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ADJUSTMENTS IN HEIGHT FOR A SWIM- OR BODYSUIT

DO BODYSUIT PATTERNS BETWEEN SIZES DIFFER IN WIDTH AND HEIGHT BOTH?

Usually the different sizes in women clothes and lingerie are mainly to indicate the measurement difference in width.

As an international standard full body height is chosen for 168cm (though some Western companies use 172cm as a new standard).

The clothes and patterns themselves increase slightly in height along with the widths to cover the extra body roundings.

For bodysuits and swimwear a height difference might in some cases cause a problem because they don't hang loose but have to fit properly around the crotch. But these garments are made out of stretch fabrics which have a lot of 'give' and rarely need a measurement adjustment.

THE PICTURE

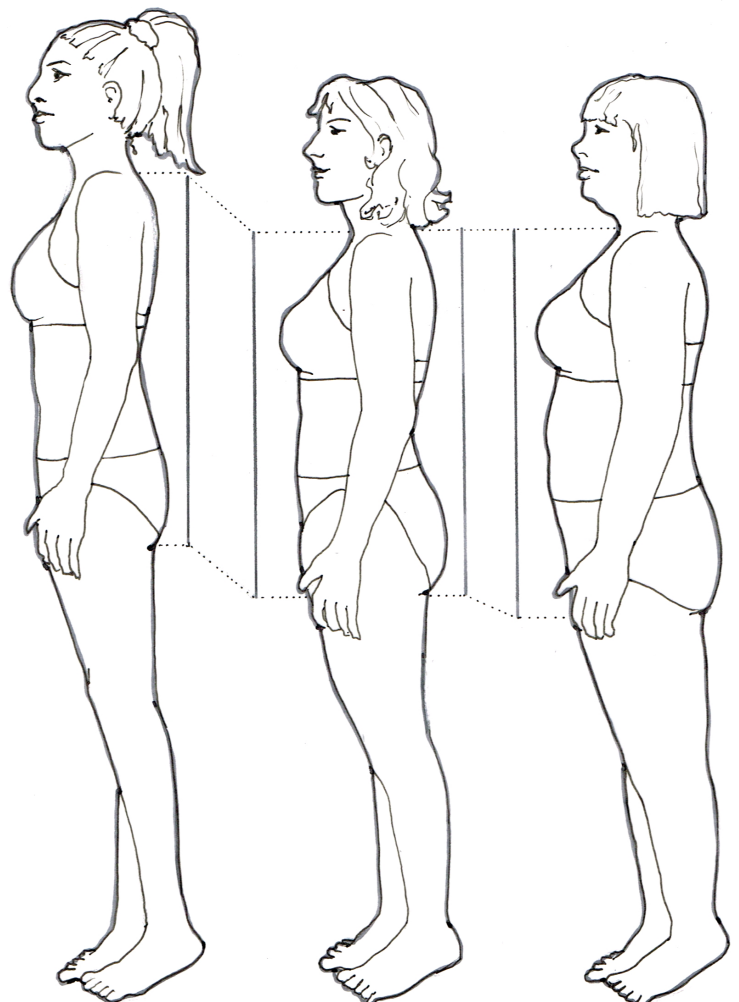
The picture shows the woman in the centre in regular size proportions which are mostly used in standard size clothes and patterns.

The height from shoulder to crotch is more or less equal to the legs and in a full body height of 168cm in all sizes.

The woman on the right is the same 168cm full body height but her legs are shorter compared to the centre woman. That is why the height from shoulder to crotch is longer. She might need some height adjustment in her bodysuit pattern.

The woman on the left is much taller compared to the centre woman but her height from shoulder to crotch is still the same. This is because only her legs are longer and she won't need adjustment to her bodysuit pattern.

**STANDARD SIZE
FULL BODY HEIGHT
LADIES = 168cm**



WHEN DO I ADJUST THE HEIGHT IN A BODYSUIT PATTERN?

For most women the standard proportions will be fine, the stretch of the fabrics will provide enough flexibility. There always will be cases where this will not be enough and adjustments are needed.

Usually women are already aware of their garment height problems and this might even be the reason to sew a bodysuit or swimsuit instead of buying one.

