Oct. 5, 1971 J. R. OLIVE 3,609,766

METHOD OF MAKING A DRESS

Filed Jan. 5, 1970 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

FIG. 1.

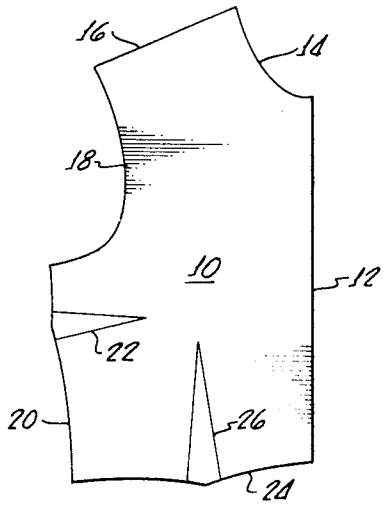


FIG. 2.

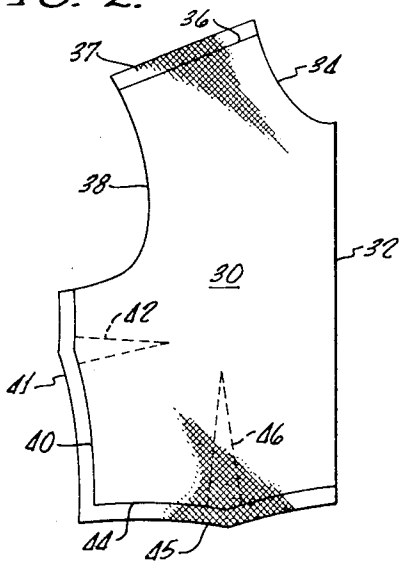
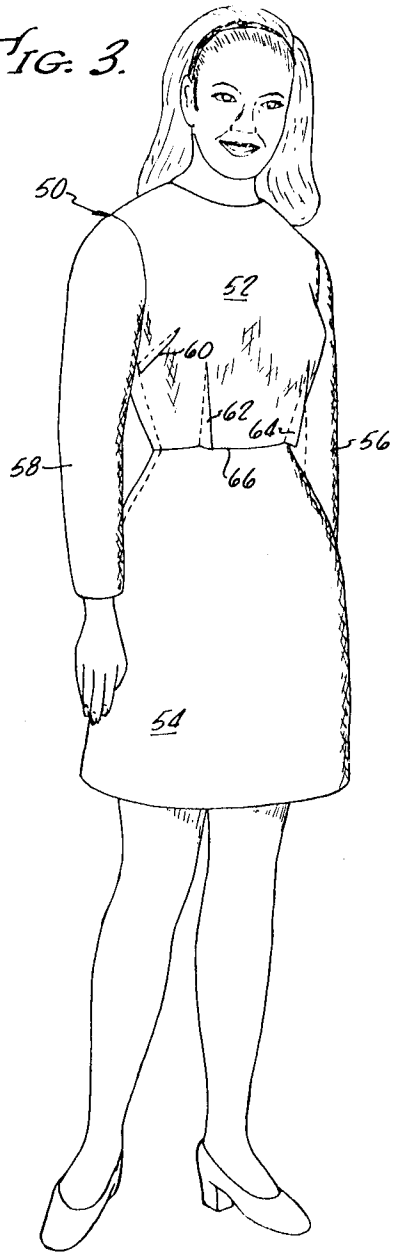


FIG. 3.



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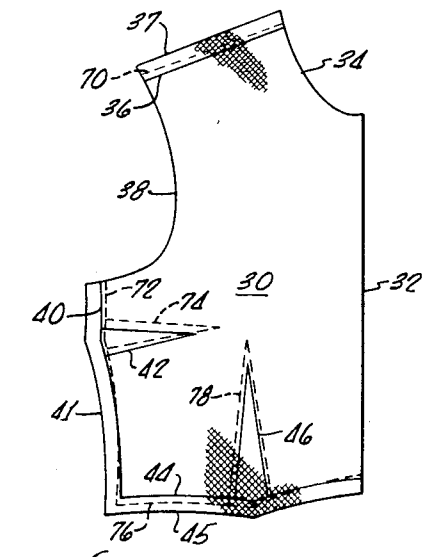


FIG. 4.

