

Measurement Sheet

Circumferences:

Natural Waist Circumference _____

Full Hip Circumference _____

High Hip Circumference _____

*Cylinder Circumference _____

Half _____

Half _____

Half _____

*Half _____

Horizontals:

*Front Waist Arc _____

*Back Waist Arc _____

Front Hip Arc _____

*Back Hip Arc _____

Front High Hip Arc _____

Back High Hip Arc _____

Verticals:

*Center Front Waist to Hip _____

Side Seam Waist to Hip _____

*Center Back Waist to Hip _____

Side Seam Hip to Knee _____

Side Seam Hip to Floor _____

Skirt Block Length _____

Darts:

*Side Seam Dart Intake _____

Side Seam Dart Length/Depth _____

Front Dart Intake _____

Front Dart Length/Depth _____

Back Dart Intake _____

Back Dart Length/Depth _____



Intake

Body

Length/
Depth

* indicates the most important #s for your first draft

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Bonus Measurement Taking Tips

Over the next few pages, I'll offer some detailed bonus tips about measurement taking (which is often the hardest part both mentally and physically). *In addition to your own notes and all the videos*, I hope this helps you move confidently through this process and onto the next fun steps!

- 1) Remember that this 'body mapping' process is not an exact science. Bodies are moving changing things and taking "accurate measurements" is pretty much impossible. Just the act of breathing can change the number! Relax and don't take the numbers super seriously. Getting close (the nearest 1/2") is a great goal (especially if you don't love math.)
- 2) Measurement taking is only the *first step* toward getting a good fit. The custom process involves constantly learning from and improving upon the original information. We'll continue to refine what is recorded on the measurement sheet during the drafting and fitting processes. Trust your instincts, give it your best shot, and don't worry about being perfect! **Custom sewing is a trial and error process.** Errors are as common as successes (and often teach you more...)

Elastic/Tape Placement and Circumferences:

Natural Waist Elastic/Circumference: Finding your natural waist can often be a challenge.

Everyone is encouraged to find *what feels natural to them*, but if you are looking for my advice:

The Natural Waistline is the dividing line between your upper body and your lower body. It falls *somewhere in the soft bits between the top of your pelvis and the bottom of your ribcage.*

Tying elastic around your middle and moving your body a bit until it settles into your smallest part, will sometimes reveal your natural waistline. If not, observing photos of yourself can really help!

It is often easiest to visually locate *the back*. The center back of your natural waistline will correspond with "the small of your back", the most indented point of your spine before it starts angling up toward your shoulders and down toward your bum.

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The sides of your natural waistline are likely in line with your elbows. You can also often reveal it by putting your hands somewhere *in the soft bits above your pelvis and below your ribcage* while moving your upper body from side to side and keeping your lower body still.

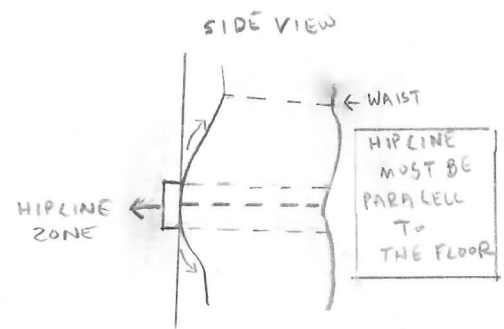
The center front point of your natural waistline is often a little more elusive. Try to find an indent (which could be teeny tiny). Many front indents can be found just above your belly button. Squish around and see if you can find one! It is possible that your front waistline will be in line with the "small of your back" making it parallel to the floor (how standardized patterns are often drafted), but it is also possible that your natural waistline has a tilt! Reference the bonus video on "Tilted Waistlines" for more waistline tips.

While the placement of the waistline elastic is important and should remain in place throughout the measurement taking process, the Natural Waist Circumference is *only recorded as a reference* to help us investigate if things get wonky. The ***Front Waist Arc** and ***Back Waist Arc** numbers, which are also taken along this line of elastic, will be more helpful when drafting your custom block.

Full Hip Elastic/Circumference: The full hip circumference is where you'll add your hip elastic.

The most important job of the hip line / hip elastic is to be parallel to the floor! Think of it more of a 'horizontal balance line' than anything else. We only record the hip circumference measurement's number as a reference. The ***Back Hip Arc** and the ***Cylinder Circumference** numbers will be the most helpful when drafting this area of your block.

To decide where to add this important "horizontal balance line", look at yourself (or a photo of yourself) from the side. There will be a section of your bum that is relatively flat and/or protrudes the most before curving up to your waist or down to your legs. Anywhere in this area is a great place for your hip line / hip elastic. If your thighs are fuller than your bum, you could move the elastic to the lower portion of this zone but don't place it underneath the curve of your bum.



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***Side Seam Placement:** The placement of the side seam is a bit arbitrary, however it's job is to be perpendicular to the floor / hip line / hip elastic and to divide the body front and back. Drawing a rectangle/cylinder on a photo of your body (like I do in the "Darts and Seams" video and in the image below) can help! Using the photo, you can play around with your personal vertical front-to-back dividing line and where to place your Side Seam Tape. Dividing the rectangle in half is often a good choice. Other good advice I've heard is to use the back of your ear and/or the front of your ankle as your custom side seam guideline.

High Hip Circumference (and its Arcs): are for reference only. Don't sweat these numbers. The Cylinder Circumference will take care of this area when drafting.