And for those who like to be thorough before starting a project it's a good idea as well to check on the measurements first..

Most sewing pattern companies only mention the width measurements of their patterns because all sizes are drafted for the same full body height of 168cm.

You will have to measure the height in the pattern manually.

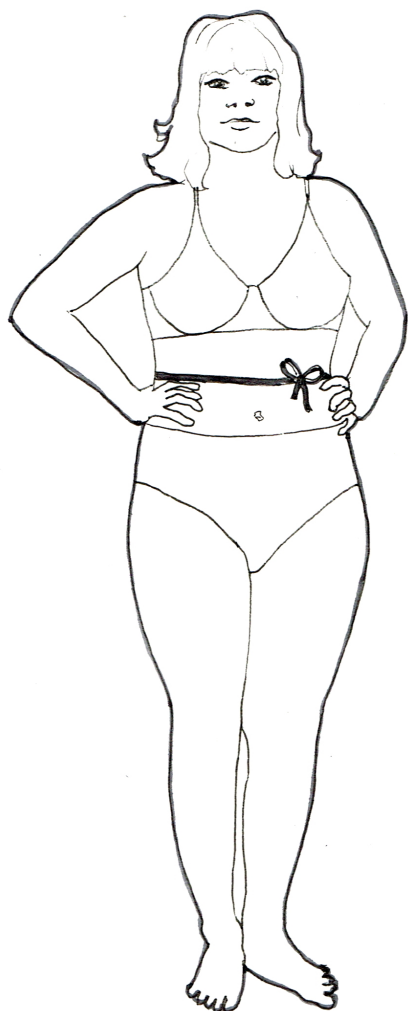
WHERE DO I ADJUST THE HEIGHT IN A BODYSUIT PATTERN?

The waist will be the best place for height adjustments if these are needed.

Between the lowest rib and the hip bone is a soft area where extending or decreasing has the least effect on the overall fit.

Most sewing patterns will mark the waistline for orientation purposes, just as is done in all the Merckwaerdigh patterns.

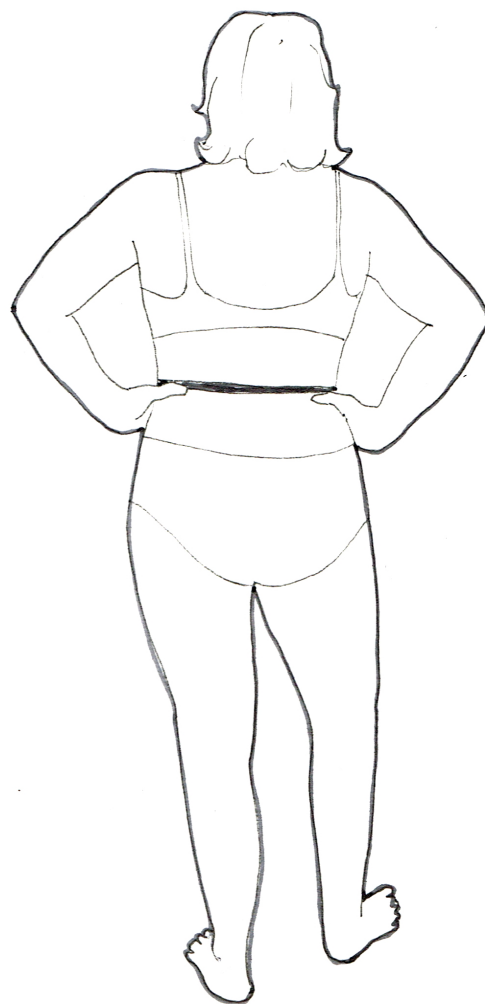
You will have the best adjusting result if you take your own comparing measurements above and under the waist of your own body.



HOW DO I FIND MY WAIST?

The most effective way to find the placement of the waist on your body:

- put your hands on your sides with the thumbs at the back and the fingers at the front.
- let your full hand rest on the hip bone and push slightly inwards.
- tie a ribbon just above the thumbs to mark your waist.



HOW DO I MEASURE THE HEIGHT?

The **full body height** is measured from floor to top of the head measured against the wall, just as you did as a kid.