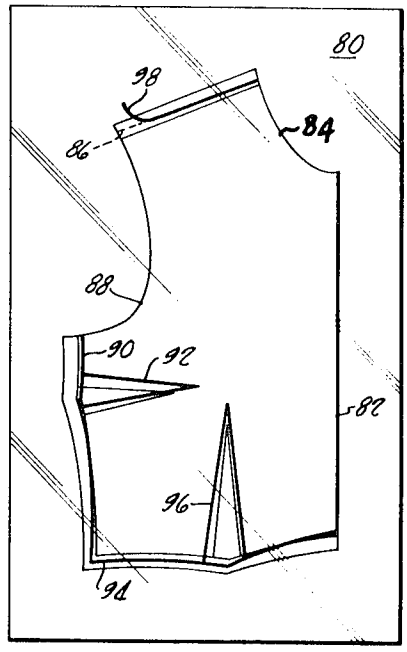


FIG. 5.

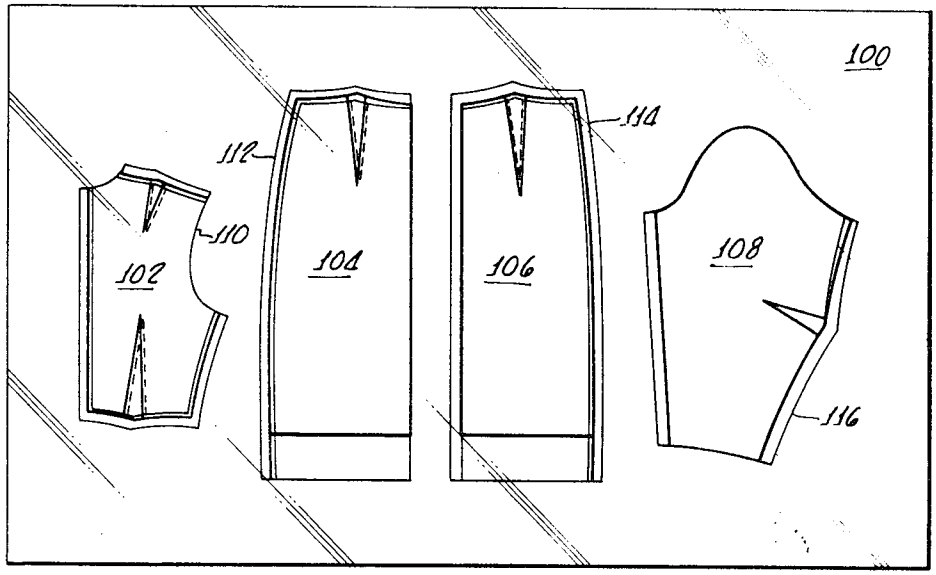


FIG. 6.

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METHOD OF MAKING A DRESS

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method for perfecting a standard pattern to fit a non-standard figure is disclosed. A muslin test dress is made from a standard basic pattern and modified to fit an individual non-standard figure. Clear flexible plastic pattern elements are constructed showing the corrected seam, dart, and cut lines from the pieces of the test dress. The lines are formed on the clear pattern correction element by removable and replaceable pressure sensitive tape strips so as to permit adjustment of the pattern perfecter elements to compensate for changes in the non-standard figure.

This invention relates to pattern perfecters and methods for making the same for use in custom modification of standard patterns such that high fashion dresses made from the standard pattern as modified fits a non-standard figure of a wearer.

There are some forty-six standard pattern sizes available for use by home steamstresses. Women's figures, however, come in more than forty-six sizes and shapes and only a fortunate few can find proper fit using these standard patterns. The vast majority of women require alterations in the standard pattern to fit their individual figures. Frequently, however, the seamstress lacks the necessary skill and experience to make the alterations at the time and in the manner in which such alterations must be made if a satisfactory fit is to be obtained. It is recognized, for example, that about 80% of the alterations and modifications to a standard pattern necessary to fit an individual non-standard figure must be made before the dress fabric is cut, if the alterations are to be made at all. Even those few alterations which can be made after the dress pieces have been cut are commonly made on a trial and error basis with repeated sewing, fitting and unpicking of the dress fabric. Frequently, this damages the dress fabric so that the finished dress contains certain permanent defects. These problems in fitting individual figures have been recognized and many efforts have been made to provide solutions for these problems.

It is known, for example, to make a test dress out of muslin, or some other medium weight inexpensive fabric, to fit the test dress to the individual figure and to transfer the pattern derived from fitting the test dress to the figure to a dress material. Various techniques for transferring the configuration of the muslin pattern to the dress fabric have been propsed, but none of these techniques are entirely satisfactory in that the transfer may be difficult and complex and/or inaccurate. Basic patterns made of paper, for example, which may be cut to a particular configuration corresponding to the shape of a test dress piece have been offered for sale commercially. Foundation patterns which include a plurality of spaced lines from the shoulder to the bust portion and from the bust to the waist have been proposed. This permits the user to make certain basic measurements of the figure to be fitted and to select a particular line corresponding to the measurement as an aid in more nearly fitting a standard pattern to the individual figure. This concept has been suggested for fitting the several elements of a pattern, such as sleeves, bodice pieces, etc.

