
Although darts or bust fullness may be positioned correctly on a pattern, the amount of fullness might be too much for your figure. A bodice that is too large in the bust is baggy and wrinkled (Fig. 1). If the pattern is larger than your measurement plus ease on your *Personal Measurement Chart* (line 2), you need to decrease the bodice front fullness.

Check the length and placement of the fitting darts before using the altered pattern. Bust darts should end ½ to 1 ½ inches (1.5 to 5 cm) from the tip of the bust.

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1. To locate the bust point on a basic pattern, extend the center lines of the darts until they cross. Extend the line from the side dart to the center front. Draw a line from the bust point to the armhole seamline at the notch (Fig. 2).

2. Slash the line from the waist to the bust point and to, but not through, the armhole seamline. Clip the armhole seam allowance at that point. Slash the line from the side seam through the center front.
3. Lap the lower section from the bust point to the waist cutting line, aligning the dart markings horizontally. The lap should equal one-half the amount you need to decrease. The diagonal slash will taper to the armhole. On the center front section, use your Personal Measurement Chart (line 7) to guide you on how much you need to lap along the horizontal slash. Keep the center front line straight and the horizontal lap even width. Pivot the underarm section of the bodice so the underarm dart markings are aligned vertically. The clipped seam allowance will spread (Fig. 3). Tape the pattern in place.

4. Relocate the tip of each dart in the center of the lap. Draw new dart stitching lines by connecting the new dart tip to the original dart markings at the seamlines (Fig. 4).

5. Fold in the underarm dart as if it were sewn. Redraw the side seam and cutting lines as straight lines from the underarm to below the dart. Trim the base of the dart to make a smooth cutting line (Fig. 4).

**Bodice or dress with French darts**

1. Locate the bust point by extending the center line of the dart approximately 1 ½ inches (5 cm). Measure the pattern from the normal neckline and compare that length with your Personal Measurement Chart (line 6). You can also lay the pattern over another pattern that has two fitting darts. Mark the bust point on the pattern you are altering. From that location to the lower edge of the pattern, draw two lines: one from the bust point to the armhole seamline at the notch and one parallel to the center front. Draw another line from the bust point to the center front at a right angle to the center front (Fig. 5).

2. Slash the line from the center front to the bust point and slash the vertical line to, but not through, the lower edge of the pattern. Slash the line from the bust point to, but not through, the armhole seamline, clipping the armhole seam allowance at that mark. Slash the line from the side seam through the dart to, but not through, the bust point.

3. Keeping the pattern flat, lap the vertical slash one-half the amount you need to decrease the pattern at the bust point. The diagonal slash will taper to the armhole. On the center front section, lap the pattern even width along the horizontal slash to maintain a straight line at the center front. The French dart will lap, and the clipped seam allowance will spread (Fig. 6).
4. Relocate the tip of the dart in the center of the lap. Draw new dart stitching lines by connecting the new dart tip to the original dart markings at the seamline. Fold in the dart as if it were sewn. Cut off the base of the dart so it matches the side cutting line (Fig. 7).

**Bodice or dress with princess lines**

1. Locate the bust point on the princess seamlines of both pattern pieces halfway between the notches. On each section, draw horizontal lines through the bust point at right angles to the lengthwise grainline or center front. On the center front piece, draw a line parallel to the center front from the shoulder to the lower edge or waist seamline at the princess seamline. On the side front section, draw a line parallel to the lengthwise grainline from the intersection of the princess seamline at the shoulder or armhole to the lower edge or waist seamline (Fig. 8).

2. Slash the side front section from the princess seam allowance to the vertical line. Slash the vertical line *to, but not through*, the shoulder or armhole seamline and *to, but not through*, the lower edge or waist seamline. Clip the shoulder and waist seam allowances at the slashes.

3. Even with the bust point line, lap the side front section along the vertical slash one-fourth the amount you need to decrease and keep the pattern flat. The vertical lap will taper to the seamlines, the horizontal slash will lap and the clipped seam allowances will spread. Tape the pattern in place (Fig. 9).

4. Slash the center front section along the horizontal line. Slash the vertical lines on each pattern section *to, but not through*, the shoulder seam and *to, but not through*, the lower edge or waist seamline. Clip the shoulder and waist seam allowances at the slashes.

5. Even with the bust point, lap the center front section along the vertical slash one-fourth the amount you need to decrease. Taper the lap to the seamlines to keep the pattern flat. At the same time, lap the pattern at the princess seamline along the horizontal slash until the lap at the princess seamline equals the lap on the side front princess seamline. Keep the center front line straight and the horizontal lap even width from the vertical lap to the center front. The clipped seam allowances will spread (Fig. 9). Tape the pattern in place.

6. Redraw the smooth curve of the princess seam and cutting lines on the side front section. Trim the excess pattern, and draw smooth stitching and cutting lines on the center front section. Redraw the lengthwise grainline on the side front section (Fig. 10).
**Bodice with kimono or dolman sleeves**

Kimono and dolman sleeve styles often have styling and wearing ease. This may cause the finished garment to look baggy and oversized. Unless the pattern is altered correctly, the garment will be ruined. Your Personal Measurement Chart (line 2, column 3) will help you determine how much to alter. You do not need to measure the pattern piece before beginning the alteration.

1. Locate the bust point as you do for a bodice with French darts (Fig. 5). Draw a line from the bust point to the waistline through the dart. Draw a second line from the bust point to a point on the shoulder seamline approximately 7 1/2 inches (19 cm) from the neck seamline. Draw a horizontal line from the bust point to the center front (Fig. 11).

2. Slash the vertical line from the waist to the bust point and to, but not through, the shoulder seamline. Clip the shoulder seam allowance at that point and slash the horizontal line from the bust point through the center front.

3. Lap the vertical slash at the bust point one-half the amount you need to decrease, keeping the pattern flat and aligning the dart horizontally. The clipped seam allowance will spread, and the diagonal lap will taper to the shoulder seamline. At the center front, lap the pattern along the horizontal slash. Your Personal Measurement Chart (line 7) will guide you on length. Align the pattern at the lower edge (Fig. 12).

4. Relocate the tip of the dart in the center of the overlap. Draw new waistline dart stitching lines by connecting the new dart tip to the original dart markings at the seamline. Fold in the dart as if it were sewn and redraw the waist seam and cutting lines. Cut the base of the dart to match the cutting line. If necessary, redraw the shoulder seam and cutting lines (Fig. 13).

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