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# Altering Ready-to-wear Dresses



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## Contents

Is it the fault of the dress? . . . . .	3
What can you learn from this circular? . . . . .	3
What factors are involved in a good fit? . . . . .	3
When is it advisable to alter a garment to improve its fit? . . . . .	4
What hints will produce good alterations? . . . . .	5
What basic principles are guides for fitting ready-to-wear? . . . . .	5
How can common fitting problems be corrected? . . . . .	7

# Altering Ready-to-wear Dresses

Prepared by *Extension Clothing Specialists*  
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## Is it the fault of the dress?

Too frequently we, as consumers, blame the dress for a poor buy. Actually the mistake began in the fitting room when for any number of reasons we answered "yes" much too quickly—or gave an unconsidered "no."

When a dress fits well, it becomes the source of real satisfaction because it contributes its maximum in usefulness and smartness. A dress that fits well adapts itself to the wearer's body. It feels easy and comfortable, yet is snug enough to have that look of belonging to its wearer. It does not have to endure unnecessary pulls and strains, and this conserves the fabric and ultimately saves the clothing dollar.

A well-fitted dress compliments the wearer's good points and skillfully hides poor ones. Contrary to general opinion, the price of a dress is not necessarily the key to *smartness*. Quality and color of fabric, workmanship, and suitability of design, regardless of the price of the dress, all depend on *fit* to achieve attractiveness.

Doubtless every woman has had difficulty at some time with the fit of ready-to-wear garments. Since many

consumers do not have the time or ability to alter their own clothing, retail merchants have to maintain expensive alteration departments in order to sell their garments.

The cost of fitting garments and the decreased value of garments due to misfits were an important part of the more than 13½ billion dollar annual clothing bill in the United States in 1960. Increased costs of labor and materials are bringing alteration prices to the attention of all and creating a great interest and need for homemakers to become skillful in alteration techniques used in the successful fitting of clothing.

Though there may be certain faults which the consumer cannot correct satisfactorily by herself, she can do much to improve the fit of her ready-made garments. Fitting is not difficult if a few fundamental principles are learned. According to one alteration workroom manager, the most common alterations are adjusting darts, taking in or letting out the bodice or the waistline of the skirt, and altering the length of the skirt.

## What can you learn from this circular?

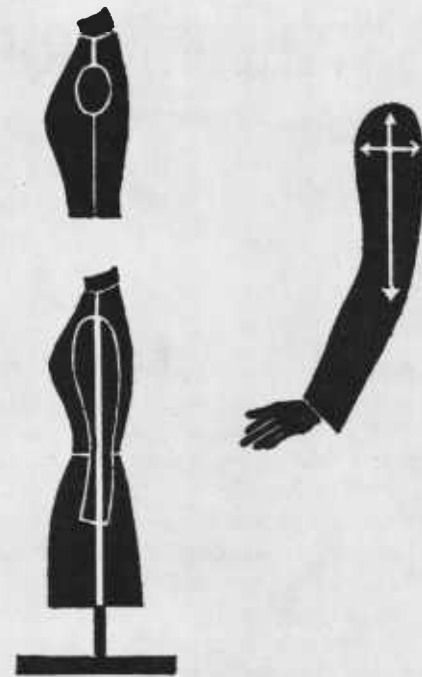
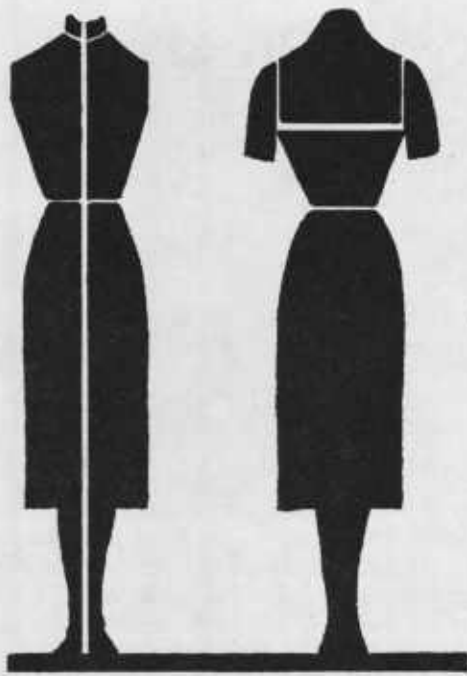
- To recognize standards of good fit in dresses, blouses, and skirts.
- To know the principles of alteration to achieve good fit.
- To decide on the advisability of making alterations to improve fit.
- To practice proper techniques of altering clothing for a good fit.

## What factors are involved in a good fit?

Key factors responsible for good fit in garments are: (1) the ease provided in the finished garment, (2) the design in relation to the physical structure of the body, (3) the accuracy in which the grainline has been observed in cutting and assembling the garment.

The amount of "livability ease" required is a matter of personal preference. One person delights in a snug-fitting garment, while another feels constrained by the same fitting. The active person with a fast tempo needs

more room to live in than the relaxed, slow-moving person. As a consumer, it is advisable to observe the livability ease allowed in current fashions so you can select the correct and complimentary size for your figure and your needs. Figure types vary in many ways such as the slope of the shoulders, the height and shape of the bust, and the length of the torso and legs. The amount of ease is determined by the movements of the body in an area. Ample ease is required at the bustline



because of shoulder and upper torso movements; very little is needed at the waist; and a moderate amount (2-inch ease) is required at the hips.