According to one technique, a series of standard garments are supplied to a garment seller, the standard garments including a plurality of guidelines. The seller selects the standard size which most nearly fits the user's individual figure and, by reference to the guidelines in the standard pattern can approximately describe the deviations of the individual figure from the standard size pattern. This information enables a tailor more nearly to fit the garment to the individual's figure without the tailor having to measure the user's figure directly.

A number of proposals involving the use of transparent materials have been made. According to one propsal, a transparent overlay having guage marks for estimating the degree of deviation of an individual figure from a standard size is used in connection with standard patterns. Standard size patterns printed on clear flexible plastic have been suggested and while these patterns permit somewhat better viewing of the dress fabric during cutting, tailoring of the pattern to fit the individual figure is not more easily accomplished using such transparent standard patterns than with conventional tissue standard patterns. Plastic patterns which are clear, flexible and to be fitted to the individual's figure have been suggested as a means of providing a custom fitted garment for the figure. Certain advantages are said to accrue by using a plastic which is pressure sensitively coherent, such as vinylidene chloride copolymer film. Such material does not have the characteristics of fabric, however, and proper fitting is not easily accomplished using this approach. The same difficulty and disadvantages are faced in any effort to use a clear plastic material for direct fitting to an individual figure. While the use of such clear plastic materials with appropriate marking, more easily permits the transfer of the proper size and configuration characteristics to a dress pattern, a proper fit is difficult or impossible using such materials which are significantly different in stretch and other characteristics from fabric of which the dress is to be made.

Transparent overlays which include auxiliary fashion stylized patterns for use in association with standard patterns have been described. Using such overlays, ornamentation and desired style characteristics can be added to a basic standard size dress pattern but no provision is made for fitting the standard size dress to the figure of the individual user. The present invention solves the problems inherent in efforts to fit a dress to an individual figure and overcomes the disadvantages of the prior art techniques. According to thes present invention, the best techniques for fitting an individual figure are combined with novel techniques and material relationships to provide a method and means for perfecting a standard sized pattern to fit an individual non-standard figure.

According to the present process, one or several elements for correcting standard size dressmaker patterns for use in making a dress to fit an individual non-standard figure is made on the basis of a custom fitted trial dress. The correcting element comprises a clear flexible film formed in the configuration of, for example, a bodice front, bodice back, sleeve, skirt front or back, etc. Cut lines, seam lines, darts, etc. are marked on the clear plastic in conformity to the dimensions and configuration of the individual figure to be fitted.

One of the difficulties of the prior art techniques and means for fitting an individual figure is that once the basic pattern is formed and marked no alterations thereto are possible or can conveniently be made. According to the present invention, the cut lines, seam lines, etc. are formed by pressure sensitive tape strips which are removable from and replaceable on the film. These strips are adjustably positioned on what is normally the top surface of the clear film. Thus formed, the correcting element is so constructed and arranged as to be especially adapted to overlay and analogous standard pattern element for marking the position and amount of modification of the standard pattern

which is necessary to make a dress embodying the fashion of the standard pattern but which is especially fitted to the individual non-standard figure.

One of the features of the invention, therefore, lies in the formation of a correcting element which can be adjusted to changing figure dimensions and contours. According to one specific feature of this invention, the tape strips which form the cut lines are of one color while the tape strips which form the fold lines are of another color. This permits easy distinction between the types of corrections which must be made and permits simplified transfer of the necessary corrections to a high fashion standard size dress pattern element.

The correcting element is made by cutting muslin, or equivalent fabric, into dress elements according to a basic pattern and sewing the dress elements into a trial dress. The trial dress is fitted on the particular figure and modified by proper placement and sizing of darts, placement of seams, etc. The modified dress elements are separated from the trial dress and overlayed with a clear flexible material. Removable pressure sensitive tape strips, which may be of different colors, are used to place lines on the clear flexible material corresponding to the final corrected seam lines, dart lines, cut lines, etc. of the dress elements which are adapted for overlaying corresponding standard dress pattern elements to permit the correction of the standard dress elements to fit the particular figure.

The overlays are, in use, placed over corresponding elements of high fashion dress patterns. The corrected cut lines, seam lines, etc. are then transferred to the high fashion pattern elements. These corrected high fashion pattern elements are then used in the conventional manner to form a dress which is fitted to the particular figure and which retains the fashion characteristics of the original standard size pattern. One of the important features of this invention lies in the utilization of best fitting techniques in combination with novel material relationships to perfect standard size pattern elements.

