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# CHILDREN'S CLOTHES— SIZE AND SELECTION



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# CHILDREN'S CLOTHES—SIZE AND SELECTION

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Preschool and school-age children have special clothing needs because they are growing and active. The rate of growth varies from child to child and in the same child at different ages. The number and kinds of activities vary, too. With careful planning, however, the different needs of each child can be met. To satisfy children and parents, children's clothing should fit well, allow for growth and be durable and easy to care for.

## Children's Sizes

The age of a child does not determine size. Children of the same age may vary greatly in height, weight and body measurements. Clothing for children is divided into size classifications based on weight, height and body proportions.

Children's sizes 2 through 6X are designed for boys and girls who are outgrowing baby roundness but still have a baby's posture. When children no longer wear diapers, they are ready for children's sizes. Toddlers' and children's sizes 2 through 4 are based on the same weight and body measurements, but the children's sizes do not allow room for diapers. Children's sizes are usually selected by height and weight.

Boys' and girls' sizes are designed for children who are taller with proportionately longer arms and legs and more adult posture.

Girls' sizes 7 through 14 are divided into three classifications designed for the undeveloped figure: regular for the average size, chubby for the heavier figure and slim for the slender figure.

Select shirts, sweaters and blouses by height and chest measurement. Buy skirts and pants by hip measurement. Coats and dresses are selected primarily by height.

Boys' sizes 6 through 20 are available in regular, husky and slim for average, heavy and slender boys.

Buy boys' shirts, sweaters and coats by height and chest measurement. Choose pants by waist and inseam measurement.

## Standard Clothing Sizes for Children

The following chart gives standard measurements recommended by the U.S. Department of Commerce and recognized by the garment industry.

Children's Sizes — For Boys and Girls

Child's Measurements (inches)	2	3	4	5	6	6X
Height	34	37	40	43	46	48
Weight	29	34	38	44	49	54
Chest	21	22	23	24	25	25½
Waist	20½	21	21½	22	22½	23
Hip	21½	22½	23½	24½	25½	26½

Sizes may vary among different brands and with the style of the garment. A child may also have a minor figure variation that causes a fitting problem. For these reasons, the best way to be sure a garment will fit is for the child to try it on. If a child is between sizes, the next larger size is usually a better choice because the child will grow into it quickly. Avoid buying garments several sizes too large, however, since loose, poor fitting clothes can cause accidents by catching on objects or tripping the child.

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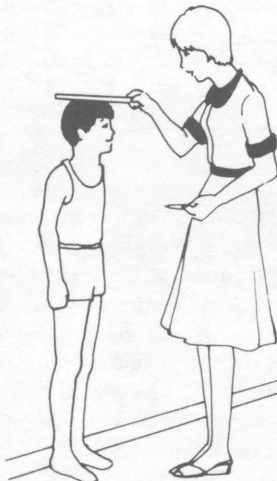
Standard Measurements (U.S. Department of Commerce)

Girls' Regular Sizes						Boys' Regular Sizes					
<b>Girl's Measurements (inches)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>Boy's Measurements (inches)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>
Height	51	53	55	57½	60	Height	46	50	54	58	61
Back Waist Length	11	11½	12	12½	13¼	Chest	24½	26½	28	29½	31½
Chest (bust)	26	27	28½	30	31½	Waist	22½	23½	24½	25½	26½
Waist	22½	23	24	25	26	Inseam	19	21½	24	26½	28
Hip	27½	28½	30	32	34						
Girls' Slim Sizes						Boys' Slim Sizes					
<b>Girl's Measurements (inches)</b>	<b>7S</b>	<b>8S</b>	<b>10S</b>	<b>12S</b>	<b>14S</b>	<b>Boy's Measurements (inches)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>
Height	51	53	55	57½	60	Height	46	50	54	58	61
Back Waist Length	11	11½	12	12½	13¼	Chest	23¼	25½	26¾	28½	30
Chest (bust)	24½	25½	27	28½	30	Waist	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½
Waist	20½	21	22	23	24	Inseam	19	21½	24	26½	28
Hip	25¾	26¾	28¼	32¼	34¼						
Girls' Chubby Sizes						Boys' Husky Sizes					
<b>Girl's Measurements (inches)</b>	<b>7½</b>	<b>8½</b>	<b>10½</b>	<b>12½</b>	<b>14½</b>	<b>Boy's Measurements (inches)</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>
Height	51	53	55	57½	60	Height	46	50	54	58	61
Back Waist Length	11	11½	12	12½	13¼	Chest	26	27½	29	31	33
Chest (bust)	28½	29½	31	32½	34	Waist	24½	25½	26½	27½	29
Waist	26	26½	27½	28½	29½	Inseam	19	21½	24	26½	28
Hip	30½	31½	33	35	37						

**Measuring the Child**

Take all measurements with the child in underwear. Weigh the child in underwear and without shoes.

