

FIT CLINIC

EPISODE 4

CHARM
ARTIST
COLLECTIVE

BUST ADJUSTMENTS

Welcome to the fourth episode of our Fit Clinic series! This handy cheat sheet will help you make common bust adjustments so you can get the perfect fit. Follow along with this month's video to see these tips in action.

xoxo, *Gertie*

Busts come in all different shapes and sizes. Charm's patterns include A-H bust cups, but you may find yourself outside of that size range, with a different apex location, or needing additional fitting help. Learning how to do bust alterations will help you fit garments to your unique shape, and is a skill you will find useful for all of your sewing projects.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT CUP SIZE

Wearing the foundation garments you intend to wear underneath your finished garment, measure your high bust measurement and your full bust measurement. Using the Size Chart and Finished Measurements Chart included with your pattern, choose the correct garment size and cup size.

Use the high bust measurement to determine your garment size. The difference between the high bust measurement and the full bust measurement will determine your cup size. At Charm, we do the work for you by offering A-H cup measurements for each dress size. Once you have determined your garment size, scan down that column to find the number that is closest to your full bust measurement; this will be your cup size.

Remember, the size you choose should only be based on your actual measurements. Your bra size and ready-to-wear dress size won't necessarily be the same as your Charm sewing pattern size!

COMMON BUST FITTING ADJUSTMENTS

Small Bust Adjustment ("SBA"): A small bust adjustment will remove both width and length. Follow along with the video to make your own SBA. If desired, you can remove the bust dart completely using this method.

Full Bust Adjustment ("FBA"): A full bust adjustment adds both width and length. To go up one cup size, add 1 inch. (Remember, if you are working with only half the pattern, you'll add only 1/2 inch!). Follow along with the video to make FBA adjustments to your pattern pieces. If you continue to experience gaping at the armhole after making a FBA, see the Fit Clinic 2 video.

Moving Darts or Changing Dart Length: Darts should point to the apex (the fullest part of the breast) and end about 1 inch from the apex, although this will depend on personal taste. Bigger busts will often need more space between the apex and the end of the dart. See Gertie's Ultimate Dress Book for detailed info on dart manipulation.

Asymmetrical Breasts: This is a common issue, and often does not require any garment fitting adjustments. Choose the cup size that fits the larger breast and pad the foundation garment on the smaller side.

BUST ADJUSTMENT CHECKLIST

1. Have you selected the correct garment and cup size, based on your actual measurements?
2. On your test muslin (toile)...
 - Are the darts in the correct place on your body?
 - Is there horizontal pulling or bagginess across the bust?
 - Is the garment level at the waist?
 - Are there drag lines or wrinkles indicating straining towards the bust?
 - Is the side seam pulled towards the front of the body?
 - Is the neckline too high or too low for your personal taste? While this is not directly related to fit, it is smart to address it while doing your bust adjustments.
3. Based on this information from your muslin, watch the Fit Clinic video to help you identify which bust adjustments you need.
4. After doing your bust adjustments to the paper pattern pieces, sew another test muslin.
5. Repeat the previous steps as necessary. Once you are happy with the fit, you are ready to attend to the details..
6. Using your adjusted pattern pieces, make corresponding adjustments to the facings, linings, collar, or any other pattern piece that crosses the bust.
7. Remark your grainlines so they are parallel to center front.
8. Transfer notches to all pattern pieces.
9. Move buttons, buttonholes, or other fasteners, if necessary.

NOTES

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