The several features and advantages referred to hereinbefore and others will appear from the discussion which follows and from the drawing which illustrates the various steps, materials, and elements used in the present invention.

FIG. 1 illustrates a standard size tissue pattern of basic design which is the starting point for carrying out the inventive process.

FIG. 2 illustrates a corresponding dress piece made up of muslin for use in making a test dress to be fitted to the individual figure.

FIG. 3 illustrates the trial dress on the user for making corrections necessary to fit the pattern to the user's individual figure.

FIG. 4 illustrates the fitted trial pattern of FIG. 2 showing corrected seam lines, cut lines, darts, etc. placed thereon during fitting to obtain proper size and contour according to the individual's figure.

FIG. 5 illustrates the making of pattern correction elements using a clear flexible plastic sheet and removable and replaceable pressure sensitive tape strips.

FIG. 6 illustrates the use of the transparent overlay correction elements of this invention for perfecting a high fashion standard size pattern.

In the following description, reference will be made to the drawing for illustrating the process and the means of this connection in relation to a single pattern element, the bodice front. It will be understood, however, that the same techniques and steps and reasonable variations therein are used in the formation of perfecting elements corresponding to the other pattern elements, such as the bodice back, the skirt front and the skirt back, the sleeves, etc.

The first step in obtaining a perfectly fitted dress is to select a basic standard size dress pattern with a fitted bodice, waist line seam, fitted skirt and long set-in sleeve. The pattern is chosen by the bust measurement and appropriate figure type using the criteria and instructions published by commercial pattern makers. The basic dress pattern is used to cut corresponding trial dress elements from muslin. The term muslin is used herein because this is a conventional and convenient fabric for use in making a test or trial dress. Most other medium weight fabrics, such as percale are fully equivalent and, for present purposes, are included within the type of materials contemplated by the term muslin. Indeed, any material of appropriate weight which has sufficient dimensional stability may be used in making the test dress.

The adjustment of seam lines, etc. requires that the trial dress elements be cut with somewhat greater dimensions in certain areas than the standard size basic pattern. For an individual figure, it may not be necessary to provide additional dimensions in all of the areas referred to hereinafter but since the areas requiring correction cannot be foreseen, the trial dress pieces should be cut according to the standard size basic pattern with the following exceptions. Five-eighths inch is added to the side seams of the bodice front, the bodice back, the skirt front and the skirt back, to the underarm seams of the sleeves, to the bottom waist line of the bodice front and back, to the top waist line of the skirt front and back, to the center back seam of the bodice back and skirt back and to the shoulder seams.

These trial pieces are marked, using dressmaker carbon and a tracing wheel so that the markings are visible on the right side of the fabric with all darts, basic standard size pattern seam lines, center front folds, center back seam lines, straight grain lines on the bodice back, skirt, and sleeves and the cross grain lines on the bust line, hip line and the sleeve cap.

These trial dress elements are sewn neatly and accurately together along the seam lines of the standard size basic dress pattern elements using the longest stitch of a sewing machine. All of the darts are sewn on the outside of the garment, rather than on the inside, to permit correction and adjustment of the dart position and dimension so that the flat fabric, when sewn together, will conform to the figure contours. The shoulders and underarm seams of the bodice are sewn on the inside of the garment. Since additional area is included in the trial dress pieces in these portions, the seam allowance is 1¼". The underarm seam of the long sleeves is similarly sewn using a like seam allowance. The skirt side seams are sewn inside the garment with a seam allowance of 1¼" in the same manner.

The trial dress is then fitted to the individual user's figure using principles and techniques which are known in the prior art. The process described herein and the means described and illustrated are intended for use by individual homemakers, seamstresses, etc. but the homemaker may find it desirable to obtain professional assistance in fitting the trial dress to her particular figure since the quality of fit of the trial dress will be reflected in the quality of fit of all dresses made thereafter from the overlay elements of this invention.

All fitting techniques are well known to the dressmaker art, but certain principles are set forth herein to insure completeness of the disclosure.

In fitting the trial dress, the fitter should insure that the lengthwise grains of the fabric run straight up and down on the garment and that the crosswise grains run across or around the body horizontally. The underarm seam, while cut on a curve, should fall in a straight line from the armpit towards the floor and the waistline should follow the contour of the waist.

Generally, if the lengthwise grains are not vertical, there is a problem in the garment width and, conversely, if the crosswise grains are not horizontal, there is a problem in the garment length. The grain lines are adjusted by slashing the grain to release strain or by making tucks to reduce bagginess.