- **Height:** Have the child stand against the wall without shoes. Place a ruler or stiff paper level with the top of his head. Mark this point. Measure from the mark to the floor.



- **Chest or breast:** Measure under the arms around the fullest part of the chest or breast. Keep the tape measure parallel to the floor.



- **Waist:** Measure the natural waistline. To find the waistline, have the child bend from side to side. The

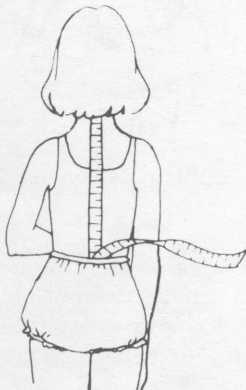
point at which the body indents is the natural waistline.



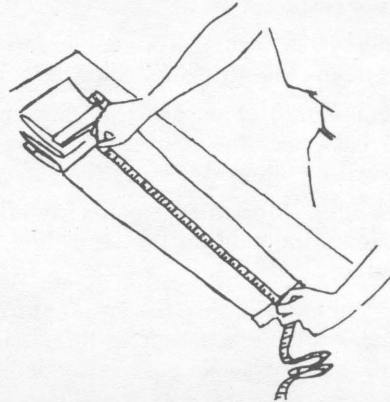
- *Hip or seat:* Measure around the fullest part of the body below the waist. Keep the tape measure parallel to the floor.



- *Back waist length:* Measure from the prominent bone at the base of the neck in back to the natural waistline.



- *Inseam:* Measure the pants, not the child. Lay a pair of well-fitting pants flat on a table. Fold back one leg and measure along the other leg from the crotch to the edge of the leg along the inside seam.



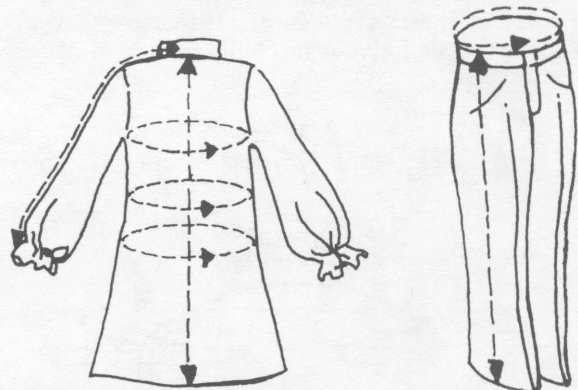
To get the best fit, a child should try on clothing before it is purchased. If this is impossible, the clothing can be measured to determine fit. Used clothing, which is generally not sized, may also be purchased by measurement.

In addition to the measurements used for determining size, the following information will be needed to buy clothing that cannot be tried on for fit:

- *Sleeve length:* Measure from the prominent bone at the back base of the neck along the shoulder to the wrist with the child's elbow bent.
- *Garment length (except pants):* Measure from the prominent bone at the back base of the neck to the desired length.
- *Pants length:* Measure from the natural waistline to the desired length down the side of the body.

### Buying By Measurements

Clothing must be larger than the child's measurements to allow for comfort and freedom of movement. The following information tells how to measure the garment and gives the ease needed for fitting garments without stretch. Garments of knitted or stretch fabrics usually need only about half the amount of ease listed.







- **Chest:** Fasten the garment and measure around it just below the armholes. Dresses, shirts and blouses need 3 to 4 inches of ease; coats slightly more.
- **Waist:** Measure the waistline of the garment. Allow 1 inch of ease.
- **Hip or seat:** Measure around the garment 6 to 7 inches below the waistline. Allow 2 inches of ease.
- **Garment length:** Measure the garment from the center back neckline seam to the lower edge. No ease need be allowed.
- **Pants length:** Measure the pants from the waistline seam down the side on the seam line. No ease is needed.
- **Sleeve length:** Measure the garment from the center back neckline seam along the shoulder to the edge of the sleeve. No ease is needed.

Skirts, dresses, coats, pants and sleeves may be shortened easily if they are too long. Never buy clothing that is too short for a child since it usually cannot be lengthened to fit.