Clothes should be designed to suit the individual and the purpose and occasion for which they are intended. The line (design) in a garment is always considered in good taste when the basic silhouette seamlines follow the general silhouette of the body.

When buying a dress, a wise consumer will be aware of the design and "look for trouble" before she says "I'll take it!" She will try sitting down in the skirt that looks perfect when she stands. She will note the collar line. Is it flattering? Does it "hug" her neckline as the designer intended it to do? She will check the sleeves for comfortable style and length. She will be aware of the basic structural lines of the dress—the design and placement of armhole and waistline. Are they located so as to grant her body freedom of movement and comfort, as well as to present a smart appearance? If she

chooses clothes which basically are right for her in line or design, it is possible for her to be assured of a smart-looking dress after minor alterations are made to improve the fit.

The grainline of a perfectly fitted dress is perpendicular to the floor in the center front and center back of both bodice and skirt. The bust and hip grainlines are parallel to the floor. The lengthwise grain of the sleeve should be parallel to the long axis of the arm. If the grainline is askew at any place, due to figure irregularities, an adjustment is needed. However, if its irregularity is due to inaccurate cutting, it is questionable whether the garment will be able to maintain a well-fitted appearance, even though it has been properly altered at the time of purchase. The properly fitted dress is snug where fashion demands but never feels tight or strained. It has smooth lines with no unbecoming folds when the wearer sits or stands still. However, in movement, folds naturally will appear.

## When is it advisable to alter a garment to improve its fit?

*Too much alteration is to be avoided* for it usually results in a distortion of original lines and style.

Before purchasing a garment, consumers are urged to analyze the alteration problem carefully. Before doing any actual fitting, study the general effect of all sides of the garment on the figure. Decide what is good and what needs changing. Alterations like the removal of a collar are usually expensive or beyond the skill

of the inexperienced. If the collar does not fit, the consumer would be wiser to substitute another style. Be especially aware of correct location of grainlines. If there is any doubt about the success of alterations, it would be wiser not to buy the garment. If the style of a dress is not suited to the wearer's figure, it may never fit properly or look attractive regardless of skillful alterations.

In general, it is helpful to note the overall ease of garments. Note the width of seams, hems, and facings. Is there ample fabric to make alterations? When considering the alteration of seams, a minimum width of  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch must remain for durability. An attempt to fit an incorrect size due to a determination to wear a specific size garment is not practical or intelligent. Sizes vary considerably and a dress of the correct size is much more attractive than one of an incorrect size that has been altered. Merely setting the buttons over in center front or center back to allow more room, may affect the grainline as well as throw the garment off center, thus

detracting from its general appearance. If a choice in size is possible, and no particular size is a good fit, the slightly larger garment would be the better choice, for it is easier to take seams or hems up than to let them out.

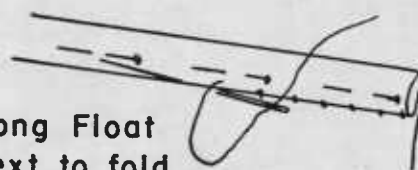
Also note the type of fabric in the garment—its appearance and characteristics. Some fabrics reveal stitching or pressing impressions from previous construction, and they are, therefore, not suitable to alter if original construction lines remain visible. Guarantees against shrinkage, as stated on labels, are also important in considering the fit of the garment.

## What hints will produce good alterations?

Whether or not alterations are minor or major problems, it pays to be cautious in making them. A few simple guides will help you to achieve the best results with a minimum amount of effort.

- 1) Rip only as much as is absolutely necessary to ease the alteration inconspicuously into the original lines of the dress.
- 2) Remove stitching carefully by clipping machine stitches at the place of the alterations to avoid pulling or tearing the fabric.
- 3) Carefully press the edges of the open seams before restitching. Handle gently to prevent stretching.
- 4) Use the "alteration basting stitch" when making alterations from the right side of the garment. (This stitch is made like a slant hemming stitch—with the long float of thread running

alongside the fold and the short stitch catching the fold slightly—see illustration.) The alteration basting stitch will temporarily sew the alteration into place and provide a guideline for stitching on the wrong side of the garment.



**Long Float  
next to fold**

- 5) Adjust alterations over the same clothing that will be worn with the garment for most accurate fitting. A properly fitted foundation garment makes for a good fitting outer garment.

## What basic principles are guides for fitting ready-to-wear?

Anyone who knows how to make and fit a dress is familiar with making general length and width alterations. The important decision is in knowing where and how an alteration might be made in a completed garment. When you have found a garment which suits you in color and design, and fits you reasonably well, note the finer details of construction. Are they well made? If they were altered, would the garment fit better?

### Darts

The purpose of darts is to mold or shape fabric to the contour of the body by decreasing width in some areas and creating or directing fullness to adjoining areas.

To serve their purpose well and to get a smooth, becoming line, darts should angle in the directions of the high point of the curve to which the fabric is being shaped and stitched to a fine, invisible point.

*Example:* Waistline darts in skirt directed to hip fullness. Dart ends should "melt" into the fabric.

The design of darts is important for good fit. Their length determines the general appearance of a garment.

Short darts provide considerable livability ease (freedom of movement).

Long darts provide a trim, snug fit. Normal length of darts is designed to end from 1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches from the high point of the curve.