The presence of creases in the garment indicates the presence of stress in the trial dress. These creases point directly to the place of stress and more ease is needed at

this point. The amount of ease to be added at the point of stress is usually the same amount that can be pinched with fingers at the base of the full end of the crease. These stress creases may form on the bias, cross grain or lengthwise grain of the garment and are a definits result of inadequate ease and should not be confused with excessive fullness. Darts provide contour to the otherwise flat piece of fabric and must be carefully placed and dimensioned to give the precise contour needed for each individual figure. The size of the dart determines the extent of the curve. A dart which is too deep will result in bagginess at the dart point. The size of the dart, in this case, should be reduced and excess fabric should be removed in the seams parallel to the dart. A dart which is too shallow, on the other hand, will show strain at the dart point. The size of the dart should be increased and extra fabric added in the seam parallel to the dart. The trial dress elements, when cut according to the preceding instructions, contain sufficient fabric to compensate for changes in dart size.

A properly fitted dart should point to the fullest part of the body but end directly above or below it and does not extend onto the full curve. Bust darts, for example, should end 1½" from the bust.

Any extra fullness in the trial dress must be eliminated. This is done by pinning the excess fullness into neat, even tucks along the grain lines. The grain line must be followed to preserve the shape of the dress element and the tuck must be kept even to keep the pattern flat for cutting. The side seams or waistline seams are used to compensate for any overall deviations resulting from the tucks. If one pattern piece is altered, the pieces joining it must be altered accordingly.

The properly fitted garment should hang gracefully from the shoulders and waist and the shoulder seams should rest on the top of the shoulders without sloping toward either the front or the back of the garment.

If additional width is needed to provide sufficient ease to permit comfortable fit and body movement, the material added into the several portions of the trial dress elements during cutting may be used safely. If this ease is insufficient, more ease may be added by slashing along the grain line and allowing the garment to relax. A patch is pinned and later sewn into the opening made by the slash. The trial dress is best fitted on the user wearing her best foundation garments and dress shoes. Care should be taken to make the dress fit comfortably without strain. The trial dress when the proper adjustments are made, should fit like an easy sheath dress.

The bodice is fitted first. The bodice is pinned closed in back using the extra seam allowance if necessary. The garment must be adjusted from the shoulders downwardly using the extra fabric in the shoulder seam to make such adjustments as may be necessary. The back is altered after the shoulders are properly fitted. Ample ease must be allowed across the shoulder blades and the armscye must extend to the tip of the shoulders at the shoulder seam. The armscye is 1" below the armpit to permit sufficient ease in movement.

The front bodice is altered last. The lengthwise and crosswise grains must remain respectively, vertical and horizontal and the bust darts should be sized and positioned so as to point to the fullest part of the bust, ending 1½" from the bust point. The depth of the darts is adjusted to provide the necessary contour. Any additional width necessary may be gained using the extra seam allowance provided during cutting. If further width is required, it can be obtained by slashing and pinning as previously described.

The cross grain should be even across the bust points. If the grain pulls up in the center it should be slashed and allowed to relax. If the cross grain sags at the bust point, an even tuck is pinned across the fabric with any excess fullness being pinned out using even tucks across the grain lines.

A cord is tied over the bodice at the waistline to indicate the user's natural waistline and the waistline is marked.

Next, the skirt is fitted. The back of the skirt is pinned closed using the extra seam allowance if additional width is required. If still more width is required, it may be necessary to slash the fabric on the straight grain between the darts and side seams on both front and back adding equally to all four slashes so that the side seams are straight up and down from the arm pit.

If the cross grains are pulled up, additional length is needed in that area and the fabric is slashed on the crosswise grain and released until the grain is restored and a patch is pinned over the slash. Oversize skirts can be made smaller at the side seams by taking up to ⅝" on each seam but any additional fullness must be removed in small tucks on the lengthwise grain between darts and the side seams. The side seams should be kept straight under the arms. Puckers below the darts indicate that the darts are too large and these darts should be released with the excess fabric taken in at the side seams. A cord is tied over the top of the skirt and the skirt is adjusted until it is free of wrinkles and the user's natural waistline is marked. A line is then marked for the hem fold.

Care must be taken at all stages to make certain that the garment is hanging properly from the shoulders and the waist and that the grain lines remain vertical and horizontal.

The bodice is basted to the skirt along the penciled lines and the garment is tried on to check the waistline and grain flow of the bodice and skirt.

