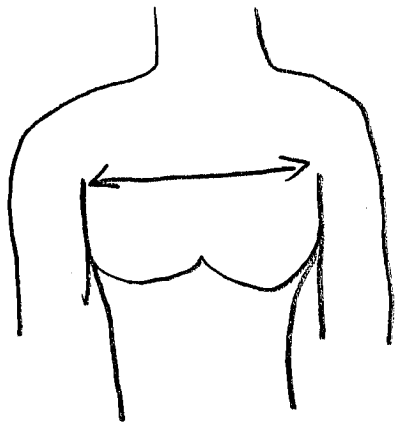


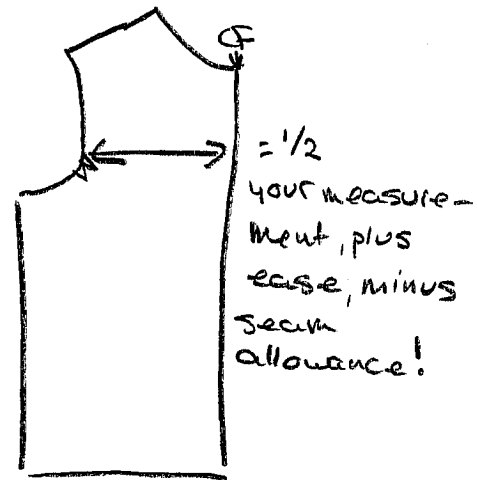
Bust Fitting

This is a problem area for anyone with a cup size other than B - the industry standard. Fortunately, fixing this is not too difficult, but be prepared to make muslins of at least the bodices of your patterns until you get the hang of it.

The first thing to do is get help measuring yourself. You want to measure from arm crease to arm crease



12½" = size 8
13" = size 10
13½" = size 12
14" = size 14
14½" = size 16
15" = size 18
16" = size 20



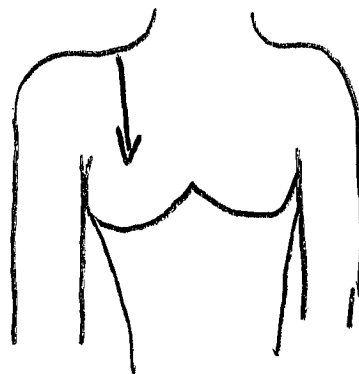
Why is this important? Changing the bust on a pattern is a stand-alone adjustment. If the pattern fits the bust, but it's too large or small in the upper chest, you need to adjust the front and back shoulder seams, the front and back neckline, and quite possibly the armhole and the sleeve cap! The garment, whether it is a dress or just a top, is suspended from the shoulders, so that is where it needs to fit first.

Next, you need to determine your bust point. This is the fullest part of your bust. Again, get some help measuring. Wear your regular bra.

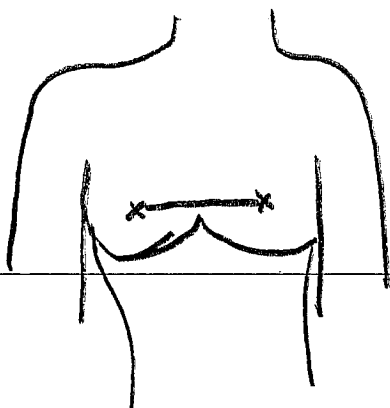


Fullest part is both here and here,

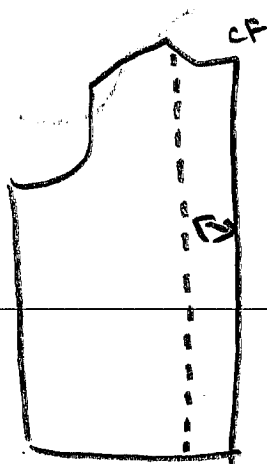
mark with chalk, if you need to.



First, measure from bust point to bust point. Make a line on your pattern parallel to the center front $\frac{1}{2}$ that distance away.



