

From: [cat42](#) Nov-9 4:37 pm
To: [PendleStitches](#) (9 of 11)

in reply to [10226.1](#)

I too am apple shape, with belly and balloon rear. My hips (on the side) are straight below the high hip bone, and my legs are slim. I've been experimenting with fitting and have an idea to offer, which worked for me.

Try draping a slim pant fitting shell using gingham fabric (1/4" check).

1. Start with a pattern and clean pattern paper. Trace seamline for both the front and back crotch curves, but straight-grain above the curve onto the clean paper. Note: if you know you need extra length on front and/or back crotch extension, add that to the curve. If you are like me, thick from front to back, you'll need extension on at least one of these. If you're not sure, add 1" extension on front curve and 2" on the back curve, for 'just in case'.

Also, if you want to experiment with angling CF or CB outward above the curve as someone suggested, draw that now.

Now put away that commercial pattern; you'll be working with your own pattern from this point forward.

2. Draw vertical (straight-grain) inseams below the crotch curves. Then draw vertical straight-grain sideseams positioned for the widest part of the front and of the back (plus 1/2" ease on each).

Determining sideseam position:

The sideseam should bisect the leg at thigh, calf and ankle, and be perfectly vertical from floor to waist. You can tie a piece of string to the elastic around your waist, and attach a weight (like a clothespin) at the bottom; then slide the string along the elastic until it is positioned correctly for a sideseam.

Measure your vertical inseam from floor to crotch, and use that to determine where to draw a horizontal line for the bottom of the leg (at floor).

With that length of elastic or string around your waist, measure your length from waist to floor at several positions around your body, following your curves as your finished pant will do: center front, front dart area, side seam, back dart area and center back, on both sides. Note which is the longest length, then measure up from the floor line at the sideseam for that longest length and draw a horizontal line on both front and back, for approximate waist seam.

Each piece will be a long rectangle, with the crotch curve cut out of one corner. When you are finished, there will be a lot of excess fabric down the legs which is eventually trimmed away.

3. Now add 2" seam allowance for front and back inseams and sideseams, and 2" seam allowance at waist. Add 5/8" seam allowance through crotch curves and 1" seam allowance above crotch curves for center front and back. Mark grain lines on front and back.
4. Cut out these pieces from the gingham, paying attention to grain. Baste on temporary front and back crotch to waist, and sideseams from waist to crotch depth. Baste inseams only about an inch each side of the crotch seam, to hold the crotch together. The legs will not be connected below the crotch at this point.

Try on, using a length of elastic to hold the pant in place at the waist. Adjust crotch seams as necessary. You want a good fit in the crotch area, with no wrinkles, smiles or drag lines before you proceed with the rest of the pant. It becomes difficult to fix the crotch once the rest of the pant is fit. And a good fit in the crotch will help the pant stay on-grain.

You can also play with the CF and/or CB positioning (tilt forward) for big belly or balloon butt. Once you get the crotch to fit, with the length of elastic around your waist, tug pant as needed so that vertical gingham lines hang vertical all around, and horizontal gingham lines are perfectly horizontal. Mark the bottom of the elastic for the waist seam.

5. Now the hard part, and it helps to have a friend help. Mark the center of the knee on front and back with a pin (this will be the crease line position). Then determine the position of the inseam first, so that the verticals and horizontals remain straight, the knee centers remain centered, and the inseam bisects the leg at crotch, knee and ankle. Do this with pins.

Then do the same with the side seam, ensuring that it bisects the leg at waist, hip, knee and ankle. Also that verticals and horizontals remain straight, and knee center remains centered on both front and back.

Determining leg width:

- Desired ease is the determining factor. You want a slim, tapered, fit but with enough ease for movement.
- Width at the hem also plays a part in the leg width. For the average figure it would be about 15 inches around.
- Another factor is a need to have smooth transitions along the seam, from inward to outward curves and straight sections.

Typically, the back leg is 1" wider than the front leg (1/2" wider on sideseam side, and 1/2" wider on inseam side), from hem to knee. It continues to be wider all the way up to the hip, tho it may be more or less than 1" wider, depending on your figure. Above the hip, not considering darts, it is also wider than the front, but after the darts are made, the front and back should be about the same width at the waist, for most figures (a very large apple would be an exception).