The **bodysuit pattern height** is measured around the torso vertically, curves and all, and not against the wall.

You could measure this **in one go** all around from your navel over the shoulder and around the crotch back to the navel.

More accurate though is to use the waistline which will provide an indication whether it's the **bottom part** or the **top part** that is different from the measurements in your sewing pattern.

STEP-BY-STEP :

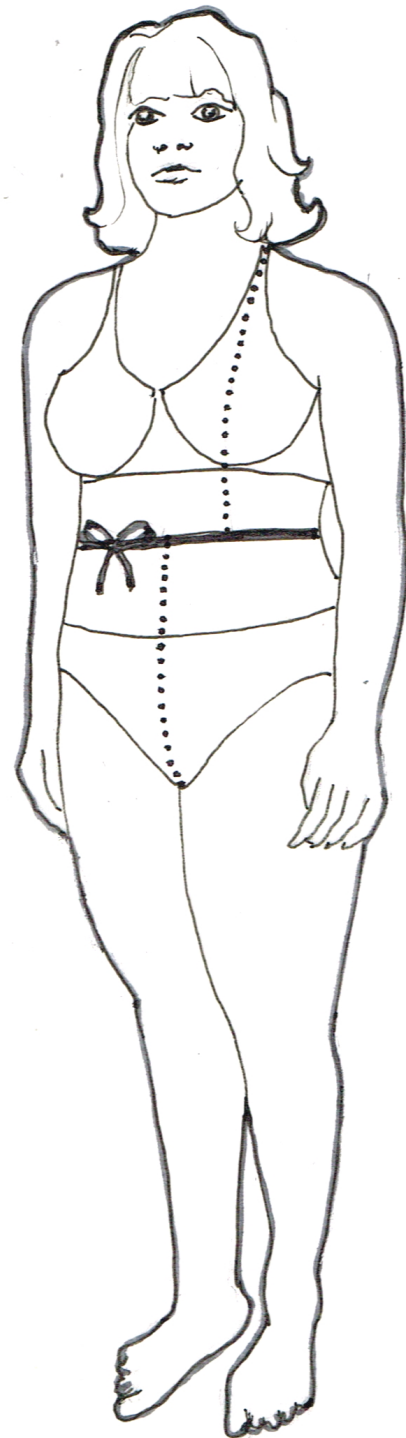
- Wear regular underwear, no foam cup bra.
- Stand up right, like something is pulling slightly at the top of your hair.

The bottom part :

- Place the beginning of the measuring tape on the waist ribbon at midback.
- Pull the tape down and around the crotch but make sure you still cover the full rounding of the buttock.
- Pull the rest of the tape up to the waist ribbon at midfront.
- Take **5% off** this measurement to compensate the fabric stretch, this is the **bottom part height**.
- When you compare with the bottom height of the sewing pattern you add up the pattern parts of back + crotch + front below the waistline.

The top part :

- Place the beginning of the measuring tape on the waist ribbon right under one breast.
- Pull the tape up to halfway the shoulder and make sure you go over the fullest part of the breast.
- Pull the rest of the tape over the shoulder straight down to the waist ribbon at the back, not to the midback but a bit beside it.
- Take **5% off** this measurement to compensate the fabric stretch, this is the **top part height**.
- When you compare with the top height of the sewing pattern you add up the pattern parts of back + front above the waistline.



A list of standard measurements is written down under here as used in all Merckwaerdigh sewing patterns and most other pattern companies.