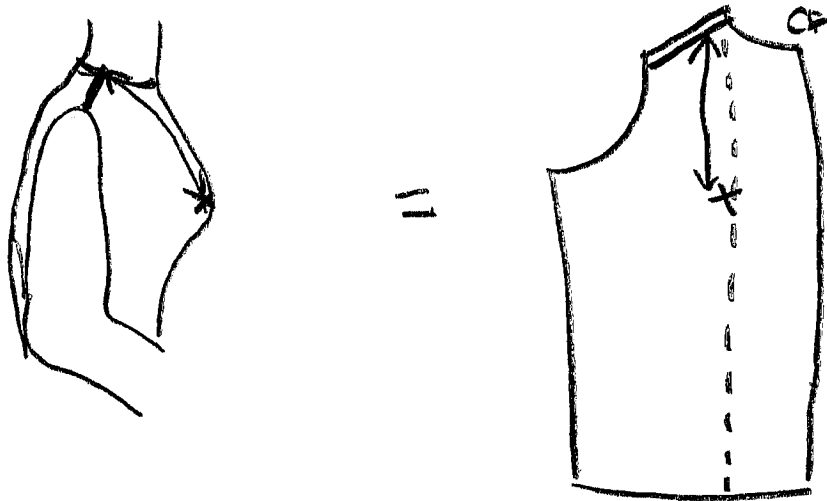
$\times \frac{1}{2} =$



Then measure from the center of the shoulder where it meets the neck down to the bust point. Mark the seam allowance on the shoulder of your pattern, and measure that distance along the line you drew.



To illustrate...



Now you have drawn your bust point on your pattern. You'll want to do this on every pattern if you need a bust adjustment, so keep these measurements on hand.

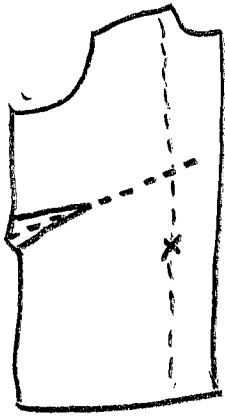
Why do we need this? Well, you need the darts to point to your bust point, and they need to end the right distance from your bust point, and you need the most fabric there - above, below, too far out or in, and you get an unflattering, improper fit.

There are a number of different methods to make this adjustment, but I find that slashing the pattern works best for me, so this is what I'll illustrate for you. Now... since you might make a mistake, or decide to change the fit, or even use the pattern for a different person (or a different-sized you) I recommend copying the pattern piece onto a

Bust fitting 4

separate piece of paper. I use white butcher paper, which I can lay over the pattern tissue and still see to trace, and which is nice and sturdy.

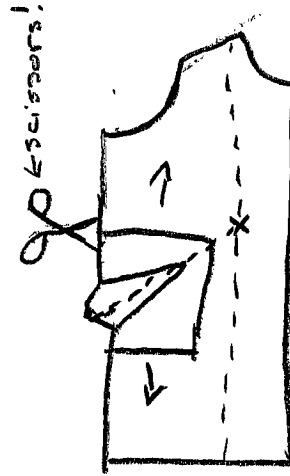
That said, step one is to make sure the dart is in the right place.



dart points above bust point

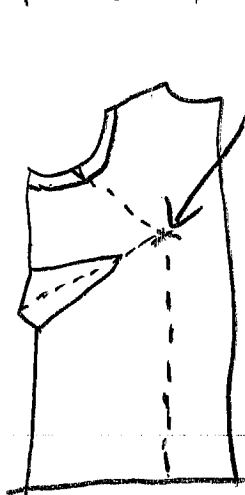


dart points below bust point.