Both sleeves are then basted into the armscyes and the length and width of the sleeve adjusted. Tucks are used if the sleeve is too long and the fabric is slashed if the sleeve is too short. If the sleeves bind, the fabric must be slashed along the straight grain with fabric being added in the opening by patching. Small darts are formed at widest points of the patch to make the sleeve lie flat for cutting. The sleeve hem lines are marked for short, three-quarter, and long sleeves. These marks are subsequently transferred to the clear flexible correction elements of this invention.

When the garment is properly fitted, the bust points and the lowest desired neckline are marked on the fabric. These marks are subsequently transferred to the transparent overlays of the invention for use in modifying a stylized standard size pattern to provide the proper neckline.

The trial dress is unpicked to permit transfer of the proper seam, cut and dart lines to the overlay. If only very minor adjustments have been made to individual pattern elements, these adjustments may be transferred to the tissue paper standard size pattern and these corrected standard size pattern elements may be used in forming the overlays. The tissue may, of course, be used for those pieces which fit without alteration.

The patches which have been added are stitched in place and the small tucks are stitched evenly into the fabric. The trial dress elements are pressed flat and, unless the figure is uneven, only one-half of the bodice and skirt front elements need be used. If the figure is uneven, then all pieces must be used to insure perfect fit to the user's individual figure.

The trial dress elements are placed flat and overlain with a clear film.

Most clear films may be used for this purpose. Celluloid, polyethylene and polypropylene, vinyl polymeric and copolymeric and polyester films, for example, are suitable for use in making the clear plastic overlays of this invention.

All seam lines and darts are marked in one color of plastic tape, black for example. Fold lines, grain lines and maximum neckline limits are marked with a different colored plastic tape, red for example. This permits easy distinguishment between the critical configurational and

dimensional lines of the pattern perfecting elements of this invention.

The perfecting elements may be used without further handling if desired, i.e. by overlaying a high fashion standard sized pattern with the clear plastic film having the seam lines, etc. marked thereon. It is convenient, however, to cut the clear plastic out using a minimum seam allowance of one inch from the plastic tape lines. This gives space to permit increase in the pattern size if needed. This, indeed, is one of the important features of the invention in that the pattern perfecting overlays may be modified to conform to changes in the figure from, for example, growth or loss or gain of weight.

A hole is punched in the pattern perfecter at the bust point and the plastic is folded to reach the bust point. Holes are punched every few inches along the sleeve hem folds also. This helps in the transfer of markings to other patterns.

These permanent pattern correcting elements can be placed over the corresponding elements of any standard size commercial pattern. The standard size pattern is then easily marked to show the proper placement of darts, seams, cuts, etc. to insure a perfect fit to the user's individual non-standard figure.

The pattern perfecter is placed over the standard pattern element. All of the sewing lines, grain lines, hem lines, bust point and neckline limits of both the standard size pattern and the pattern perfecter are clearly visible. The standard size pattern can be corrected to fit the individual's figure by marking the correct seam lines, cut lines, dart lines, etc. on the standard size pattern using, for example, dressmarker's carbon and a tracing wheel.

Since the pattern perfecter is a basic pattern it may be used to make all basic dresses. Individual fashion items may be added according to techniques available in the prior art but, more importantly, the pattern perfecter may be used to custom fit any standard size high fashion pattern to the individual figure of the user.

Certain points should be kept in mind when perfecting a high fashion pattern in the manner described. For example, the center front line of the pattern perfecter must correspond with the center front line of the commercial pattern and, likewise, the center back line of the pattern perfecter must correspond with the center back line of the commercial pattern. The shoulder seams should correspond as closely as possible and the end of the shoulder seam should match with the armscye on both the front and back bodice. If they do not, the pattern perfecter should be used to make a new shoulder line.

The waist markings on the pattern perfecter should match the waistline on the standard size pattern, but if the pattern does not have a waistline or if the waistline is improperly placed, then a new waistline should be marked using the pattern perfecter.

The standard size pattern should be checked for adequate width and length. If the tissue is extremely long, yardage may be saved by altering the pattern at this point and if the pattern is not sufficiently long, it can be modified using the cut and seam lines of the pattern perfecter overlay. Any necessary fabric must, of course, be added before cutting since it is usually impossible to add material to adjust a piece after it has been cut.

If the standard size pattern consists of several pieces in the bodice or the skirt, these pieces should be pinned together along seam lines and overlaid with the pattern perfecter. The combined pieces are then corrected according to the principles previously discussed.

The standard size pattern bodice should be marked through the hole at the bust point and the darts should be adjusted so that they end 1 or ½ inch away from the bust point. The depth of the darts is adjusted using the lines on the pattern perfecter.