Extra-long darts result in a tight or flattened appearance, because darts end on or near the high point of the curve.

The width of darts determines the amount of shaping the dart will create. If you let out a dart line there will be less shaping than before. If you nip in a dart line more shaping will result. Therefore, the contour of the body determines which depth of dart provides the most becoming fit.

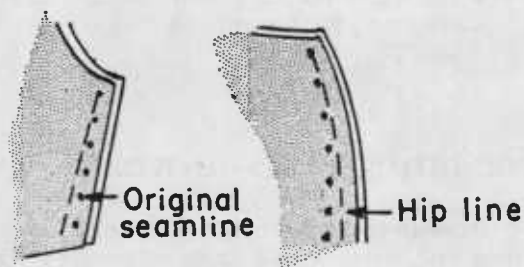
The wider (deeper) the base of the dart, the greater the amount of shaping created in a given area and usually the longer the dart needs to be for a smooth line.

The more shallow the dart, the more limited the shaping in that area.

In general, individuals with rounded, curving figures may decrease waistlines by taking in darts, but the same figures would be poorly fitted if darts were let out to increase waist measurements.

A full-busted person needs a wider dart to create a better shaping for her bustline. If diagonal ripples form in the upper torso region, from the bust point leading downward to the side seam, a deeper dart is needed. Taking in a dart decreases the waist measurement, so the side seams may have to be let out to make the waist large enough.

Conversely, individuals with slim, flat figures can let out dart lines to increase waist measurements, but would be poorly fitted if darts were taken in to decrease waist measurements. Decrease in their waistlines needs to be done at the side seams.



Groups of darts increase the size (expanse) of the shaped area. Two or more narrow darts may create an amount of shaping equal to a single deep dart, but the shaping is distributed over a broader area. This fitting technique is especially satisfactory for the large, full figure, and for individuals whose body measurements vary considerably from one area to another.

The location of darts determines their function. Front shoulder darts remove wrinkles from the shoulder down to the bust. They also straighten the grain of the goods.

Back shoulder darts from the back shoulder seam to the shoulder blade give ease across the back. They improve fit for a round-shouldered person.

Neckline darts, tucks, or gathers at the back make a dress fit snugly at the neck and yet allow fullness over the back. These darts may be straight or diagonal. They may be stitched on the right or wrong side.

Underarm darts give ease and can be used to shift the crosswise grain of goods below the bust. Usually one or more darts from the underarm seam are placed below but pointing toward the bustline. Generally, any one underarm dart should be not more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch wide at the side seam or more than 3 inches long.

Waistline darts—often placed in a blouse at points directly below the bust or shoulder blade—give needed ease.

Skirt darts from the waistline in the side back or front create a smooth effect between ease at the hipline and a snug waistline.

Elbow darts properly located give elbow room and hold fullness in the right place. When locating these darts, bend the arm to find the elbow point and place the darts or gathers at the elbow.

## Seamlines

Well-made seams lie and hang straight and keep dresses in proper line on the figure. The appearance of seams should be carefully noted. Good seams should conform to the following descriptions.

Underarm bodice and skirt seams hang perpendicular to the floor.

Waistline seams lie parallel to the floor.

Armhole seams are straight in front and back of arm (parallel to center front and back) unless the design of the garment dictates otherwise. Seam across the top of the shoulder and underneath the arm is an evenly curved seam.

Shoulder seam lies in a straight line at the shoulder.

If you change one side seam, change the other in an identical fashion, unless the two sides of the figure vary.

If an alteration of a seamline is made merely to increase or decrease width, make an identical correction on both front and back edges. If the alteration is made to adjust to a figure irregularity, the correction will vary on the two edges.

## Pleats and slits in hemlines

Design features should continue to be in pleasing proportion to the length of the garment, even after alterations are made.

If a new skirt length upsets the pleasing propor-

tion of the original length, re-establish the length of the pleat or slit, if possible. If this is not possible, the pleat or slit may have to be removed to retain the attractiveness of the garment.

Note the length of the pleat or slit in relation to its usefulness. Is it comfortable for walking and for stepping up?

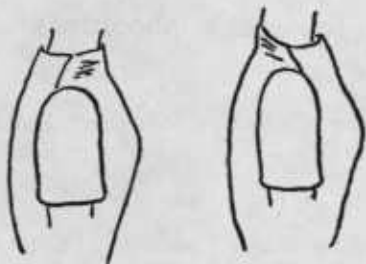
## How can common fitting problems be corrected?

The ability to judge the fit of a garment as well as the skill to achieve a good fit is rarely learned in one lesson or demonstration. The problems and solutions illustrated on the following pages are common alterations which are often made in ready-to-wear clothing. If a better understanding is gained of how these alterations can successfully be made, the skill of fitting clothing will be more easily developed and a greater appreciation of wearing well-fitted clothing will be gained.

**Problem:** *Shoulder seam lies too far to the front or to the back of the shoulder. Wrinkles appear in back of neck if shoulder seam is too far forward. Wrinkles appear in front if shoulder seam is too far to the back.*

### Why a problem?

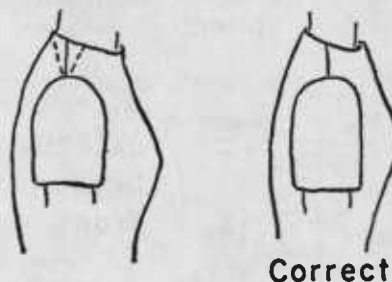
- Prominent shoulder draws garment away from neckline, causing a strain either in the front or back neckline.



