

EUROPEAN CUT

At the beginning of this book, before Chapter 1, there is a Measurement Chart, where all measurements will be entered. Following, there are six pages of Calculations, worksheets designed to help you subtract and divide effortlessly and make your drafting perfect. Remember, drafting is geometry. Certain parts of slopers must be carefully calculated. All pattern drafting books require some calculations; my book provides ready-to-use worksheets.

Before you start drafting, please make copies of both the Measurement Chart and the Calculations, so that you will always have clean originals in the book for future use. Take your time when you draft slopers for the first time. After some practice you will notice that drafting is neither difficult nor time-consuming.

European Cut consists of 8 illustrated chapters.

The illustrations are grey and black.

Both inches and centimeters are used throughout the book.

- **Chapter 1 is about preparing the woman** you will measure by explaining to her how important it is to stand correctly (relaxed position, not rigid) while her measurements are being taken. You will also mark her body in certain areas, like the neck, shoulder, center front, center back, etc. Those little marks are crucial for taking accurate measurements.
- **Chapter 2 is about taking 38 individual measurements.** Taking measurements is the most difficult and demanding part of flat fashion design. It must be done right, or the slopers will not fit. Each measurement is described in detail and illustrated.
- **Chapter 3 is about drafting the bodice.** While the European bodice back is very similar to the American one, the bodice front offers a more precise fit. The European method eliminates gapping around the armholes in sleeveless garments and ripples in the bust area in garments with sleeves because it is based on the difference between the bust width (at the apex) and the chest width (above the bust).
- **Chapter 4 is about drafting the skirt.** In the front, depending on the widths of the waist, abdomen, and hip, no dart, one narrow dart or two narrow darts are needed. I provide easy directions to help you decide when to use darts and how many to use. When one dart is needed, the European method places it toward the side of the skirt, at the end of the abdominal protrusion. This placement and the narrowness of the darts eliminate a dimple on the bottom of the dart often seen in the American skirts.
- **Chapter 5 is about drafting the sleeve,** the most complex of all slopers. As a bonus I also include easy instructions on how to convert a 1-piece sleeve into a 2-piece sleeve. The European sleeve cap protrudes more in the front but less in the back than the American cap, matching closely the shape of the top of the upper arm. Also, the European cap is divided unevenly, to match the uneven lengths of the armholes (the front armhole being shorter than the back armhole). Sewing is easier and the fit is flawless.

- **Chapter 6 is about drafting the torso.** Many patternmaking books simply advise to add the upper part of the skirt to the bodice to create the torso sloper. This method works only for perfectly proportional bodies. In reality, there are so many bust-waist-abdomen-hip variations that only a custom-made sloper will fit perfectly. The European torso front is drafted with either an "open" or a "closed" dart, depending on the relation between the waist width and the abdominal protrusion. Final "tuning" will be done during muslin fitting.
- **Chapter 7 is about drafting the pants.** There are major differences in drafting between the European method and the American method. The European cut of the back crotch curve is longer and deeper, but the front is shorter and shallower than the American cut. If you ever tried and liked Burda's pants patterns, you will appreciate the European cut and fit of this sloper.
- **Chapter 8 is about making muslin samples,** fitting them, and preparing a final set of slopers made of hard paper. Fitting slopers is a 4-step process:
 - Paper slopers are trued and blended before muslin slopers are made.
 - Muslin samples are made and sewn. These samples are skin-tight, yet they should fit smoothly.
 - Muslin samples are tried on in five separate fittings: bodice, skirt, dress (for garments with a seam in the waist, where the bodice is joined with the skirt and the sleeves are added), torso (for garments without a seam in the waist), and pants. These fittings are absolutely essential. There is no point in making sewing patterns unless slopers fit perfectly.
 - A final set of slopers is made (after any corrections that might be necessary) of hard paper. It is this set that is your basis for making custom sewing patterns.

If you choose to learn the European method, try my textbook for easy but comprehensive instructions.

Recommended shortcut...

If all the steps described above are too much for you, and you would like a shortcut, use Pellon's Tru-Grid™ interface-like craft fabric, instead of paper and muslin. You can draft slopers right on this gridded fabric, blend the edges, cut out the slopers, pin or baste them, and try them on. Finally, make hard paper slopers. This shortcut saves a considerable amount of time. Please first try all the steps, as described in my book, to learn the method. Practice until you become fluent. Once you know how to draft and fit slopers the European way, you can use the shortcut to save time.

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