

Fitting a curved spine and uneven shoulders (fitting a scoliosis figure). Fitting a boxy torso draft with a side bust dart (waist darts released) instead of a sheath dress draft.

Chapter 1: Bodice. I want to throw something out there that may be helpful to sewers with asymmetric figures. I have a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch difference in my shoulder height and a curve to my spine. This affects my hips by $\frac{3}{4}$ inch as well. Also my arms torque. The low side arm hangs forward and the high side arm hangs back.

With the shoulders being $\frac{3}{4}$ different I anticipated length differences - from waist to shoulder tips for example - but my girth measurements differed too. Measuring from CF and CB to other points on the pattern there were differences in girth from side to side and different dart intakes and dart lengths too. The differences were always relative to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch: $\frac{3}{8}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $1\frac{1}{2}$. For example, my back across the shoulder blades measures 16 inches. But instead of 8 inches on each side CB (grain line), the high side measures out $8\frac{3}{8}$ and the low side measures out $7\frac{5}{8}$ (a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch difference). Besides the asymmetry, I also had to sort through a myriad of more common fitting problems.

Anyway, I don't want other sewers with asymmetric figures to be stuck on the idea that measurements and darts must be the same on each side. That's the information I want to share. And they should all know about getting started by making an initial slash diagonally from the high shoulder tip to the low side seam above the waist and overlapping the amount of the difference in shoulder height – a helpful bit of knowledge that I had yet to discover, when I started out.

My fitting sheath dress became a distant memory, as I concentrated my efforts on a torso draft which is more useful to me. I think the waist seam and waist darts in the sheath probably held the garment closer to symmetry which collapsed when I gave up the waist fitting in the boxy torso draft.

At the conclusion of this phase I had a nicely fitting torso bodice without sleeves. My armhole measurements were the same on each side.

Chapter 2: Sleeves. After inserting the sleeves, the bodice became distorted. This was somewhat of a shock because while it remained sleeveless I could not find fault with the garment. Once the sleeves were in, the CF and CB (grain lines) shifted. I removed the sleeves and the original CF and CB fell back into center position. I re-inserted the sleeves and the CF and CB shifted again. With the sleeves in I did something drastic; I slashed along the grain lines, through the hem to about 1 inch from the neck edge (so the garment remained connected) and let the cut edges fall where they may. I redrew the grain lines down the center of the garment. (This exercise allowed me to more clearly understand that it was the way my arms hung that caused the garment to twist.) I redrew the hemline to keep it perpendicular to the new CF and CB grain lines. The hang of the garment had improved yet I could still "feel" a twist. I began to fiddle with the shoulder and side seams. Thinking in terms of right front, right back, left front and left back, I made changes to the opposing quadrant. Any change to the right front, I made to the left back. And anything I changed on the left front, I changed on the right back. In the end the left front around the bust and hem matched the right back measurements. And the right front around the bust and hem matched the left back measurements. The armhole curves were like this: Left front and right back had a deep curve and the armholes measured the same; whereas, the right front and left back had a shallow curve and the armholes measured the same. The final surprise: dart intakes matched, lengths remained different.