

Pattern (sewing)

In sewing and fashion design, a pattern is an original garment from which other garments of a similar style are copied, or the paper or cardboard templates from which the parts of a garment are traced onto fabric before cutting out and assembling (sometimes called paper patterns). Patternmaking , pattern making or pattern cutting is the art of designing patterns.

A custom-fitted basic pattern from which patterns for many different styles can be created is called a sloper or block.

Contents [hide]

Patterns for custom dressmaking

Custom dressmaking frequently employs one of three pattern creation methods. The flat-pattern method begins with the creation of a sloper or block, a basic pattern for a fitted, jewel-neck bodice and narrow skirt, made to the wearer's measurements. The sloper is usually made of lightweight cardboard or tagboard, without seam allowances or style details. Once the shape of the sloper has been refined by making a series of mock-up garments called toiles (UK) or muslins (US), the final sloper can be used in turn to create patterns for many styles of garments with varying necklines, sleeves, dart placements, and so on.

The drafting method is more commonly employed in men's garments and involves drafting a pattern directly onto pattern paper using a variety of straightedges and curves.

The pattern draping method is used for more elaborate and unique designs that are hard to obtain through the flat pattern method. It involves creating a muslin mock-up pattern by pinning fabric directly on a dress form, then transferring the muslin outline and markings onto a paper pattern or using the muslin as the pattern itself.

Patterns for home sewing

Home sewing patterns are generally printed on tissue paper and sold in packets containing sewing instructions and suggestions for fabric and trim. Modern patterns are available in a wide range of prices, sizes, styles, and sewing skill levels, to meet the needs of consumers.

Home sewing patterns are graded, that is, redrawn to fit larger and smaller sizes than the original design. Ebenezer Butterick invented the commercially produced graded home sewing pattern in 1863 (based on grading systems used by Victorian tailors), originally selling hand-drawn patterns for men's and boys' clothing. In 1866, Butterick added patterns for women's clothing, which remains the heart of the home sewing pattern market today.



home sewing pattern

There are some applications today that enable a home sewer to customize a computerized pattern to fit her body measurements and or body shape. The 3D technology enables the home sewer to see a virtual simulation of the final garment as it will appear on her. This reduces the Time-to-Market as well as the number of muslins/test garments that are needed.

Patternmaking Books

Patternmaking books are instructional manuals that provide instructions and diagrams on the constructions of various garments. They are primarily for personal and educational purposes.

Patterns for commercial clothing manufacture

The making of industrial patterns begins with an existing block pattern that most closely resembles the designer's vision. Patterns are cut of oak-tag (manila folder) paper, punched with a hole and stored by hanging with a special hook. The pattern is first checked for accuracy, then it is cut out of sample fabrics and the resulting garment is fit tested. Once the pattern meets the designer's approval, a small production run of selling samples are made and the style is presented to buyers in wholesale markets. Once the style has demonstrated sales potential, the pattern is graded for sizes, usually by computer with an apparel industry specific CAD program. Following grading, the pattern must be vetted; the accuracy of each size and the direct comparison in laying seam lines is done. Once these steps have been followed and any errors corrected, the pattern is approved for production. When the manufacturing company is ready to manufacture the style, all of the sizes of each given pattern piece are arranged into a marker, usually by computer. The marker is then laid on top of the layers of fabric and cut. Once the style has been sold and delivered to stores – and if it proves to be quite popular – the pattern of this style will itself become a block, with subsequent generations of patterns developed from it.