- Bodice too short between shoulder blade and shoulder seam or bustline and shoulder seam.
- Weight of the garment does not hang from the shoulders correctly, resulting in discomfort as well as poor appearance.

### Correction:

- If the shoulder seam is ample in width, it can be let out to accommodate shoulder height.



**Problem:** *Horizontal ripple of fabric at the base of back neck.*

### Why a problem?

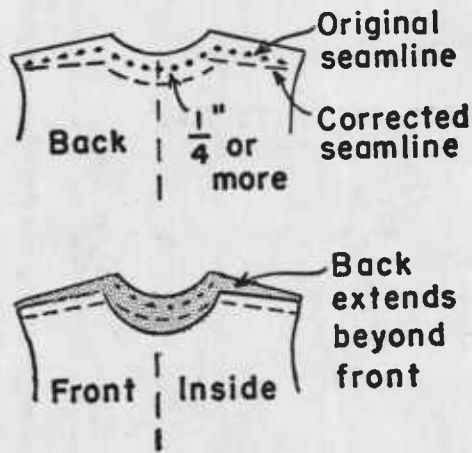
- Caused by too high a neckline and shoulder area.
- Strain on shoulder area of garment. Fabric tries to creep up at neckline.
- Common to individual with a very straight back, or one who holds her head and neck very erect.



### Correction:

- Remove the back collar and open the shoulder seams to about 1 inch from the armseye.
- Smooth the back shoulder and neck of the garment over the figure, allowing the back to "ride up" the required amount.
- Re-establish shoulder and neck seams, using original outline as a pattern.
- Usually the front shoulder edge retains the same seamline. It is important that each shoulder seamline and neck seamline retain the exact measurements of the original seamline. A good idea is to trace original line on paper and make a paper pattern.

- Stitch shoulder seam. Trim to normal seam width. Clip if necessary.
- Pin the collar on new neckline seam. Check fit before final stitching.



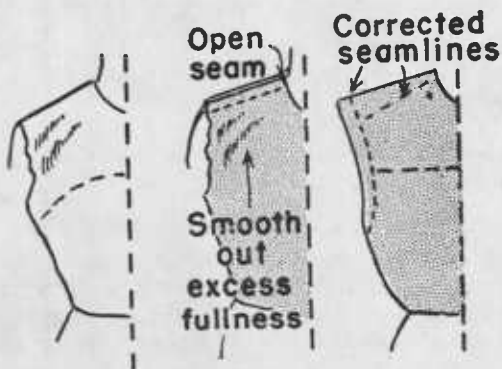
**Problem:** *Diagonal wrinkle from base of neck to lower armscye.*

**Why a problem?**

- Sloping shoulders cause diagonal folds, which emphasize figure irregularity.
- Shoulder width too narrow.

**Correction:**

- Remove sleeve. Also open shoulder seam from armscye to within 1 inch of the neckline.
- Smooth hand across the fold of the wrinkle—forcing excess fabric out at the shoulder line—until crosswise grain lies parallel to the floor.
- Establish new shoulder seam. Re-establish armscye and carefully replace sleeve in position.  
\*Caution: Allow for comfortable body motion.



**Problem:** *Garment too small across the shoulders.*

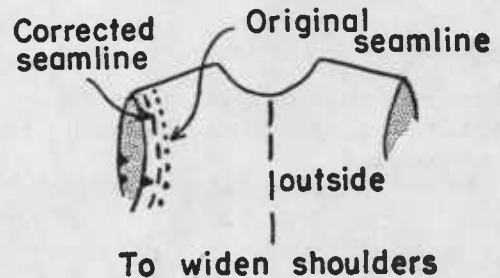
**Why a problem?**

- Armscye seam slants towards neckline, decreasing the apparent shoulder width.
- Freedom of upper arm movement is limited, causing a strain on seamline.



**Correction:**

- If armscye seam permits, extend shoulder line by decreasing the depth of the seam.
- If original armscye seam is not of ample width, this problem cannot be corrected.



**Problem:** *Diagonal wrinkles fall from shoulder blade to underarm.*

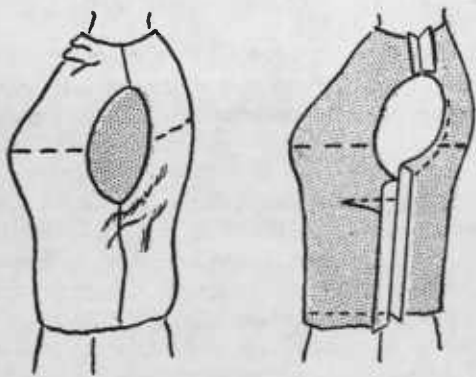
**Why a problem?**

- Rounded back causes bodice to pull up in center back, raising the waistline above normal.
- Rounded back causes a poorly fitted skirt by pulling it upward at center back.

**Correction:**

- Remove the sleeves from the armscye. Also open shoulder seam. Lift back bodice at armscye so grain of material is straight across the upper back.
- Pin and refit the shoulder seam; let it out near the neckline and take it up near the armhole.



