HOME DRESSMAKING.

HOW TO CUT AND FIT THE WAIST AND LINING.

The Proper Tools and the Taste and Fashions—How to Take the Measurements—Placing the Diagram Correctly—Building It to the Body.

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Nearly everybody who does her own dressmaking must have the proper tools and accessories to begin with. A box a large amount of patience and taste. The tools needed are best briefly mentioned:

A cutting board or folding table.
A tape measure.
Three pairs of scissors, one for button holes.
A pincushion for general use and one to fasten to the side.
A needlebook.
Thread and sewing silk as much as one likes.
A press board for ordinary waist and skirt.
A sleeve board for pressing sleeves.
A heavy flatiron and one light one.
One or more wire frames for draping skirts.
A tin body for adjusting waists, trimmings, etc., on.
A bundle pin wire for collars and stiff bows.
Elastic, braid, tracings, whalebones, tapings, corsilene, buckram and other linings—such as sleeve, paper muslins and drilling—and taffeta, silk and brilliantine or percaline for linings. Aside from these there should also be bottles used for pipeclay and soft crayon, black and white, for collars, etc., pencil and book for writing down measurements, also a sack for scraps and some stiff paper to diagram patterns on.

TAKING THE LIVING MEASUREMENT.

The first thing to be done in the making of a dress is to cut and fit the waist. It is a simple matter, but requires some enough to allow the dressmaker to long work of all her belongings. When ready to begin work, let the person measured take a large piece of stiff cartridge paper and start from the right armpit with the left measurement. The person to be fitted stands with her hand on her hips, and the tapeline is passed around the body close under the arms and over the bust and brought to the back and the figures noted. The height of the back is taken, the first from the top of the shoulder to the waist line and to the throat. Then under the arms, and finally around the waist and covering the tape is outlined on the diagram.

When the measurements are all down, the dressmaker takes her pencil and runs and thinks the first line four inches from the edge of the paper and brings it down to a starting line on the half inch of the edge of the waist line. She then draws the back line to three inches from the length to the back, and runs down to the front and side lines, marking dots where the measure strikes. The front, from about to waist line, is then measured and the neck dropped out from the shoulder to the low one, which gives it about the right form, which can be well set down if need where it is not.

The basque shape is the foundation of all dressmaking, but as just how the waists are unusually short it can be cut off at the proper line or a little below it. When the body to be fitted is stout, the lines on the diagram will show how to add to the width without changing the symmetry.

The darts form a very important part in the appearance of waists, for there is no set rule for the supply to them. The waist is cut to the proportion marked, and if the bust is slender the darts should not be taken deep. If full or very full, they can be made deeper, according to the need, and the front may be pinched. If so pinched, be sure to throw added fullness where it is required. Nor can the length of the darts be decided until the figure of the lady is seen. Some need high darts, some low ones, but the average is about five inches from the point, the forming the apex, and about one inch set over in the under. This can only be determined by trying on.

When all the pieces belonging to a waist—eight in all, though they are not in pairs which are exactly alike—have been marked with dots according to the measure, they can be marked out with a pencil and then cut. The lining should be then laid flat and the cuttings pasted down in their order and the pattern marked on the lining, which must be cut to the straight. Cut, allowing one half inch all around except in front for the seams. In front allow two inches for turning in.

The next material should be laid flat and cut out exactly the same as the lining. The darts should not be cut out until the lining has been tried on, though their position may be marked.

The lining, if not satin, should be cut on the bias, or slightly so, for better closing, of drilling. The seams of these must be cut on even line with the lower line.

In putting both lining and outside one should notice carefully if the different parts of each set together, as often a very important, and in cutting the darts one point is found to set a little to front, the other to the back.

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