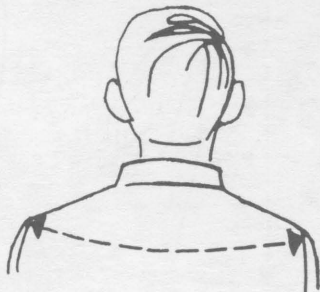
### Checking for Good Fit

Before deciding on a garment for a child, check the following for good fit:

Be sure the *neckline* is low enough in front to be comfortable and high enough in back to fit snugly. It should not ride up or slide down. Avoid gapping or binding necklines as they may cause irritation.



Check the *shoulders* to see that they are wide enough for free arm movement without binding across the back or chest. Avoid garments that are so wide or full that the shoulder seams will not stay in place.



*Sleeves* need to be roomy. Tight ones will restrict movement and pull out with strain. See that cuffs are slightly loose, not binding.



Check the *waistline* for comfort. Elastic waistlines adjust to movement and growth. Avoid elastic that is tight enough to cause red marks on the skin.



Make sure that *shirts and blouses* are long enough to tuck in at the waist and stay tucked in.



*Pant legs* should be short enough so the child won't trip on them.

See that the *garment* is large enough around to allow vigorous activity without binding or pulling. If the garment is to be worn over other clothing in cold weather, be sure to make adequate allowance for the bulk.



Also, ask the child if the garment feels good. A well-fitting garment is usually comfortable to wear.

### Growth Features

Selecting clothing that can “grow” with the child will save both time and expense by reducing the number of items needed. Specific features that allow for growth will vary in different styles, but the following are general features to look for:

- Deep hems in skirts, pants and sleeves can be used for lengthening. Use decorative stitching, rickrack or trim to hide marks from the old hem if necessary.
- Tucks in bodices, skirts, pant legs and sleeves can be released to add length.
- Wide seams at the center back of pants and wide side seams allow adjustments in width.
- Two piece garments usually provide more room for growth than one piece items.
- Adjustable straps and waistbands allow for increasing size.
- Garments without a definite waistline can be worn longer than those with fitted waists.
- Raglan sleeves do not bind or pull as shoulders broaden.
- Stretchy fabrics and knitted garments have more give to allow for growth.
- Elastic waistbands on skirts and pants provide room for growth.

### Durability

Because growing children are active and vigorous in play, select clothing that will withstand stress and strain. Clothing that wears out or falls apart before the child outgrows it is frustrating as well as expensive to replace.

The durability of clothing depends primarily on the fabric and the workmanship. Durable fabrics are closely woven or knitted so they don't snag easily. They may be of natural fibers such as cotton or wool, synthetics or blends of fibers. Fabrics need not be stiff or rough to be durable. An example of soft yet durable fabric is cotton/polyester blend broadcloth, frequently used for blouses and shirts.

Label and hangtags listing fiber content and special treatments give clues to fabric durability.

Another durability factor to check is workmanship. Sturdily constructed clothes have:

- Wide seams that will not ravel or pull out; or on knits, narrow seams that are stitched and overcast securely.
- Double stitched seams or tape inserted in seams that receive the most stress, such as pants crotch or armholes.
- Reinforcements or patches on the knees and elbows of clothes that receive hard wear.
- Evenly stitched buttonholes with securely fastened threads and buttons sewn on securely.
- Reinforcement stitching such as bar tacks at points of stress such as pocket corners and the ends of plackets or flies.
- Machine stitched hems on garments that receive much wear.

Finding a garment with all these good features may be difficult. If the style, fabric, fit and price are right, the homemaker can often add the needed reinforcements to make the clothing last longer.

### Care

To save time and money, easy-care clothing is a good choice. Labels and hangtags provide information on fiber content and care instructions. Check for terms such as machine washable, permanent press, soil release, little or no ironing, crease resistant and stain resistant. Some flame retardant clothing needs special care to maintain the protective finish. Always follow the care instructions for longer lasting and better looking garments.

### Consumer Tips

In addition to considering size and fit, growth features, durability and care, a few other tips will help you get the best wardrobe for the least money.

- Spend the most money on clothing that is worn often, receives the hardest wear and is laundered frequently.
- Buy clothing that suits several purposes (for example: an outfit might double for school and church).

- Look for coordinates or mix and match items that will give a variety of looks with a small wardrobe.
- Take advantage of sales, being sure that you buy only what is necessary and that the garments will fit for several months.
- Keep the wardrobe small and active. Buy or make only a few garments that will be worn often before they are out-grown.

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