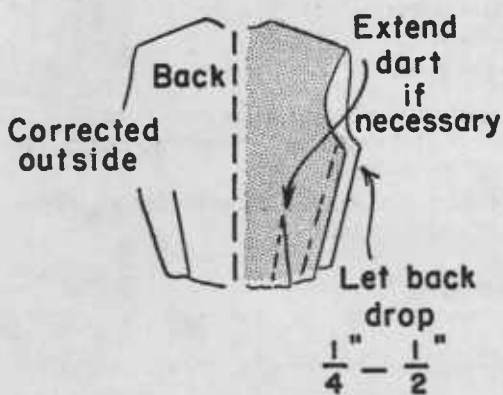
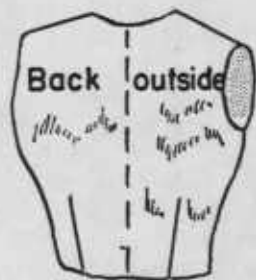


*\*Caution:* Do not attempt this correction if the waistline seam is not ample in width to allow upward movement of back bodice.

**Problem:** *Wrinkles in back near shoulder blade area.*

**Why a problem?**

- Caused by person who is short-waisted in the back only.
- Common alteration problem for individual with unusually straight back.



**Correction:**

- Open the back waistline seam and approximately 2 inches of front waistline seam, the waistline dart, lower section of armscye seam, and underarm seam.

- *For the short-waisted person*, drop the back to remove the ripples from the excess length. Extend the darts, if necessary. Pin the underarm seams together. Stitch. Re-establish the underarm seam and the waistline seam, allowing sufficient length for comfortable movement.
- *For the straight-backed person*, decrease the depth of the dart and ease excess fabric toward the side seam. Re-establish side seam. Restitch waistline and underarm seams in original position (not illustrated).

**Problem:** *Garment too broad across the shoulders.*

**Why a problem?**

- Armscye seam falls too far down on the arm, causing ripples in the upper sleeve.



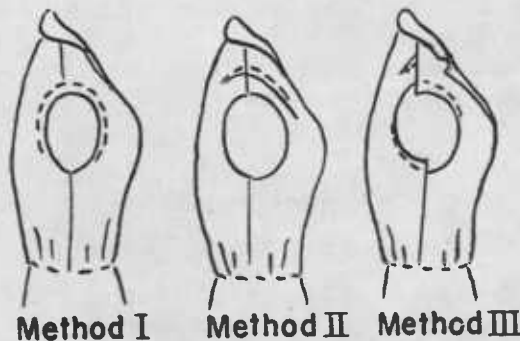
**Correction:**

*Method I:* Re-establish the top of the armscye by moving the seamline in to a desired position.

*\*Caution:* Do not trim the seam until the sleeve is replaced and tried on for final check.

*Method II:* Open the shoulder seams up to within 1 inch of neckline seam. Take up extra length in a front and back shoulder dart.

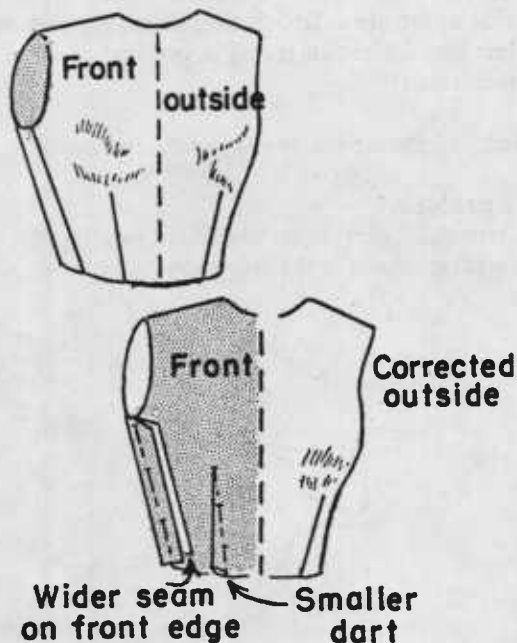
*Method III:* After shoulder seam is opened, fold and stitch a dart in back shoulder and trim excess width from front shoulder.



**Problem:** *Excess amount of fullness in bustline.*

**Why a problem?**

- Caused by smaller than average bust.
- Bustline area is shaped with too deep an under-bust dart. Places emphasis on figure irregularity.



**Correction:**

- Open the front waistline seam, under-bust dart, lower section of armseye seam, and underarm seam.
- Working from the right side of the garment, pin in a smaller under-bust dart on the original dart line closest to the center front. Smooth fabric towards the side seam, letting out excess at the seam. Mark new dart and seam location on the wrong side of the bodice. Pin or baste into place. Check fit before stitching.
- Might also make alterations on right side of garment using "alteration basting stitch."

**Problem:** *Convertible collar stands away from neck. (Applied shirtwaist collar.)*

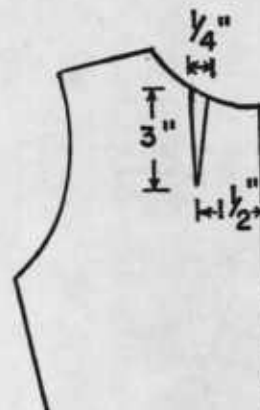
**Why a problem?**

- Collar is too long for the dress neckline.
- Neckline is too large for the individual.
- Basic cut of neckline is not suited to wearer. Select another style.