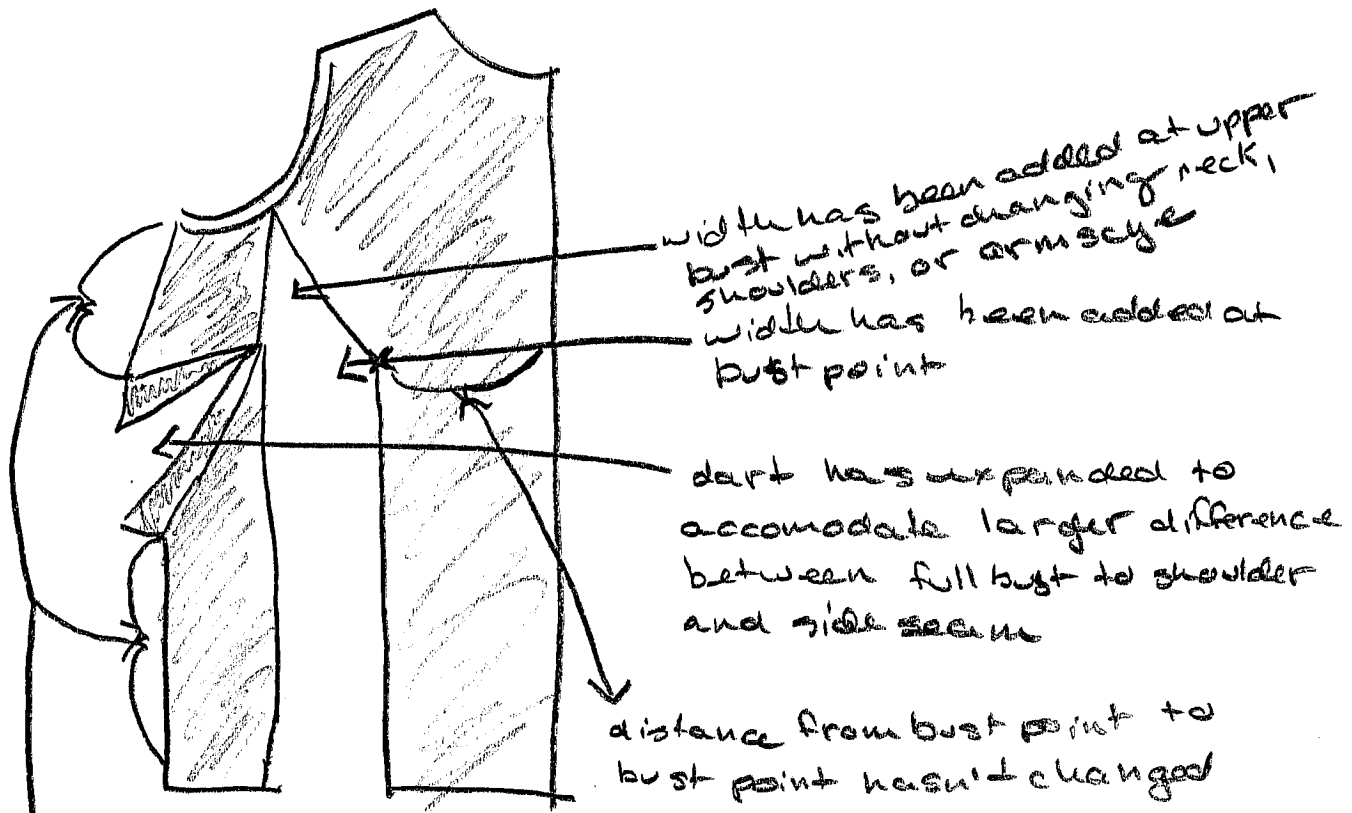
cut the dart out, move it up or down until it points to the bust point, and tape it in its new location.

Step two is to cut the pattern to resize the dart. Back cup size increases the bust point to bust point measurement by one inch, so, since you're working with a half-front pattern piece, you increase (or decrease) the width at the bust point by $\frac{1}{2}$ " for each cup size.



cut along these dotted lines. The cut up the line you drew in for bust point to bust point width, along with the cut up to the seam allowance of the armseye will allow you to widen the pattern across and just above the bust. The cut through the dart allows the dart to spread.

Here's what happens:



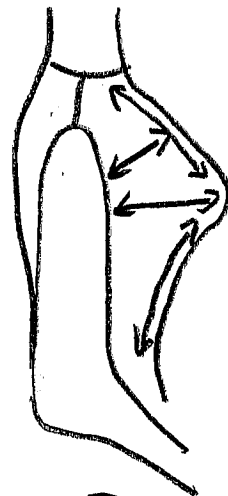
Side seam has not changed! after the new dart is sewn, it will be exactly the same as when you started.