In perfecting the size of a standard pattern it is important to avoid removing design ease. Basic ease in the standard size pattern can be corrected using the pattern perfecter. When the standard size high fashion pattern has insufficient basic ease, all of the design ease of the standard size pattern may be used simply to supply basic ease necessary to a proper fit of the dress to the individual figure to permit body movement. In such cases, it is then necessary to restore the design ease to the garment before the individual dress pieces are cut.

The end result should always be kept in mind. For example, in perfecting a standard size pattern for a strapless dress, an absolute minimum of basic ease is provided in the bodice area whereas in making a fitted sheath dress, sufficient basic ease is provided to permit the garment to fit freely in the bodice while conforming to the bust and other body contours in the bodice area. A shirtmaker dress, on the other hand, includes substantial design ease in addition to basic ease, in the bodice area such that the garment fits loosely without conforming to the figure contour.

Having discussed the broad principles of the invention, the method of the invention and the product thereof are now described with reference to the drawing.

An element of the tissue pattern, for example the bodice **10** which includes a fold line **12**, a neckline **14**, a shoulder line **16**, an armscye **18** and a side **20** with a dart **22** and a bottom **24** with a dart **26** is used in the formation of a fabric dress piece indicated at **30** and which includes analogous elements. For example, the fabric dress piece which is made of muslin or the like, includes a fold **32** and a neckline **34** but to the shoulder line **36** there has been added material as shown at **37** which comprises a strip about ⅝" in width. The armscye **38** follows the lines of the tissue pattern, but to the side **40** there has been added ⅝" of additional material, with a dart marked at **42** as on the original pattern. Similarly to the bottom **44** there has been added ⅝" of additional material with a dart **46** being marked as on the original basic pattern.

The muslin fabric piece is formed by overlaying the fabric with the basic standard pattern, allowing about ⅝" additional material as previously indicated and marking the trial dress pieces with the darts, basic pattern seam lines, center front folds, center back seam lines, straight grain lines on the back, bodice, skirt and sleeves, and the cross grain lines at the bust line, hip line and sleeve cap. For clarity in illustration, certain of these lines have been omitted from the drawing.

The dress pieces are then stitched into a trial dress **50** along the basic standard pattern seam lines. The trial dress will include the bodice **52**, the skirt **54** and sleeves **56** and **58**. The darts **60**, **62** and **64** are sewn so as to protrude on the outside of the garment. Initially, the sleeve and skirt are left separate from the bodice.

The bodice is fitted first, then the skirt and then the sleeves. The trial dress is carefully fitted to the non-standard figure of the user, making such corrections in the cut lines, seam lines, dart positions and other dimensions and figurations as are necessary to insure conformity of the trial dress to the contours of the individual figure.

All or part of the trial dress is then unpicked. Only those dress pieces which must be modified have to be unpicked, but it may be convenient to unpick the entire trial dress.

A typical trial dress piece **30** is shown in FIG. 4 with the modifications made thereto. For example, the shoulder line has been modified at **70**, the side lines have been modified at **72** with the dart position and size being modified as indicated at **74**. Likewise, the bottom line has been modified as shown at **76** with the dart size and position being modified as shown at **78**.

The modified trial dress piece is then overlain with a clear flexible film **80** as shown in FIG. 5. The fold line **82** is marked, for example, in red with the neckline being marked at **84** in black. The shoulder line **86**, the armscye **88**, the side **90** with the dart **92** and the bottom **94**

with the dart **96** are all marked along the modified lines resulting from the fitting of the trial dress on the figure of the user.

As previously indicated, it is desirable to mark the fold lines in one color with the cut lines in another color to permit the seamstress to distinguish easily between the types of lines shown on the pattern perfecter.

The lines on the pattern perfecter are preferably marked using pressure sensitive tape strips which can be removed and replaced on the clear flexible film. The placement of one of these strips is shown at **98**.

FIG. 6 illustrates a clear plastic flexible film **100** with pattern perfecting pieces **102, 104, 106** and **108** in the form, respectively, a bodice, skirt front and back, and a sleeve. These pattern perfecting elements may be used in the form illustrated in FIG. 6 by overlaying individual stylized pattern pieces **110, 112, 114** and **116** with the pattern perfecters and making the changes necessary. It is desirable, however, to cut out the pattern perfecting elements, allowing about one inch along the edges thereof to permit future change in the particular figure, resulting from growth or from the gain or loss of weight.

In this manner, by overlaying high fashion standard size pattern elements with analogous pattern perfecting elements, the high fashion pattern elements can be marked according to the pattern perfecting element lines. The dress fabric is then cut according to the corrected high fashion pattern and the pieces sewn into a dress which is fitted to the individual non-standard figure and which retains the fashion of the standard size pattern.

