



**Merckwaerdigh**  
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## Exchanging Bra Cups

Is it possible to exchange the cups  
of 2 different bra patterns?

Did you come across a bra sewing pattern with a lovely cup but didn't like the band that much (or the other way around)?

Well, in many cases you can exchange the cups or band for the one of another bra pattern. Or even with a pattern for a corset or bodysuit ... endless possibilities!

Let me show you step by step what to consider in this process.

You can employ this for the Merckwaerdigh patterns but usually for other brands as well.

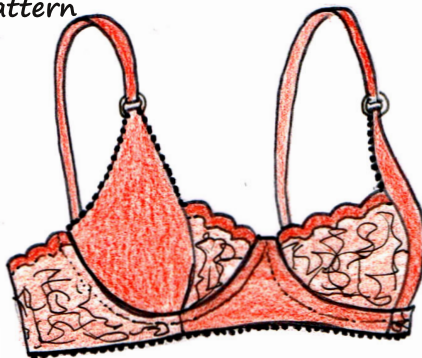
- The same bra size for both patterns! This might seem obvious but is easily overlooked when you get caught up in choosing between a lot of different designs.

- An underwired cup is required, or a soft cup which completely follows the breast root because you need a reliable reference between the cups.

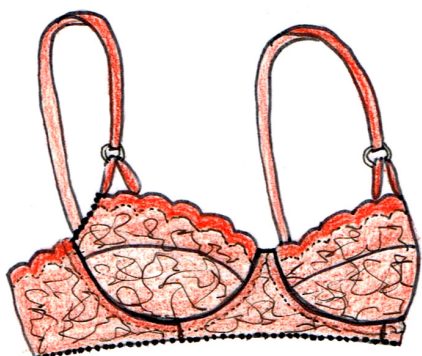
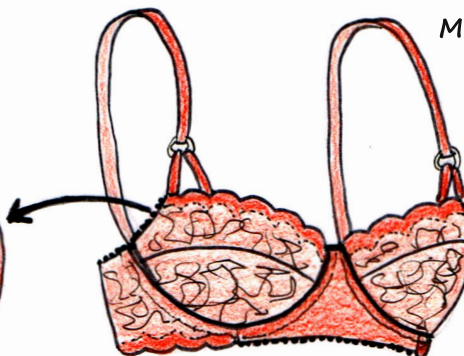
- The length of the underwire seam has to be the same. The underwire is at a fixed spot at the armpit but at midfront the cup can be lower or higher up, depending on the design. Be sure to measure both underwire seams very precise!

- The underwire casing can be either part of the band or part of the cup, this should be the same spot in both patterns. The sewing instructions should clarify where the underwire goes; upwards into the cup or downwards into the band.

Merckwaerdigh pattern  
CUT-OUTs



Merckwaerdigh pattern  
BALCONYs



No problems exchanging these cups

Both cups are the same size.

Both cups are underwired.

Both underwire seams are the same length.

Both underwires are situated in the band.

## Which problems occur when I exchange an underwired cup for a soft cup?

It all depends whether or not the soft cup follows the breast root. Some do but unfortunately most soft cups don't.

The lack of underwire presents the opportunity to blend parts of the cup with the band.

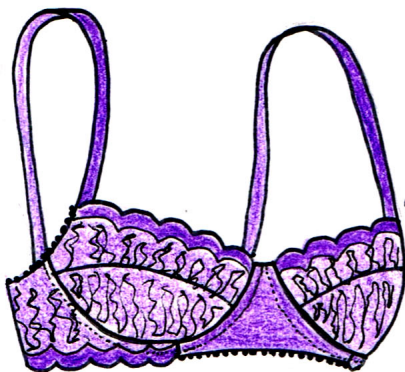
This means more freedom in appearance which most designers appreciate.

In the pictures below an example of an underwired bra and a soft bra you might want to exchange.

At first glance the cups are quite similar at the front, except for the sidebar of course. You could get tempted to give it a go and count on your tweaking abilities to overcome any problems.

But it could be worth giving it a proper look first and thinking over the whole process. Unless you don't mind doing a lot of sewing on off-chance.

Merckwaerdigh pattern  
BALCONYs



Merckwaerdigh pattern  
RACERs



## Can I tackle occurring problems?

Let's take a closer look what happens when you try to fit the new cups in the original band.

At midfront the new cups seem to be right for the band cut-out but are they really?

The original band has a small space in between the cups while the new cups are ment to come together without any space in between.

Some tweaking can solve this, like adjusting the original band spacing a bit.



The sidebar without breast root rounding has no reference at all where to connect with the band. The only way you might tackle this is to wear the band with the cups sewn only at the rounding and pin the sidebar 'on the body'.