STANDARD MEASUREMENTS

Waist-Shoulder-Waist

size XS 79cm
size S 80cm
size M 81cm
size L 82cm
size XL 83cm
size XXL 84cm

Waist-Crotch-Waist

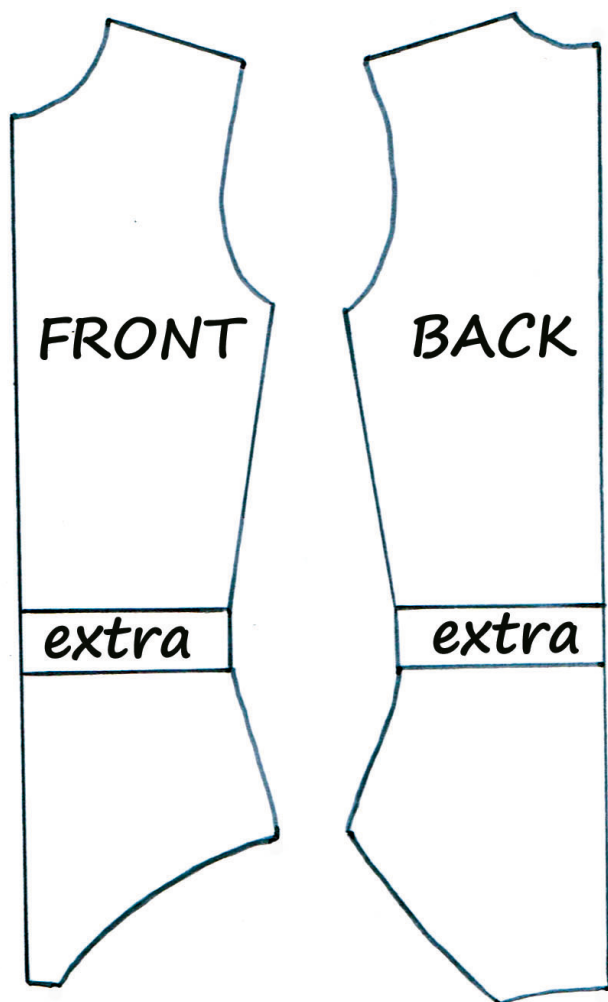
size XS 58cm
size S 60,5cm
size M 63cm
size L 65,5cm
size XL 68cm
size XXL 70,5cm

HOW DO I LENGTHEN THE HEIGHT IN A SWIM OR BODYSUIT PATTERN?

In case your own measurements are **more** than the measurements of your pattern, you could add an extension to the pattern.

No need to bother when it's just a few cm more, the stretch of the fabric can certainly make up for it. If it's **over 5cm** it could be worth it.

- Divide your extra length in 2; one part for the front and 1 part for the back.
- Trace the top pattern parts including the waistline.
- Lengthen the midfront and midback and mark the divided extra length under the waistline.
- Trace the bottom pattern parts including the waistline, starting at the marked extra cm.
- Connect the top and bottom at the side seams in a straight line.
- This creates an extra piece of length which will be part of the new pattern .

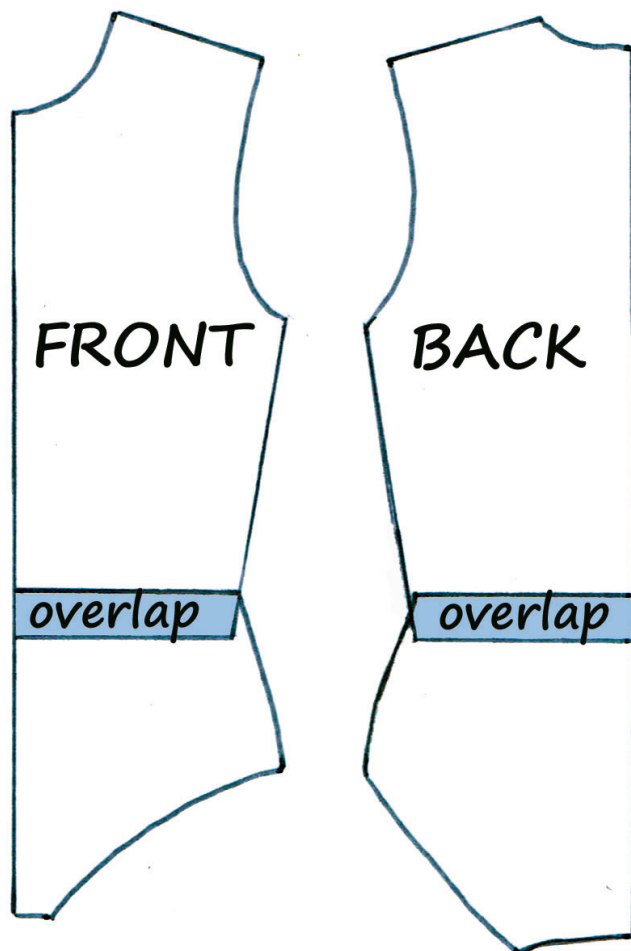


HOW DO I SHORTEN THE HEIGHT IN A SWIM OR BODYSUIT PATTERN?

