

V-neck problems

My shoulders come forward, and I am low busted and thin down to the bust area. My back shoulder width and breast size fit the pattern size I use, but I have problems with V- and crossover V-necks. How do I adjust the neckline and collar so that the neckline will lay flat?

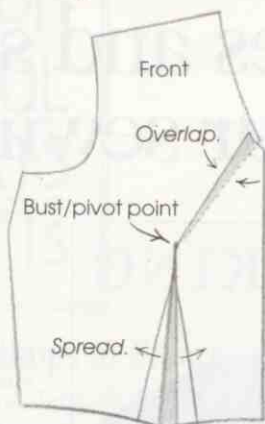
—Ramona Schall, Midland, TX

Della Steineckert replies:

In your case I suspect that your shoulders come forward because your upper spine is more curved than average. This causes the neck—and collarbone as well—to come forward. It results in the hollowness and thinness in the chest area and the lowering of the bust fullness that you mention, and does indeed affect the neckline. You need to lengthen the bodice across center back and shorten it across center front. To make these changes, all you have to shift is the seam allowances, as shown in the drawing below.

If the armseye is tight in the back and loose in the front after you've made this adjustment, you can also make length changes through the armseye. Slash the back and front bodices horizontally and through the

Removing neckline fullness



Slash from the neckline and from the waist up to but not through the bust point.

armseye; spread the back and overlap the front uniformly across the bodice. With this adjustment, you'll need to move the shoulder mark at the top of the sleeve toward the front by the amount you spread/overlapped.

With these general length corrections made, adjust the depth of the front neckline if necessary. To raise a V-neckline, lay the pattern over paper, extend the center-front line upward, then redraw the neck seamline to the desired depth, maintaining the character of the original neckline. Reshape collar and facings as well.

Hollowness or thinness of

the chest can cause V- and crossover V-necklines to gap because of excess fabric in the neckline. You still need the ease to fit the bust, so to correct the problem, transfer the excess amount to a new or an existing dart in the front bodice, as in the right-hand drawing at bottom, or gather the neckline slightly using a tape, as shown on p. 52. This will tighten the neckline against the chest.

A crossover neckline will not fit correctly if the edges rest against the bust fullness. Redesign the neckline so that the edges cross in the cleavage, no higher than the top edge of the bra band underneath the bust.

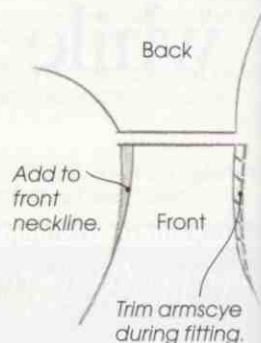
Margaret Komives adds:

When the shoulders are rounded and curve to the front, there may also be excess fabric in the width of the front bodice. The excess fabric must be removed in order for the front bodice to be smooth. The back bodice may need no alteration.

Try on a muslin and pinch out the excess fabric to determine how much to remove. If it is slight and only in the upper chest, you can add to the neckline at the front shoulder area, as shown in the drawing at top right. When you stitch the shoulder

Removing slight excess width

Shifting bodice front sideways, at shoulder seam removes some fullness at center.

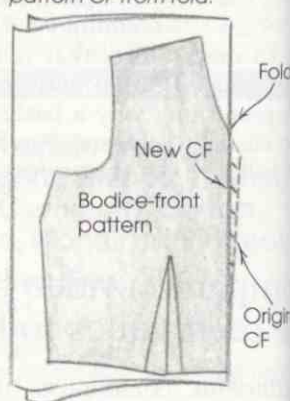


seam, this alteration pulls the excess fabric away from the neck and towards the armseye, where you can remove it later during fitting.

For more extreme cases, remove the excess fabric by pinching out at center front by offsetting the pattern center front from the fold.

Removing neckline fullness

To remove a greater degree of excess fabric, offset pattern CF from fold.

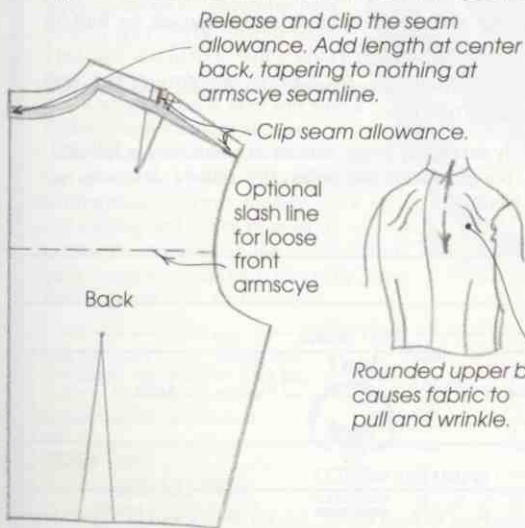


the fabric, as shown in the drawing above. Or make a similar adjustment to a center-front seam. Make corresponding changes to facings or collar.

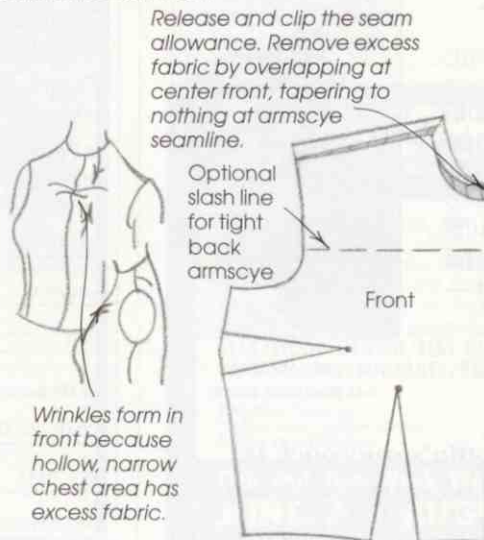
About the Fitting people: Della Steineckert is an associate professor in cloth and textiles at Brigham Young University; Margaret Komives teaches clothing construction at the Milwaukee Area Technical College. Edited by Mary Barnes.

Rounded upper back, hollow chest

This figure variation results in too little fabric in upper back, too much fabric in front.



Rounded upper back causes fabric to pull and wrinkle.



Wrinkles form in front because hollow, narrow chest area has excess fabric.