

How to Take Your Body Measurements

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You have done your research and you have picked out the outfit you want to make. You are now ready to draft your pattern. Before you start, however, you will need to know your body measurements.

Measurements are very important. A couple of little mistakes can create a big mess. Here are a few things to consider when gathering your measurements:

- You should always have someone else take your measurements for you. In fact, if you can have a third person join you to record the measurements then all the better.
- You will find that your final garment will fit better if you are wearing the same type of undergarments during the measurement process as you will be wearing under the final garment.
- Torso and leg measurements should be taken while you are standing straight with your weight evenly distributed on your feet. Head, neck and arm measurements are the only areas that can be measured while sitting.
- You should use a flexible tape measure to gather the measurements. Fabric, craft, and discount stores sell flexible tape measures in fabric, paper, and plastic. Which to use is personal preference but fabric and plastic versions last longer than paper.
- The tape measure should be snug around the body but not tight.
- Care should be taken to keep the tape measure perpendicular to the floor during horizontal measurements.
- Record all measurements in pencil so that you can go back and correct any errors if necessary.

The attached guide and chart will give you the measurements needed to make basic tunics, dresses, and trousers. Garments with a more structured shape will require some modified measurements.

Measurement Guide

Head: Measure head circumference at eyebrow level.

Bust/Chest: Place the tape measure under your arms and circle the tape around the fullest part of the bust/chest.

Waist: Wrap the tape measure around the natural indentation or break at your waist. If you can't find this curve, bend to the side and the crease will show you where to measure.

Belly: Wrap the tape measure around the fullest part of your belly.

Underbelly: If you wear your pants under your belly then that is where you should take your measurement.

Hips: Measure your hips by circling the tape measure around the fullest part of your body between your waist and the top of your legs.

Thigh: Place the tape measure between your legs and circle the tape around the fullest part of your dominant thigh.

Calf: Place the tape measure between your legs and circle the tape around the fullest part of your dominant calf.

Shoulder to Hem: Measure from top of shoulder to desired location of hem (thigh, knee, ankle, floor).

Rise: Measure from the front waist, between legs, to the back waist.

Neck: Place the tape measure around the lowest part of your neck (where the neck and shoulders meet).

Across Shoulders: Find shoulder bone and measure from right shoulder bone, across back, to left shoulder bone.

Across Upper Chest: Measure from front of right armpit, across chest, to front of left armpit.

Upper Arm: With arm flexed circle the tape around the fullest part of your dominant arm above your elbow.

Forearm: With arm flexed circle the tape around the fullest part of your dominant arm below your elbow.

Wrist: Circle the tape around your wrist, over your wrist bone. See notes for additional information.

Inseam: Place measuring tape between your legs. Start one inch below the crotch and measure straight down inside of leg to the instep of the foot.

Outseam: Place measuring tape at your natural waist (or under your belly if that is where you will be wearing your pants) and measure along outside of hip and leg to the outside of your foot.

Arm Length: With arm bent measure from shoulder bone over elbow to wrist bone.

Wrist to Wrist: With arms bent and held out in front of you measure from the left wrist bone, along arms, around your back, to the right wrist bone.

Measurement Chart

Area	Measurements
Bust/Chest	
Across Shoulders	
Across Upper Chest	
Waist	
Belly	
Underbelly (<i>pants</i>)	
Hips	
Thigh (<i>pants</i>)	
Calf (<i>pants</i>)	
Rise (<i>pants</i>)	

Area	Measurements
Head	
Neck	
Upper Arm	
Forearm	
Wrist*	/
Arm Length	
Wrist to Wrist	
Shoulder to Hem	
Inseam (<i>pants</i>)	
Outseam (<i>pants</i>)	

Notes:

* Alternate Wrist Measurement: Make a fist with your thumb on the outside of your fist and measure around your fist over the fullest part (usually your knuckles and thumb).

When using this method you do not have to add wearing ease.

