

FACT SHEET

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BUYING CHILDREN'S CLOTHES

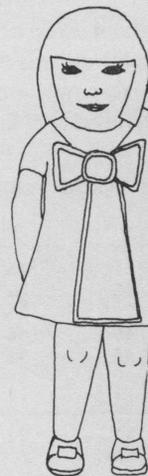
Extension Clothing Specialists
The Texas A&M University System

Planning is as essential for a 6 to 12-year-old child's wardrobe as it is for an adult's. A first consideration is to know what other children are wearing. Plan at home with the child, and make some decisions before you shop. Keep the plan flexible to adjust to the changing role, clothing desires, growth and fashionable colors and styles appropriate for the child.



When you shop, keep in mind

- the child's wardrobe.
- what the child needs.
- how the item will be used.
- what size, color, quantity and quality you want.
- the price you want to pay.



Today's mothers want easy-to-care-for fabrics. They may be of three kinds:

- fabrics such as cotton, rayon or blends that have a special finish added, as Permanent Press;
- fabrics made entirely of man-made fibers such as polyester, acrylic and nylon;
- fabrics of blends of certain man-made fibers.

SIZE AND FIT

Because sizes for children's clothing differ from brand to brand, it is wise to try clothes on the child, rather than to depend on the size on the label.

To allow for growth, instead of buying garments which are too large, look for clothing design that may adapt itself more easily to growth.



Features that allow some growth include

- undefined waistlines.
- deep-cut armholes for set-in sleeves.
- raglan or kimono sleeves.
- two-piece garments.
- deep hems or cuffs.
- long tails on shirts and blouses.
- no tight cuffs or bands.
- some elastic (elastic should never entirely encircle the arm, leg or waistline).
- stretch or knit fabrics.

Timing is important in efficient shopping. If possible, take the child to the store to try on garments. One brand may fit differently from another depending upon how the manufacturer has designed it and allowed for ease. Care required, durability, cost and how a child feels in his clothes are important points in buying. Select clothes that are designed for comfort, activity, growth and personal development.

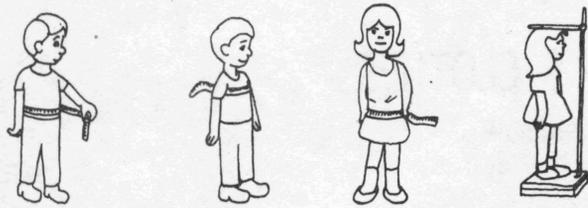
FABRIC

Cottons are favorites for children's wear because they are absorbent, comfortable and washable. The man-made fibers are easy to care for, and resist wrinkling, though they may not be as absorbent as cotton, linen and wool.

Colorfastness, shrinkage control and other fabric finishes, such as durable press and soil release are important in children's clothes.

Sizing of children's clothing is often confused with age. The age of the child does not determine the size of clothing, because children of the same age vary greatly in height and weight as well as body proportions. The best way to choose the

right size is to be fitted in the store. When shopping without the child, know his height and weight, as these are factors used in determining a child's size.



The chart below gives some standard measurements recommended by Commercial Standards of the U.S. Department of Commerce. These measurements are used by many garment manufacturers.

STANDARD CLOTHING SIZES FOR THE GRADE SCHOOL CHILD

Children	Size—6		6X		
Chest	25		25 1/2		
Waist	22		22 1/2		
Hips	26		26 1/2		
Height	46		48		
Weight	49		54		
Girls	Size—7	8	10	12	14
Chest	26	27	28 1/2	30	32
Waist	23	23 1/2	24 1/2	25 1/2	26 1/2
Hips	27	28	30	32	34
Height	50	52	56	58 1/2	61
Weight	60	67	83	95	107
Boys	Size—7	8	10	12	14
Chest	26	27	28	30	32
Waist	23	24	25	26	27
Hips	27	28	29 1/2	31	32 1/2
Height	48	50	54	58	61
Weight	54	59	73	87	100

The most frequent complaints concerning the fit of boys' clothes are in waist size, growth allowance, sleeve and pant lengths. Girls' clothes may not fit at the waistline, be too long in the shoulders or have overly tight bands on the sleeves.

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QUALITY CONSTRUCTION

To withstand hard wear and laundering, children's clothes should be well constructed. Reinforcements at points of strain at knees, elbows and ends of pockets are desirable. Seams should be finished as needed, depending on the type of fabric. Firm strong buttonholes and buttons sewed with a threadshank are found on quality garments. Interfacing should be used in button and button-hole areas to prevent the fabric from tearing. Hems should be even and sewn substantially. Wide hems are an indication of quality. Stitches should be close together. Any decoration or trim should be firmly attached and of a quality to last the life of the garment.

APPEARANCE

Younger children prefer bright colors. They often enjoy expressing their own preferences for color. A feature sometimes overlooked in designing clothes for the school child is the number and size of pockets. Children are collectors and enjoy many large pockets.

Simple uncluttered lines are compatible with a child's active life. The garments should be amply cut to allow for freedom of movement, such as deep-cut armholes, comfortable cuffs and necklines. The trim should be interesting and enhance the design of the garment rather than detract from it.

The wardrobe for a school-age child may range from a small, well-planned wardrobe to a large closet full of clothes. No one wardrobe is best for all children in the school-age group. A child's wardrobe plan depends on many things—the time and money to be spent on clothing, climate and weather, whether the child walks or rides to school and preferences of the child. A growing child needs clothing replacements at different times during the school year; therefore, it's usually wise not to buy more than is necessary for a child at one time.

CARE LABELING

Effective July 3, 1972, permanent care labeling is required for all apparel and piece goods. The consumer must *read*. Specific instructions are listed, and warnings are provided for methods that would harm the item substantially.

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