm seam when you try on the lining and waist. For an unusually large bust the alteration must be made before you cut your good lining and outside material.

Get some inexpensive lining material. Unbleached muslin will answer perfectly. Lay out your pattern, following the instructions, and cut it out carefully, marking the perforations with tailors’ tacks. (Page 85.) Put the lining together and turn under the hems, following the pattern instructions.

Take a piece of the lining material six inches wide and long enough to reach across your figure to the underarm seams. Place it over your bust and pin it carefully to your lingerie.

Put the lining on, pinning the front together with the front edges just meeting, placing the pins about 1 1/2 inch apart. The lining will draw in wrinkles that run from the bust downward toward the underarm seam. (Ill. 45.) Get some one to cut the lining straight across the figure to the side-front seam and from the side-front seam upward to within three-quarters of an inch of the notches in the armhole. When the lining is cut, it will separate as much as the figure requires and will drop in place over the bust. (Ill. 46.) Pin the edges carefully to the piece of lining underneath. (Ill. 46.) Take the lining off and baste the edges of the slash to the piece underneath. Try the lining on again to be sure that it fits perfectly. Take it off and rip it apart, cutting through the material underneath on a line with the seams.

These lining pieces are not to be used as a pattern, for muslin stretches and is not accurate. Take each piece of this altered lining and the corresponding piece of the pattern and make the same alteration on the pattern, using the lining pieces as a guide. Slash the pattern fronts like the muslin and separate the pieces of the pattern in the same way, and to the same extent, and paste a piece of tissue-paper under the slash. Keep the corrected tissue-paper and use it for any dress that calls for a French lining.

This alteration as it is illustrated here is for a figure unusually full at the bust. It will not, of course, be necessary to make such an extensive alteration for figures of a more normal shape.

ALTERING PATTERNS FOR A FIGURE WITH AN UNUSUALLY SMALL BUST. For the woman with an unusually small bust it is wiser to make up the lining first in unbleached muslin before cutting into the regular lining. Where the bust is just a little under the average the alteration can be made at the underarm seam. The alteration illustrated here is for an extreme case.

Cut a lining of unbleached muslin, baste it together, turning under the hems and putting it on with the edges of the hems just meeting. Pin it carefully. It will fall in wrinkles below the bust. (Ill. 47.) Here again the lining should be slashed straight across to the side-front seam and from the side-front seam upward to within 3/4 of an inch of the armhole notches. (Ill. 48.) Lap the slashed edges until the lining sets smoothly over the figure. Don’t try to make it snug or tight. You should have plenty of room to breathe comfortably, and the lining should not compress the figure.

Pin the edges of the slash. (Ill. 48.) Take off the lining, baste in the alterations,
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try it on again and if it fits perfectly take it off and rip it apart. The edges of the side-front seams will be jagged where the lining was lapped. Even them off, following the original seam line.

Correct your paper pattern, slashing the front and side front, lap the edges as much as in the lining, and paste the edges together.

Alterations for an unusually large or small bust may be made on a French lining; a lining with one or two darts, or a lining with a straight or curved front edge.

ALTERING A PATTERN FOR A ROUND-SHOULDERED FIGURE.
The lining must be made up in cheap material, fitted to the figure and the alterations transferred to the paper pattern itself. Place a strip of the lining material about 4 inches wide across your shoulders from one arm to the other. Then put on the trial lining which will run in wrinkles from the round shoulders.

Have some one cut the lining across the shoulders to the side-back seams (Ill. 50) and from the seams to within 3/8 of an inch of the underarm seam. The lining will spread apart and drop to the right place on your figure. (Ill. 50.) Have some one pin the cut edges of the lining to the piece beneath it. Baste the pieces underneath and try it on again. If it sets satisfactorily, cut it apart and use the pieces in correcting your tissue pattern. Slash the pattern just where you slashed the lining, separate the pieces the same distance and place the tissue-paper underneath the slash.

If you are only a little round-shouldered, you will not require as great a separation.

For a very bad case of round shoulders a second cut should be made across the trial lining about one-third the distance between the neck and first slash. Slash across the center-back and side-back portions nearly to the arm-hole edge. Separate the slashed pieces as much as the figure requires, generally 1/8 to 1/2 inch.

In cutting out the side back preserve an even curve along the back edge. The underarm gore seldom needs any change.

ALTERING A PATTERN FOR AN OVER-ERECT FIGURE. On an over-erect figure the lining will wrinkle across the shoulders. (Ill. 51.) Make up the lining in cheap muslin and put it on correctly. Have some one slash it across the center-back portion and down to side back to within 3/8 of an inch of the underarm seam. (Ill. 52.) The edges of the slash should be lapped and pinned to remove the fulness in the lining. Don’t lap the edges too much or the shoulders will pull back.

Baste the slash, try the lining on and then rip it apart. Where it has been lapped the seam edges will be uneven. Trim them off. Alter your paper pattern, using the trial lining as a guide, slashing it and lapping and basting the edges.