**Correction:**

If the dress or blouse has a great deal of livability ease, try on a smaller size. If this does not correct the problem, adjust the garment as follows:

- Remove the collar from the dress. Insert a stay-stitching line around neckline. Check neckline for fit. If dress neckline fits, measure it carefully along the stitching line. Compare measurements to inside collar length. If these measurements are not the same, take off the extra collar length at each of the ends. Pin the collar back in place, baste along seamline, and try on for final fitting before stitching.
- If dress neckline is too large, sew in two shallow neckline darts either in bodice front or back, whichever is too large. Then decrease size of collar as explained above and replace collar in like manner.



**Problem:** *Sleeves uncomfortable because elbow fullness is misplaced.*

**Why a problem?**

- Limited freedom of arm movement.
- Elbow fullness does not correspond to the location of the elbow.
- Vertical wrinkles from shoulder to elbow indicate strain on fabric.

**Correction:**

- Open sleeve seam above and below the elbow. Re-establish location of dart or ease to allow freedom of movement. (If there are three darts, the middle dart should point to the elbow. If there are two darts, the elbow should rest between the two darts.)
- Pin sleeve seam together. Check its accuracy of fit with arm extended and in a bowed position.
- Stitch seam when fullness is correctly placed.

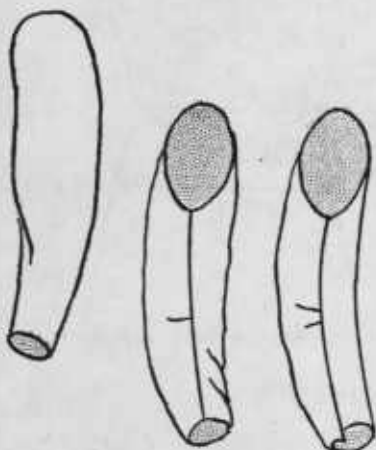
**Problem:** *Sleeve twists below the elbow.*

**Why a problem?**

- The elbow needs a greater amount of ease.
- Back sleeve needs to be longer.

**Correction:**

- Open hem and seam of sleeve below the elbow.
- Push more ease up into elbow area. If sleeve has elbow fullness created by darts, add another dart. (If there are three darts, the middle dart should point to the elbow. If there are two darts, the elbow should rest between the two darts.)
- Pin sleeve seams together. Check accuracy of location of darts when the arm is extended and in a bent position.
- Stitch darts and seamline.
- Establish new hemline.



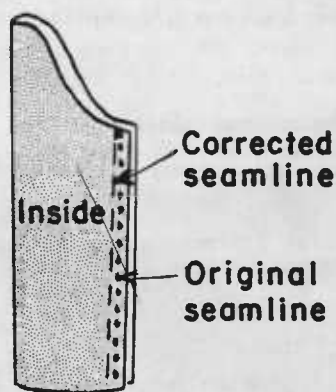
**Problem:** *Sleeves too wide or too narrow in lower arm.*

**Why a problem?**

- If sleeves are much wider than arm, the apparent size of the arm decreases, due to extreme contrast.
- If sleeves are too tight they wrinkle and appear to be uncomfortable.

**Correction:**

- Open hemline of sleeve. Lightly press out crease.
- Working from the wrong side of the sleeve, mark a ruler-straight line either in the seamline or in the sleeve.
- Open original seamline. Pin in new seamline. (Minimum seam allowance is  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch.)



**Problem:** *Sleeves too narrow in upper arm.*

**Why a problem?**

- Well-developed upper arm.
- Sleeve design is one allowing a limited amount of livability ease.
- Tight uncomfortable armhole. Upper arm places strain on fabric.

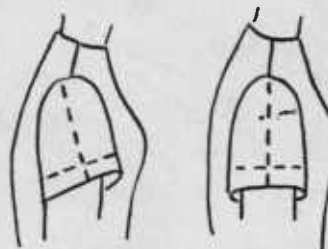
**Correction:**

- Check width of underarm and sleeve seam. If there is ample width, decrease the seams to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch width, gradually tapering to original seamlines.
- If sleeve or armhole seems especially snug, the dress would not be a good buy since the original design was not cut correctly for this type of figure.

**Problem:** *Sleeve cap twists to back or front.*

**Why a problem?**

- Sleeve was set into armhole incorrectly.
- Sleeves were set into wrong armholes.
- Sleeves were not cut on true grain of fabric.



**Correction:**

- Check the sleeves for grainline. If lengthwise grain is not parallel with long axis of the arm, twisting may be corrected by merely ripping upper armhole seam and shifting sleeve into place.

- Check location of notches in sleeve cap and armhole. If sleeves are in wrong armhole, exchange them and fit again.
- If grainline was disregarded in cutting the sleeves, you will not be able to reduce "twisted look."

**Problem:** *Wrinkles from neckline to shoulder on kimono sleeve.*

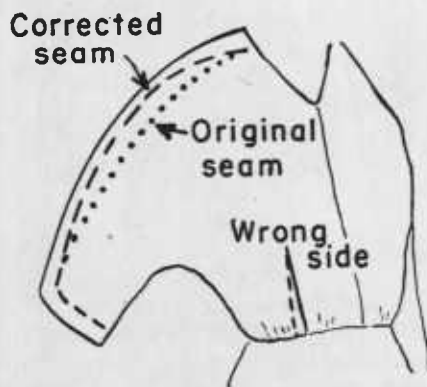
**Why a problem?**

- Curve of shoulder seam does not correspond with length of shoulder.
- Square shoulder or very erect shoulder.