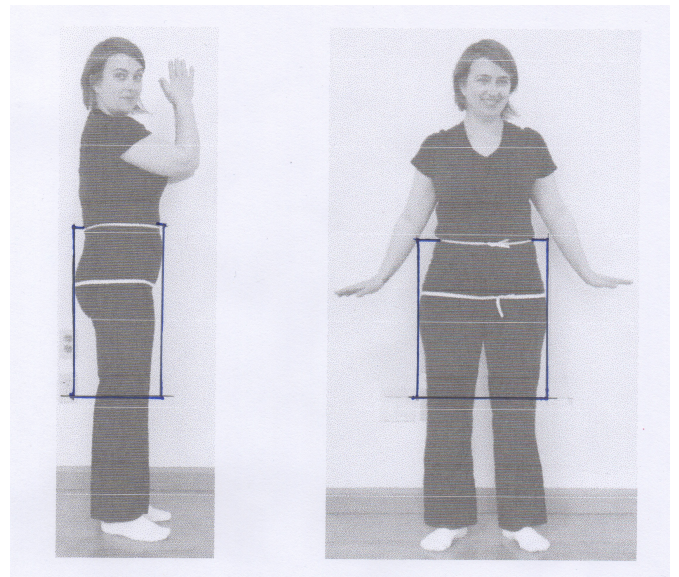
*** Cylinder Circumference (and its Half):** This is probably the most important measurement of all! It sets the volume for the draft and how much paper/fabric is included in it. The Half Cylinder is one of the first measurements that we add to the draft and many of the following measurements and drafting steps depend on the Cylinder being correct first.

To understand the Cylinder, rewatch the "Circumferences" video. In this video, the Cylinder is represented by the black oval that fits around all the colored ovals from above. The paper cylinder's job is to wrap all the way around your lower body, just touching all your most protruding parts (belly, hips, and bum) while remaining parallel to the floor (just like the well-fitting rectangles.) To understand how the Cylinder Circumference is taken, rewatch "Circumference Measurements" video starting at ~6:30. If your paper is fitting askew or gaping open, you haven't quite found it yet!

My paper cylinder fits me like this rectangle ->

A former Skirt Skills member found it easier to find her Cylinder Circumference while using stiffer paper that was longer than the (arbitrary) 18" I suggested. If you are having trouble, give her ideas a try!

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Horizontals:

***Front Waist Arc, *Back Waist Arc, and *Back Hip Arc:** These measurements will be important while drafting (especially the *Back Hip Arc.) These measurements are taken along the corresponding elastic from the centerline of the body out to the middle of your side seam tape. Make sure that your two elastics and side seam tape are in place when noting these measurements. The other Arcs are only used for reference.

Verticals:

***Center Front Waist to Hip and *Center Back Waist to Hip:** These measurements will be important while drafting. They are taken from the waist elastic straight down to the hip elastic in the corresponding areas. Make sure your elastics are in place when noting these measurements.

Side Seam Waist To Hip: This measurement will most likely fall somewhere in between (or very close to) the other two Waist to Hip measurements. If you get something else, double check all three Waist To Hip measurements more carefully before moving forward.

Side Seam Hip to Knee: This measurement is taken from the hipline elastic *to the center of the knee*. Though it may not be 'attractive' as a 'hem', remember that **a block is a tool (not a skirt) with no design features or personal preferences included**. It is nice to have *the center of the knee* as an anatomical reference point when later creating skirts with hems that are both shorter and longer. This measurement is one of the easiest to adjust in a fitting, so don't sweat the accuracy. The Side Seam Hip to Floor measurement is for your reference only.

Darts:

In the videos, I show you one way to measure your own custom darts using a Combination Square with a level. I think this is one of the best ways to grasp the concept of what we are measuring, but it can be challenging physically. Hopefully the following dart tips will help!

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Dart Intakes: The most important of all the dart measurements is the ***Side Seam Dart Intake**. This one measurement will help with the shaping of your personal side seam and (in conjunction with other info already drafted) will determine your **Front Dart Intake** and **Back Dart Intake** (which are recorded only for reference).

Dart Lengths: If you are having trouble determining dart lengths with the tool, using a photo and eyeballing the custom lengths while drafting can work just as well as numbers. Take photos of yourself and draw in your custom darts like I do at in the "Darts and Seams" video starting at ~5:10. When we get to the dart portion of the block drafting process, you can use the photos to help determine where your custom darts end in relation to other guidelines already on the draft (such as the waistline and hipline). You can then continue to refine and adjust your guesstimates on your body during your fitting.

Is lack of body shaping keeping you from measuring a dart somewhere? In the videos, I demonstrate taking the front and back dart measurements at the center front and the center back of the body. Yet, this is rarely where you'd place a dart! You might be able to find your elusive dart by moving the tool across the body. Can you measure a dart (even if it is teeny tiny) anywhere else along the waist elastic? If not, consider adding a small dart anyway (say 1/2" intake and a couple of inches in length) which can later be tested and refined to your body during your fitting. Even if you aren't curvy, a small dart could help keep your skirts comfortably anchored in place.

I hope this isn't TMI (Too Much Information)! This bonus measurement guide was created to answer some frequently asked questions and to offer an extra helping hand.

Relax, give it your best shot, and soon enough you'll be ready for the next step!

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