

# sewing surgery

## patterns – back to basics

Don't let not understanding a sewing term stop your dressmaking creativity. This month we've the A-Z of pattern terminology

### Sewing Pattern

**Adjustment line:** Indicates where a pattern can be lengthened or shortened.

**Alter:** Term used to change or revise a pattern or garment to fit an individual.

**Buttonhole placement:** A cross marks the spot where a button needs to be placed. A solid line indicates the length of the buttonhole.

**Cutting layout:** These are like a map showing how to fold the fabric and position the pieces for the most economical use – this will vary with garment view, fabric width, pattern size and nap.

**Cutting line:** This is the outermost dark line marked with the size.

**Dart:** A tapered fold in a pattern to allow for fullness which helps shape garment to body contours. Mark and fold along the centre line, matching the dots and stitch to the point.

**Dots, squares and triangles:** These indicate areas of construction where precise matching, clipping, gathering or stitching is required.

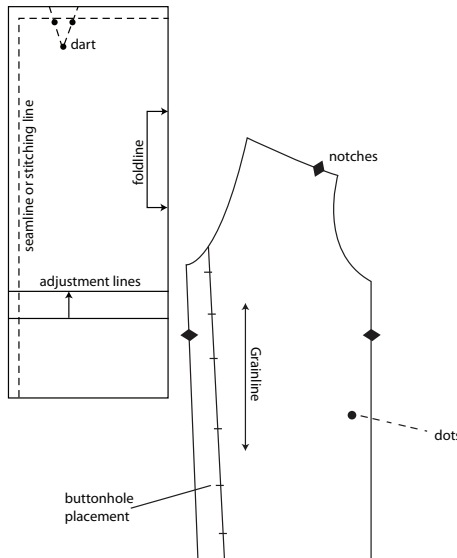
**Ease:** There is often wearing ease and designer ease. This will affect how close or loose fitting a garment is. Wearing ease is calculated to allow garments to move with the body whilst Designer ease is the style element. Woven garments need wearing ease to allow for movement.

**Easing line:** This short broken line, with dots at either end has a directional arrow to mark the area to be eased.

**Fold line:** This indicates that a paper pattern piece needs to be placed on the fold of the fabric so that two identical halves are cut as one avoiding additional centre seams.

**Grain line:** This is the suggested direction in which to place the pattern piece on the fabric with arrow parallel to the selvedge.

**Hem allowance:** Amount of fabric allowed for the hemming.



**Line drawings:** These show the shape and outline of the design plus any details such as seams and zip location.

**Notches:** These diamond shapes appear along the cutting line for matching seams.

**Pattern layout:** Diagram found on instruction sheet, which indicates how to lay out pattern pieces on the fabric.

**Seam allowance:** The area between the fabric edge and the stitching (usually 15 mm (5/8") for dressmaking).

**Seam line:** Denoted by a long broken line along. These must be matched when putting the garment together for stitching and not the raw edges.

**Toile:** This is a garment made from cheaper fabric like Calico and is used to 'prove' a pattern and make sure the pattern fits perfectly.

**Views:** Designs that appear on the paper patterns to show optional styles such as length, sleeve and hem variations.

**Yardage block:** Indicates how much fabric, interfacing and lining that you require to make a particular view on a pattern.

### Measurement

**Back waist length:** Measurement from middle of most prominent bone at the base of the neck down to waistline.

### Bust line:

The horizontal line running across the back and around the fullest part of the bust.

It's an important measurement for correct pattern sizing.

**Full bust:** Measurement taken around the fullest part of the bust and straight across the back.

**High bust:** Measurement taken above the full bust measurement under the arms and around the back and chest.

### Hip point:

Measurement from around the fullest part of your hips.

**In-seam:** The inside leg seam that runs from crotch to hem.

**Waistline:** This is the thinnest part of your body - tie a piece of string around your middle and allowing it to settle at natural waist.

**Tip:**  
If this measurement is more than 5cm (2") larger than the full bust measurement then pattern size should be selected by the high bust size and alterations made to fit the fuller cup.

**Tip:**  
If waist and hip measurements are not both included on the pattern - choose pattern for hip measurement.

## write to us:

If you are in need of a little help with a sewing dilemma, write to us at: Sewing Surgery, Sewing World, Traplet House, Pendragon Close, Malvern, Worcs, WR14 1GA.