**Correction:**

- If problem lies with incorrect placement of curve on shoulder, try a size larger. Seam cannot be altered to fit.
- For square or erect shoulder let out shoulder seam at end of shoulder to allow for greater length.



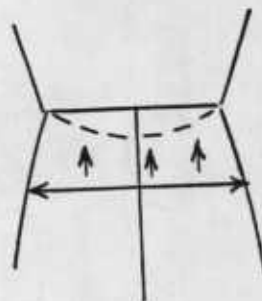
**Problem:** *Crosswise folds in back skirt, near waistline area.*

**Why a problem?**

- Flat hipline or prominent hip bones cause folds, making skirt appear to be too small for the wearer.

**Correction:**

- Open back waistline seam. Smooth excess fabric up towards waistline until crosswise grain rests on fullest part of hips.
- Absorb extra waistline fullness in a small dart or direct it out towards the side seam, whichever allows the grainline to remain in position. Stitch the darts.
- Mark new waistline seam. Join side seams, skirt, and bodice again. Check for fit before final stitching.
- Re-establish hemline.



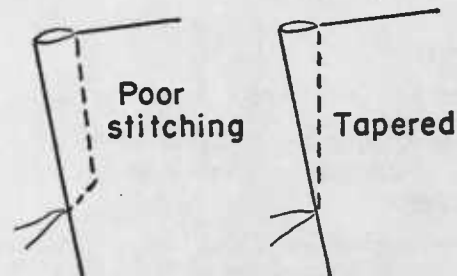
**Problem:** *Conspicuous back hip darts.*

**Why a problem?**

- Inaccurate construction of darts.
- Unsuitable length or placement on the figure.
- Appears to be an oversized skirt.

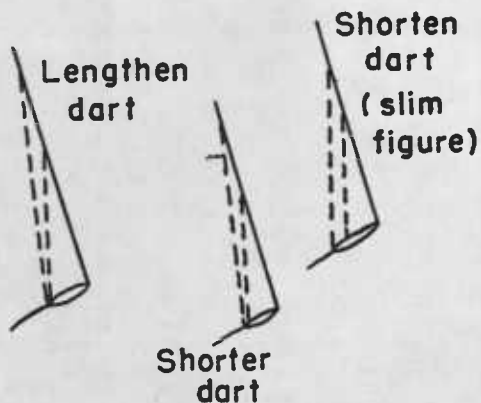
**Correction:** (Poor stitching.)

- Restitch darts to fine, tapered darts.
- If dart is deep and fabric is heavy, slit the dart open, and press.



**Correction:** (Unsuitable length.)

- Mark location of high point of hips.
- Restitch darts to within 1 inch of the fullest point.
- If dart is shortened, and figure is slim, the depth of the dart must be reduced, and the remainder of waistline width eased out at the side seam.



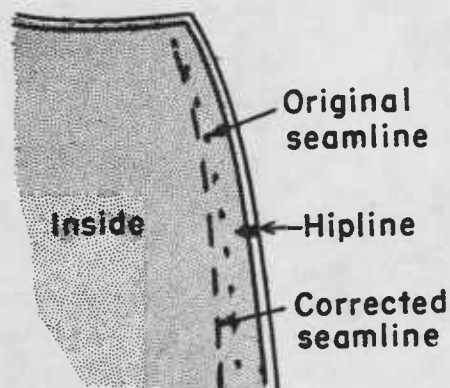
**Problem:** *Excess skirt fullness in thigh area.*

**Why a problem?**

- Slim hipline and thighs.
- Much unnecessary fullness in skirt—appears to be oversized.

**Correction:**

- Open the hem near side seams. Lightly press out hemline crease.
- Pin location of new side seams by fitting the area where excess fullness exists. Usually found in area from hipline to hemline.



The new seamline should—

- Taper smoothly into the original seam at the hipline.

- Lie parallel to the original seamline below the hipline.
- Allow 2 inches of livability ease at the hipline.

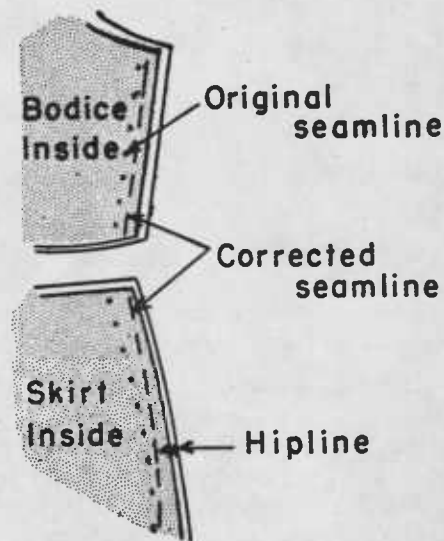
**Problem:** *Waistline too tight.*

**Why a problem?**

- Skirt “rides” up and causes horizontal ripples near waistline. (Appearance of skirt the same as in preceding problem.)
- Fabric is especially strained in placket area.

**Correction:**

*Method I.* Let out the skirt side seams. To keep skirt balanced make adjustments on the side seams, rather than center front or center back. If a slide fastener is in one of the seams, it must be removed and replaced after the seam adjustment has been made.



*Method II.* Let out skirt and bodice waistline darts, graduating them to a fine point. If this is not sufficient, also adjust side seams.