Ways + where-fores:



B cup

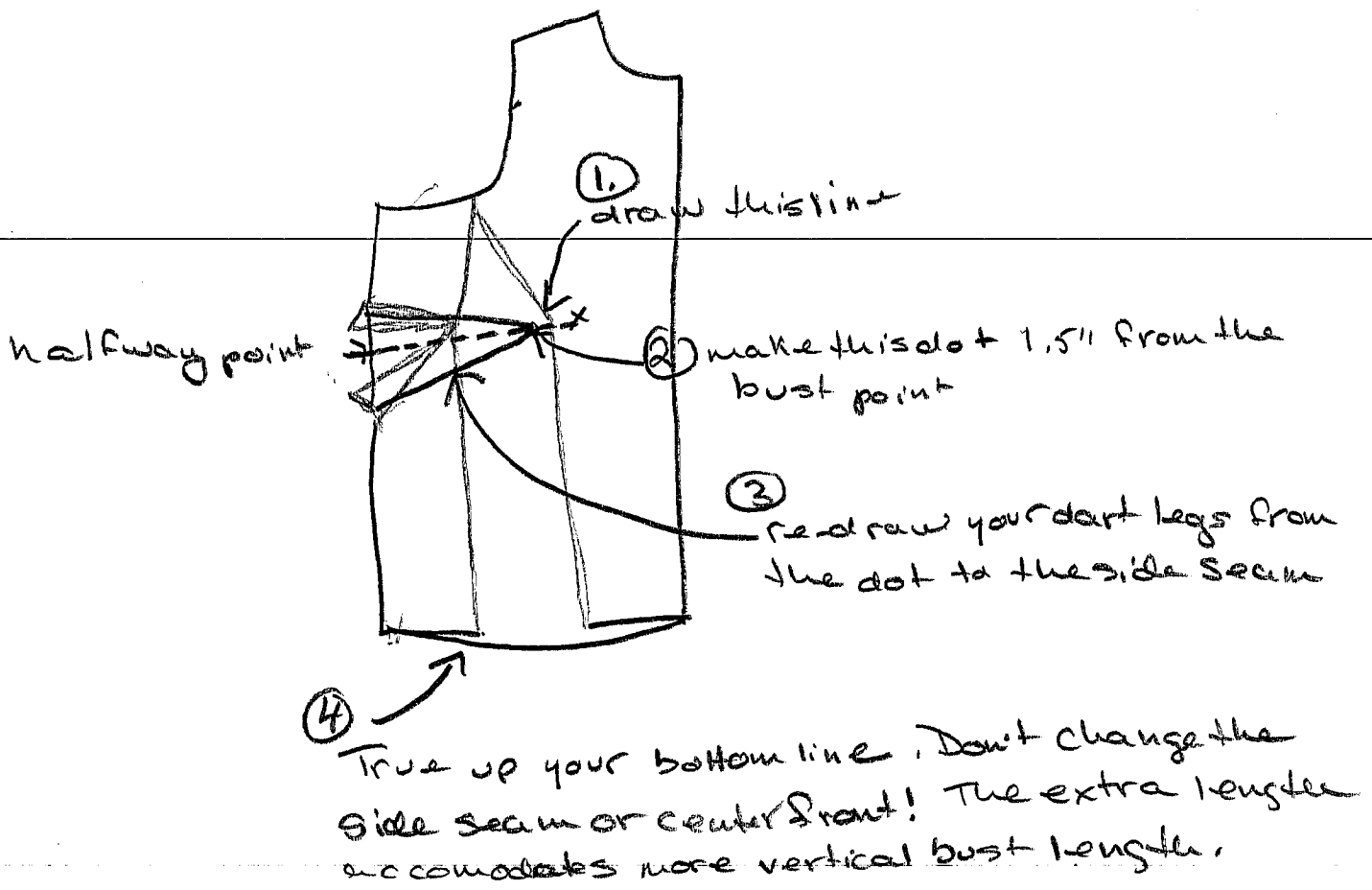
All these dimensions need to be changed, without changing the shoulders, neck, sleeve, or back side seam length.