## Which problems occur when I exchange an underwired cup for a cup with a different length underwire seam?

The problem will be in the length of the underwire seams. To fit properly these should always have the same length.

If you still decide to exchange the cups you should adjust the band cut-out at midfront. **Never adjust the underwire length of the cup!** This will change the whole fit of the cup while changes in the band cut-out have less impact.

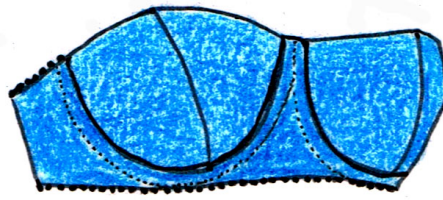
In the pictures below an example of an underwired bra which cup you might want to exchange for a strapless cup.

Even comparing the pictures it will be obvious the strapless cup is higher up at midfront. Measure up the underwire seams of both cups to find the exact difference in length.

Merckwaerdigh pattern  
SCOOP<sub>s</sub>



Merckwaerdigh pattern  
STRAPLESS<sub>s</sub>



## Can I tackle occurring problems?

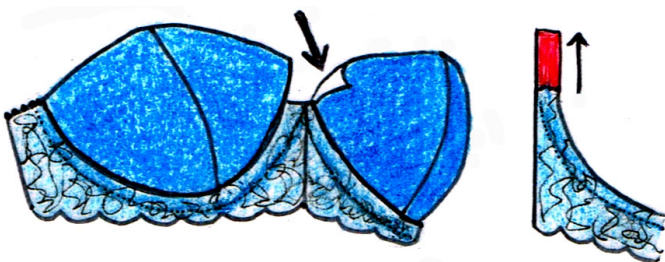
Let's take a closer look what happens when you try to fit the new cups in the original band.

The new cups underwire seam is longer than in the original band cut-out.

At the armpit cups and band are always at the same fixed spot.

At midfront the height can vary and in this case the cups will extend above the band cut-out. Without the support of the band bridge (between the cups) the loose parts of the cups will fall over.

Some tweaking of the band can solve this, lengthen the original band cut-out with the missing length as in the second picture.



## Which problems occur when I exchange a cup with the underwire in the band for a cup with the underwire in the cup?

If the underwire is situated in the band it will be downwards of the underwire seam.

If the underwire is situated in the cup it will be upwards of the underwire seam.

There can't be double underwires in a bra so this is a serious problem.

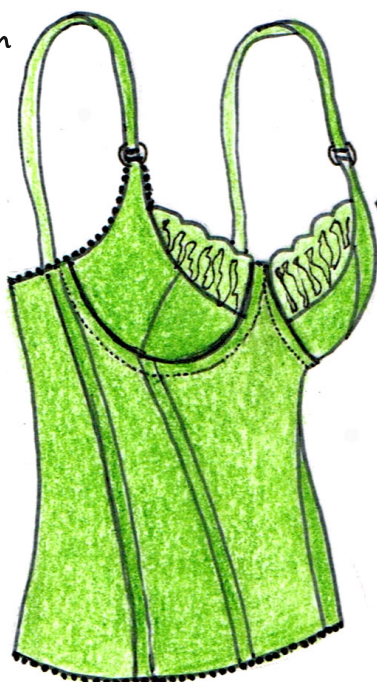
Usually the underwire will be in the band. There are some exceptions:

- a partial band instead of a full band
- the cup is rising above the band at midfront

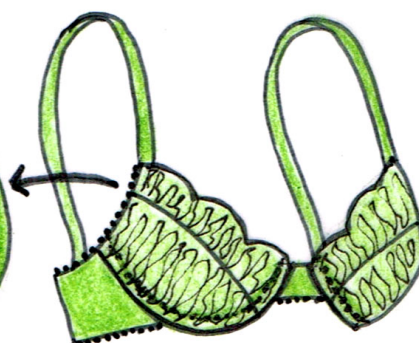
In the pictures below an example of an underwired cup in a corset and a bra with partial band which cups you might want to exchange.

A partial band means the band bridge between the cups is not connected to the rest of the band. In these cases the underwire is always in the cup.

Merckwaerdigh pattern  
DRAGONFLYs



Merckwaerdigh pattern  
PUSHUPs



## Can I tackle occurring problems?

Let's take a closer look what happens when you try to fit the new cups in the original band.

The double underwires are a serious problem. Some simple tweaking will not resolve this! The general rule is: avoid changes in a cup pattern other than for a personal fit.

A solution could be to cut off the underwire area in the band.

But what is the width of the underwire area? In Merckwaerdigh patterns this will always be 0,75cm, in other brands this might be different. Still, it's a drastic procedure and you need a lot of experience before you try this!

At midfront in this case the cups will be lower than the band cut-out. Some tweaking of the band can solve this: cut the original band cut-out to where the new cups reach.

