



*Pattern
Alteration*

Shoulder Slope

AgriLIFE EXTENSION
Texas A&M System

Extension Family Development
and Resource Management Specialists

Before attempting this alteration, review Extension publications E-372, *Principles of Pattern Alteration*, and E-373, *Personal Measurement Chart*, for basic instructions. For additional information, refer to E-380, *Shoulder Length*.

Square shoulders are higher than average (Fig. 1). They usually cause a garment to wrinkle and pull from the end of the shoulder toward the center front and back. Therefore, sleeves will hang incorrectly.

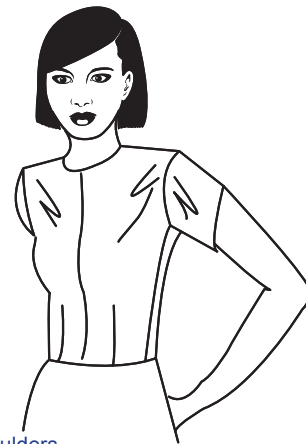


Figure 1. Square shoulders

Because sloping shoulders are lower than average (Fig. 2), a garment tends to wrinkle diagonally above the bust from the base of the neck to the armhole. Again, sleeves will not hang properly.

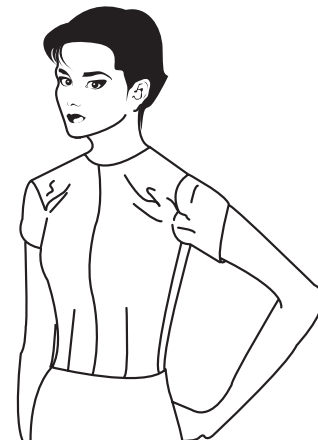


Figure 2. Sloping shoulders

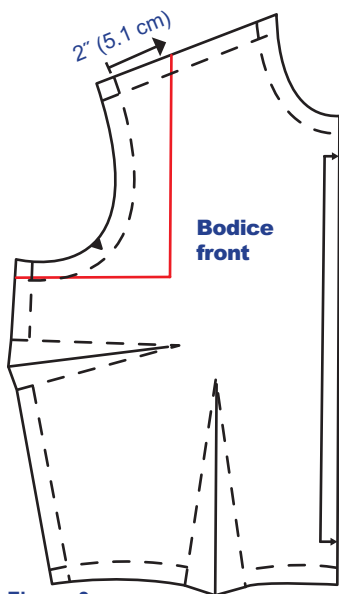


Figure 3.

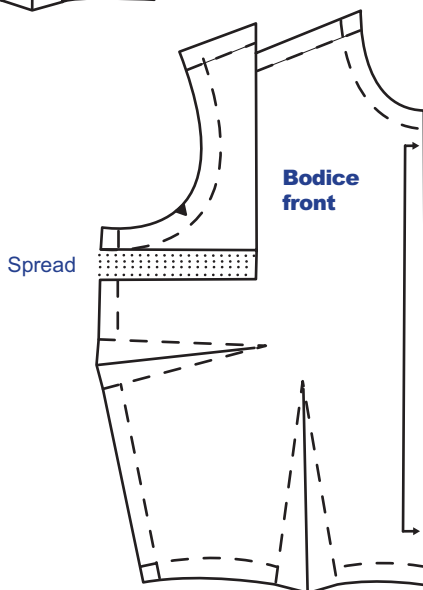


Figure 4.

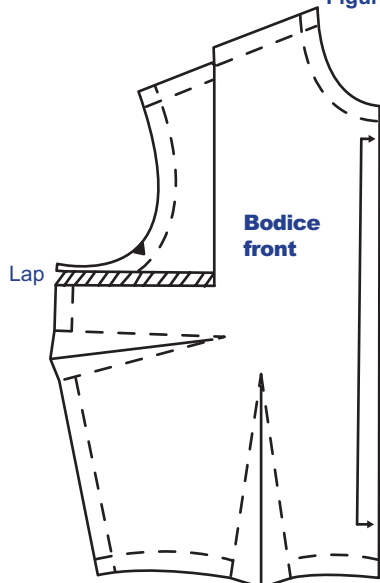


Figure 5.

Determining the amount you need to alter depends on observation and your experience in fitting home sewn and purchased garments. The best approach is to note the amount you usually alter and adjust the pattern pieces accordingly. Take up half the amount on the back bodice and on the front bodice. *Alter front and back pattern pieces.*

Basic Bodice

1. From the armhole seamline, measure in 2 inches (5.1 cm) along the shoulder seamline. From this point, draw a vertical line down the length of the armhole. Connect this line to the underarm cutting line (Fig. 3).
2. Cut along these lines, separating the armhole from the rest of the pattern.

To raise:

Place tissue paper under the pattern and raise the armhole by the amount you need.

Spread the pattern evenly along the horizontal line and keep the cut edges of the vertical slash together (Fig. 4).

To lower:

Lower the armhole section by the amount you need, lapping the pattern evenly along the horizontal line. Keep the cut edges of the vertical slash together (Fig. 5).

To complete either alteration:

1. Tape the pattern in place.
2. Redraw the shoulder cutting and seamlines as shown. Connect the ends of the armhole, and the neck cutting and seamlines (Fig. 6).