In case your own measurements are **less** than the measurements of your pattern, you could shorten the pattern length.

No need to bother when it's just a few cm more, the stretch of the fabric can certainly make up for it. If it's **over 5cm** it could be worth it.

- Divide your missing length in 2; one part for the front and 1 part for the back.
- Trace the top pattern parts including the waistline.
- Mark the divided missing length on the lines midfront and midback above the waistline.
- Trace the bottom pattern parts including the waistline, starting at the marked missing cm.
- This will create an overlap which will no longer be part of the new pattern.



SORTING OTHER FITTING PROBLEMS

You might run into other fitting problems as well. I'll show you how to sort the most common ones.

WHAT TO DO WHEN TOP AND BOTTOM ARE NOT THE SAME SIZE?

Not everybody fits completely in standard sizes. When bust and hip measurement each indicate a different size in your pattern size chart it's no problem to mix them separately.

- Trace the top parts in the size for the bust.
- Trace the bottom parts in the size for the hips, connect them at the waistline.
- Use the waistline in the size for the waist, remove the other waistline.
- Draw a new side seam towards this waistline for the smallest pattern part.

AN EXAMPLE

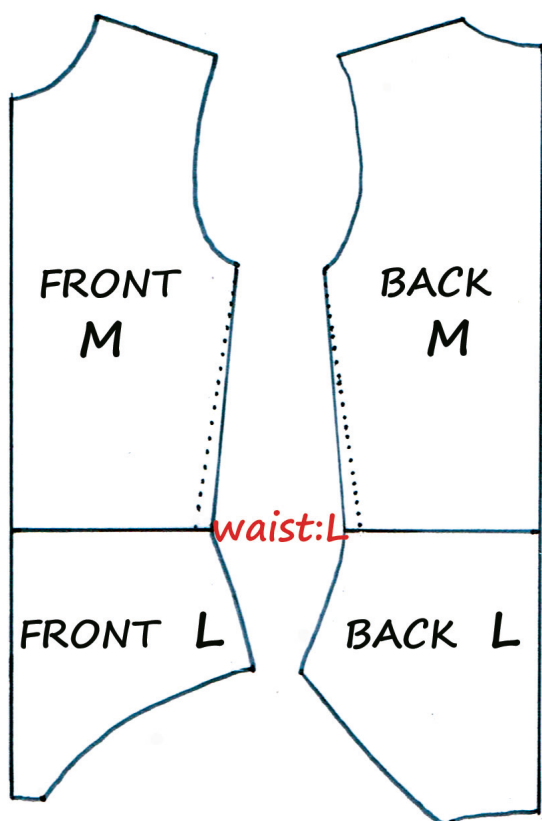
In the picture below you can see an example for bust size M - waist size L - hip size L.

The original side seam of the top parts in size M is the dotted line which was connecting to a waistline in size M.

But this side seam should now connect to the waistline in size L.

You will have to draw new side seams for the top parts connecting to waistline L.

NOTE : if the waistline size was size M you would have to draw new side seams for the bottom parts which are size L!



WHAT TO DO WHEN MY BUST IS EXTRA FULL?

More difficult is an adjustment for extra full cup sizes like cup E or above. For those sizes it will be better to use a different pattern with an extra lengthwise coupe seam.

You can add extra rounding in the coupe seam at the fullest part of the bust.

Divide the extra space over both the part midfront and the part at the side.

The problem is to decide how much?

In such cases you can use the size of the waistline for the whole top part even when the bust size shows a larger size.

This is because all the extra cm would be at the bust and not at the back.

- Start by adding an extra horizontal line in both your front pattern parts at the level of the fullest bust (the dotted line in the picture below).
- Add extra space to the bust on this line and round off to the original pattern (the red lines in the picture below).
- An indication is 0,25cm extra each side for every cup letter larger (cup E + 0,25cm - cup F + 0,5cm - cup G 0,75cm aso). The width stretch of the fabric will be around 20/25% so you don't need an awfull lot extra.