It is also possible to overlay the pattern perfecting elements with pattern elements which contain particular fashion features and by a combination of a basic pattern, the pattern perfecting elements, and the fashion elements, to modify a fashionable standard size dress with additional fashion features and to correct the standard size dress to fit the user's particular non-standard figure.

Other variations in the use and application of the process and elements of the invention may obviously be made.

The process as described and the pattern perfecter permit the proper correction of any standard size pattern to fit an individual non-standard figure without loss of the style and fashion of a standard size pattern. The pattern perfecter consists of one or a plurality of clear flexible film elements on which are marked, with removable lines, the cut lines, seam lines, dart lines, etc. necessary to obtain a perfect fit on an individual non-standard figure. The invention is, therefore, to be distinguished from certain prior art attempts to solve problems in fitting individual figures in that the dimensional and configurational lines can be moved to adjust for changes in figure size during growth or incident to the loss or gain of weight.

The technique and process of making a pattern perfecter which will give a perfectly fitted dress is also to be distinguished from the methods of the prior art in that it is impossible to obtain perfect fitting using clear plastic and direct fitting to the user's figure. The present invention takes advantage of the best techniques known for obtaining a perfectly fitted garment, in modifying a standard size pattern to obtain a perfectly fitted high fashion garment and advantageous material relationships in the formation and construction of pattern perfecting elements. These advantages can be obtained using the methods and means of this invention, and variations thereof within the skill of the art and based upon these teachings without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A process for custom fitting a dress to a particular figure comprising the steps of:

cutting fabric into dress elements according to basic pattern elements;

sewing the dress elements into a trial dress;

fitting the trial dress onto the particular figure and modifying the elements of the trial dress so as to fit the particular figure;

separating at least some of the dress elements from the trial dress;

overlaying said modified separated trial dress elements with a clear, flexible film material;

placing lines on said clear, flexible film material, said lines corresponding to the seam lines and the dart lines of said dress elements to form transparent overlays adapted to overlay corresponding standard size dress pattern elements to permit correction of said standard size dress pattern elements to fit the particular figure while retaining the fashion characteristics of said standard dress pattern elements;

overlaying a standard size pattern with said overlays;

marking the standard pattern with corrected seam, cut and dart lines corresponding to like lines on the overlays;

cutting fabric to form dress pieces corresponding to the corrected pattern; and

sewing the pieces together to form a fashion dress which is custom fitted to the particular figure and retains the fashion of the standard size dress pattern.

2. A method for making a custom fitted high fashion dress for an individual non-standard figure comprising the steps of:

(a) overlaying muslin fabric with a basic standard pattern;

(b) cutting the muslin fabric to form trial dress pieces corresponding to the basic pattern with about ⅝" additional material added to at least one of the following: to the side seams of the bodice front, the bodice back, the skirt front and the skirt back, to the underarm seams of the sleeves, to the bottom waist line of the bodice front and bodice back, to the top waist line of the skirt front and skirt back, to the center back seam of the bodice back and the skirt back and to the shoulder seams;

(c) marking the trial dress pieces with darts, basic standard pattern seam lines, center front folds, center back seam lines, straight grain lines on the back bodice, skirt and sleeves, and the cross grain lines at the bust line, hip line and sleeve cap;

(d) stitching the trial dress pieces into a trial dress along the basic standard pattern seam lines, sewing all darts so as to protrude on the outside of the garment, but leaving the skirt and sleeves separate from the bodice;

(e) fitting the trial dress to the individual non-standard figure making such corrections in the cut lines, seam lines, dart positions and other dimensions and configurations as are necessary to ensure conformity of the trial dress to the contours to the individual figure;

(f) unpicking the trial dress pieces which have been modified;

(g) overlaying the modified trial dress pieces with a clear flexible film;

(h) marking seam lines, dart lines, and fold lines on the clear flexible film according to the analogous lines on the modified trial dress pieces to form pattern perfecting elements;

(i) overlaying high fashion standard size pattern elements with analogous pattern perfecting elements;

(j) marking the high fashion standard pattern elements according to the pattern perfecting element lines;

(k) cutting dress fabric according to a corrected high fashion pattern; and

(l) sewing the dress fabric pieces together to form a dress which is fitted to the individual non-standard figure and which retains the fashion of the standard size pattern.

3. The process of claim 2 wherein the step of marking the seam lines and dart lines comprises placing pressure sensitive tape strips of one color on the clear flexible film and the step of marking the fold lines comprises placing pressure sensitive tape strips of another color on the clear flexible film, said tape strips being removable and replaceable for correcting the pattern perfecter elements to changes in the individual figure.

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