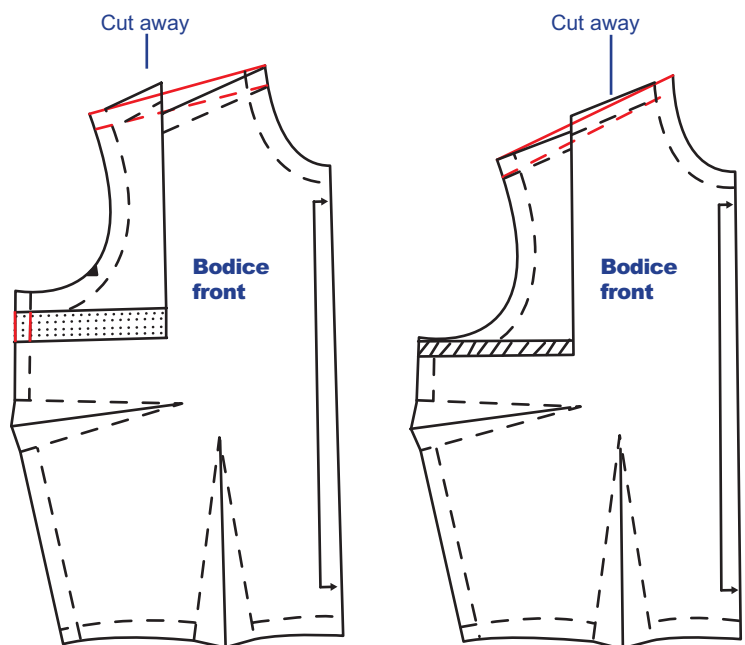


Figure 6.

Kimono Style Garments

1. At the end of the shoulder, which is marked, draw a diagonal line from the shoulder cutting line to the highest part of the underarm cutting line. If the shoulder point is not marked, find it by measuring along the shoulder seamline from the neck for the length of your own shoulder measurement (Fig. 7). Refer to line 8, shoulder length, on your *Personal Measurement Chart*.
2. Cut the pattern apart along this line, separating the armhole section from the rest of the pattern.

To raise:

Raise the sleeve by the amount you need, keeping the cut diagonal edges together (Fig. 8).

To lower:

Lower the sleeve by the amount you need, keeping the cut diagonal edges together (Fig. 9).

To complete either alteration:

1. Tape the pattern in place.
2. Redraw the shoulder cutting and seamlines by angling them from the sleeve section to the shoulder.
3. Redraw the underarm cutting and seamlines by curving them from the sleeve section to the side (Fig.10).

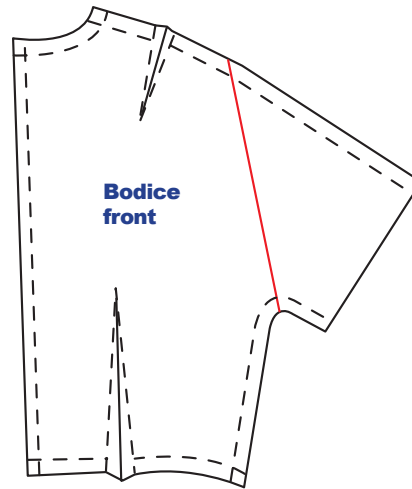


Figure 7.

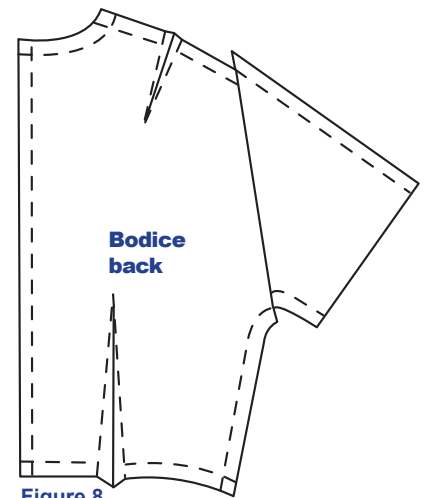


Figure 8.

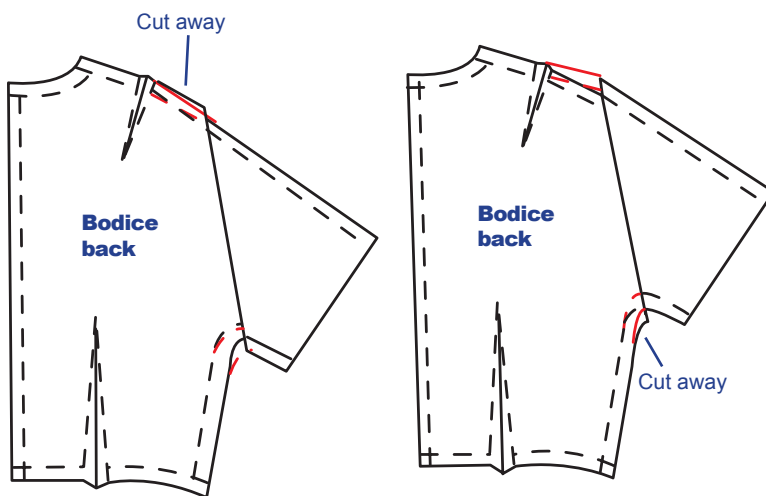


Figure 10.

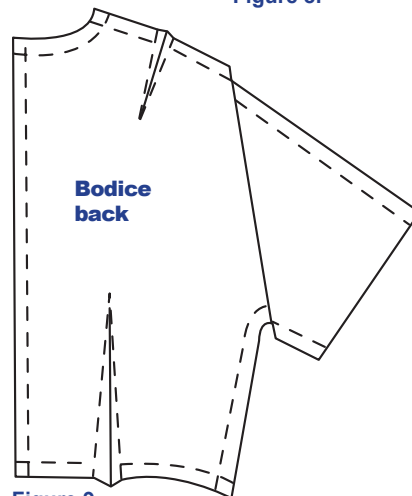


Figure 9.

Becky Saunders wrote the original manuscript for this publication.

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