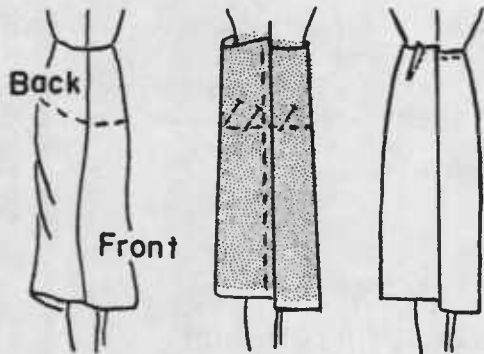
**Problem:** *Diagonal folds below the hipline in the back-skirt panel of a slim skirt.*

**Why a problem?**

- Prominent derriere (sway-back). Center back hemline becomes shorter than front and side of skirt.
- \* This type of figure would make a nicer appearance in skirts designed with several gores or one containing graceful fullness.

**Correction:**

- Open the back waistline and side seams. Lift the back panel until skirt falls in a straight line to the floor. Anchor skirt on crosswise grain at hip-line and on lengthwise grain at center back.
- Smooth extra waistline width into a dart and side seams. Re-establish side and waistline seams of back panel. Pin front and back skirt panels together.
- Check fit before stitching. Trim excess fabric at waistline before reassembling bodice and skirt. Mark new hemline, trim, and sew.



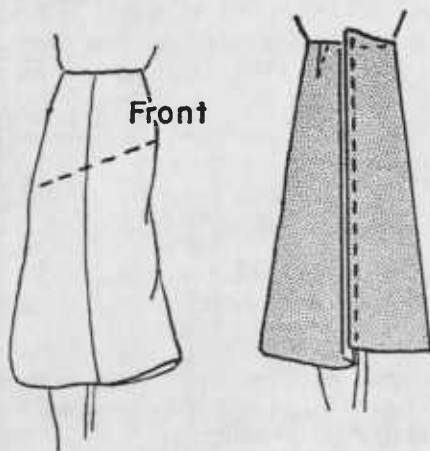
**Problem:** *Diagonal folds below abdomen in front panel of slim skirt.*

**Why a problem?**

- High abdomen causes center front hemline to be shorter than back and sides of skirt.

**Correction:**

- Open the front waistline and side seam. Lift the front panel until skirt falls in a straight line to the floor. Anchor the skirt at the high point of abdomen (crosswise grain) and at center front (lengthwise grainline).



- Smooth extra waistline width into short darts and side seams, or into several trouser pleats (unstitched tucks). Re-establish side and waistline seams. Pin back panel to the front skirt. Check fit before stitching. Trim excess fabric at waistline before reassembling the total garment.
- Mark new hemline, trim, and sew.

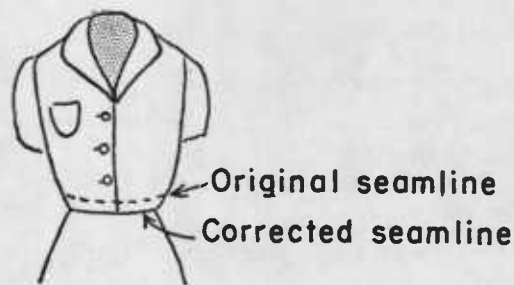
**Problem:** *Lower edge of skirt swings out in front.*

**Why a problem?**

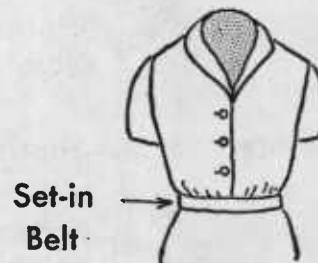
- Front bodice too short, causing it to pull skirt up above waistline.
- Flat hipline causes the back skirt to drop and swing forward.

**Correction:** (Adjusting the bodice length.)

- If waistline seam allowance of front bodice is wide enough, open the seam and drop it to the natural waistline.



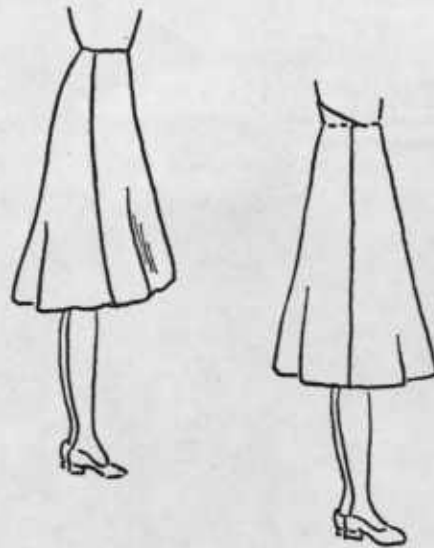
- If this cannot be done, insert a piece of self-fabric to extend length from side seam to side seam. (Fabric might be obtained from a wide, wide hem.) The belt will cover the inset.



- If enough material is available, a set-in belt might be inserted around the entire waistline, adjusting the back length so as not to change its original comfortable length. Again, the belt will cover the inset.

**Correction : (Altering the skirt.)**

- Open the back waistline seam. Raise the center back skirt until the side seams hang perpendicular to the floor, and the grainline is parallel to the floor at the hipline.
- Mark the new waistline seam. Ease extra waistline fullness into dart or out at the side seam above the hipline.



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