6. Take off pant, and line up inseam with sideseam of each leg from floor to knee. Your knee-center should lie on the crease lines when the seams are lined up, and the crease-lines should be on-grain from knee to floor. If they are not perfectly positioned and on-grain, you will need to adjust inseam and sideseam.
7. When you feel good about leg fit, baste these seams, adjusting the seamline for smooth transitions. Trim all seam allowances to 1", except through crotch curve, which will be 1/4" seam allowance. Cut off at hemline, or leave 1" extra just in case.

Try on again and refine seams as needed. Play with center front and back, both on grain and tilted (forward or backward) to get the best fit. Mark darts and baste, then refine.

8. Now transfer all seamlines including darts to your pattern, keeping grain line on-grain. Draw 1" seam allowances on all seams except 5/8" on center front and back, including crotch curves, and 1 1/2 " hem allowance.

Lay front and back seams together to mark dots on seamlines at (see sketch):

- Hip & crotch depth lines on sideseam,
 - Knee line on both sideseam and inseam,
 - On inseams about half-way between crotch and knee, and
 - On CB seamline where back crotch curve ends and straight line begins.
9. Cut this out of muslin or other fitting fabric, nipping notches at the dots. Mark crease/grain line on front legs from floor to dart; mark grain line on back legs from floor to crotch line. You can do this with a marker if fabric is disposable, or with yarn if you intend to wear this test. Then baste, refine, and transfer all changes to your pattern.

Learnings

When I did this, I learned some interesting things. You will have different learnings depending upon your individual body. It's good to make note of them

- a. I didn't need much crotch extension on front, but I needed a fair amount on back.
- b. My CF was best slightly off-grain (about 1/4" off at waist, tilted toward sideseam).
- c. My CB was also best off-grain (about 3/4" off at waist, tilted toward sideseam)
- d. I had the longest waist-to-floor measurement in the area of the back darts, not at the CB which one would expect for a big butt.
- e. I only needed one narrow and short front dart, but got best fit with 3 deeper darts in back.
- f. My front was widest at tummy line (3" below waist), but my back was widest at full-buttock line (6 1/2 " below waist).

This shell is fitted as a slim pant. Not tight, but not loose like trousers. If you want to use this shell to make wider legs, add a front trouser pleat, or to make skin-tight jeans, it is possible, but you need to know some basics about moving darts, etc.. There are several good articles in Threads about this.

Inseam length difference:

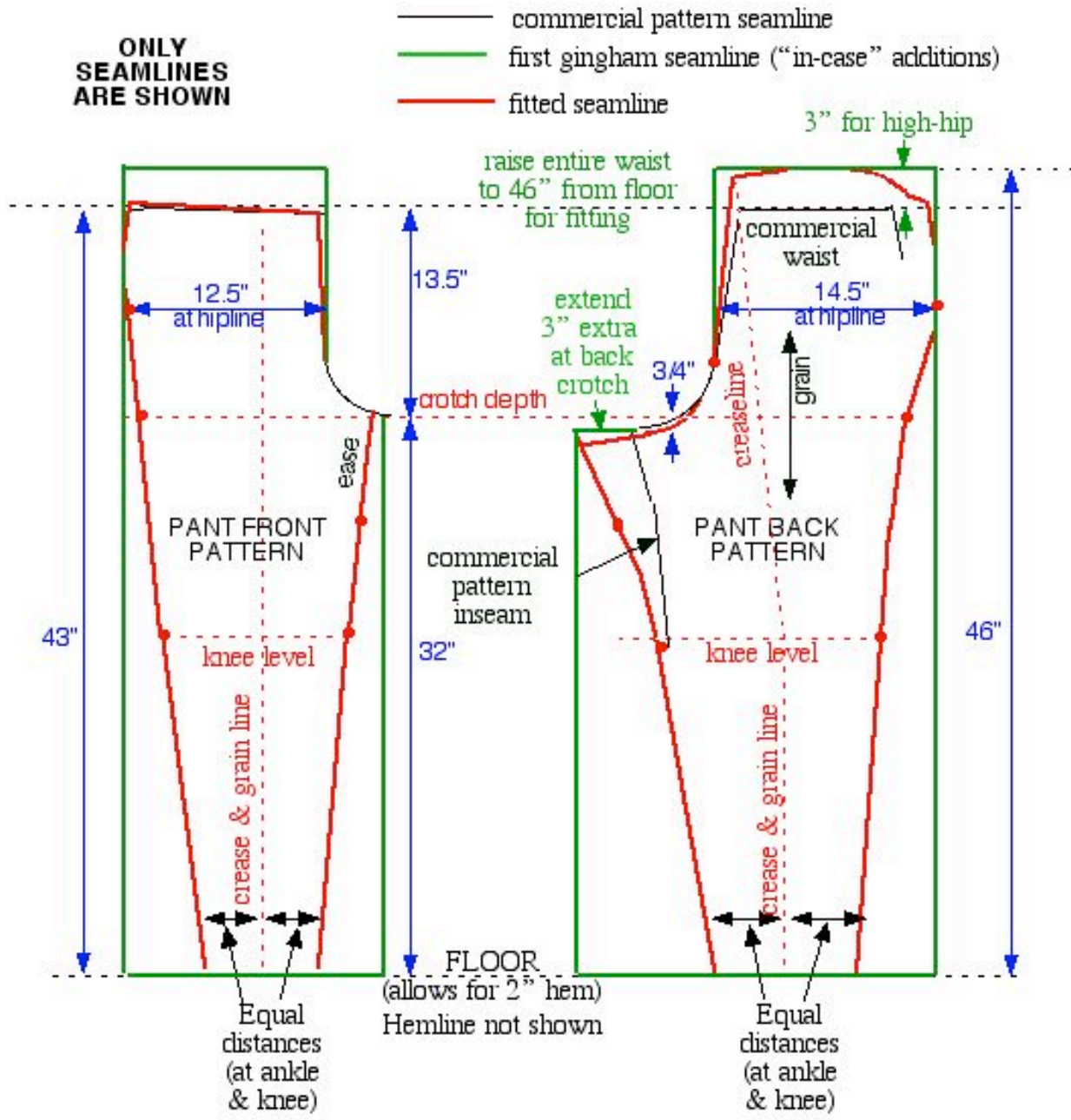
Someone asked why the back inseam is shorter than the front - that they don't meet at the same level. So I include my answer here:

This is European design, but can be found on many American patterns too. Here are some points to consider when drafting your slim pant (all gleaned from past Threads articles):

- The bottom of the back crotch curve is typically $\frac{1}{2}$ inch lower than the tip of the front curve. Think about these two together as the bottom of a circle. The front curve doesn't quite make it to the bottom of the circle, while the back curve does, and then extends a bit to reach up and meet the front. *This reaching-up allows the back of the pant to cup under the buttocks for a better fit.*
- Pant patterns have a notch on the inseam about halfway between crotch and knee. The back inseam is typically $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ " shorter than the front inseam between the crotch and the notch; below the notch, the inseams should line up to the hem. The longer front is then eased into the back inseam in the upper leg. *This allows for more comfortable movement when walking.*
- For mature figures like mine, where the buttocks have dropped (gravity), a deeper scoop in the back crotch curve allows the upper center back seam to stay up where it's supposed to be, not dragged downward to make room for the buttocks. *This helps the pant to stay put on the waist when sitting down.*
- Because I extended the back curve 3" beyond the commercial pattern's curve (to allow for my balloon buttocks), I experimented with the angle at which this extension gave the best fit. As you can see, it extends further downward, meeting the inseam at a right angle. This gave the best fit, and also *helped with cupping the back pant under, rather than hanging in wrinkles (bagginess) below my buttocks.* NOTE: If you don't have to extend the back curve, this won't apply, but the curve should still meet the inseam at a right angle.
- On my pattern, the back inseam slopes more than the front and is thus about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch longer than it appears. So while I show a $\frac{3}{4}$ " vertical difference between front and back crotch curves (when laid side-to side like this), the actual inseam difference is only $\frac{1}{2}$ ".

I want to give credit to Donna Brandt, a long-time participant in the Threads discussion, for starting me on my draping journey.

Attaching sketch of starting gingham pattern, with final draped seamlines superimposed.



(my sketch saved in path: SEWING-KNITTING > PANTS THREADS > PANT DRAPING w D BRANDT > DRAPING for THREADS > F-B pattern-forThreads2)