D cup

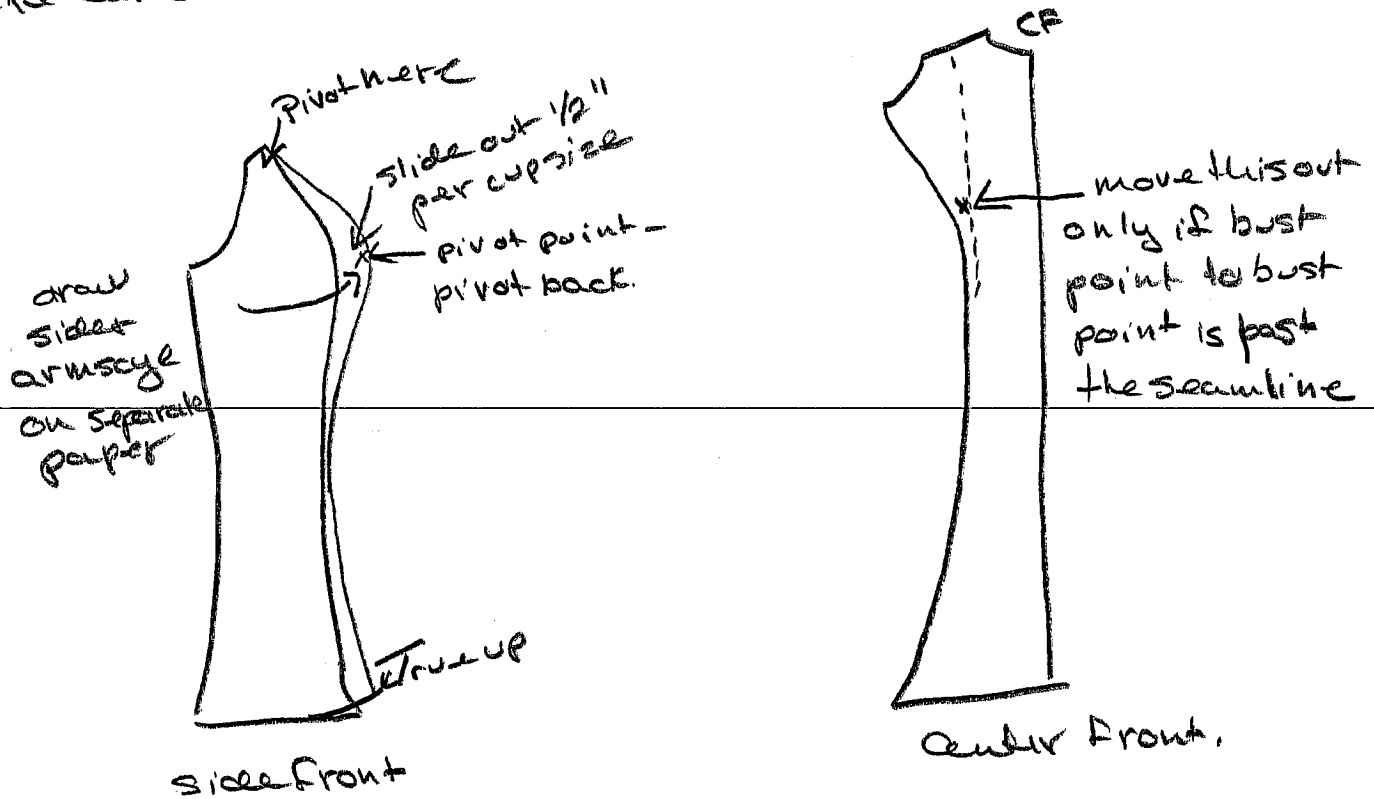
Tape the spread pattern piece in place on another piece of paper. We're almost done.

The width of your dart has changed, and depending on how much extra you had to add, it's likely you'll need to change the legs' length. It's a simple matter of drawing a line from the bust point to the center of the dart, relocating the point of the dart and connecting the dots. The point of the dart should be about 1 1/2" from the bust point. You may want to do it differently, but as long as you have the ends of the dart legs right, you can even correct the dart on the fabric.



To make the new cutting line for the dart, fold the dart just as it would end up when sewn + pressed, then cut the side seam cutting line. When it's unfolded, it'll be just right. (Make sure you tape paper onto the side for this.)

You can also use this method to add darts to dartless patterns, which need to fit over your bust, too! Princess seams, while they're really just regular bodices with the darts built into seams, involve different techniques, most requiring math, etc. It's easier to pivot + slide and make a muslin to take care of the fine tuning.



This way, the front seams are still the same length. Depending on how much you need to change, you may need to add a little length. Less than 1/2", you can often just ease it in. Again, short of drafting the pattern yourself

Bust Fitting 8

(right the first try!) Making it up in a muslin and fine tuning the fit from that is really the easiest way to get a proper fit.

© 2004
Alison Meyer