

Seam Placement & Arc Measuring Guide

for creating your custom skirt block

Tips for taking **any** measurement:

Before using your flexible measuring tape to record the number data from your body onto your measurement sheet:

- Make sure your elastics are in place (see placement lesson and Guide).
- Stand in front of a mirror in your neutral relaxed posture.
- The nearest 1/2" or cm is perfect. Resist the urge to get more specific.
- Err on the side of too roomy/long over too tight/short.
- Try each measurement a couple of times to double check your best guess.
- Do your best, knowing you'll have future opportunities to review, revise and refine the data.

Vertical Guidelines:

Our Arcs are measured along half of the body in reference to our **Side Seam, Center Front Seam, and Center Back Seam**. So first, we need to locate these vertical guidelines on the body.

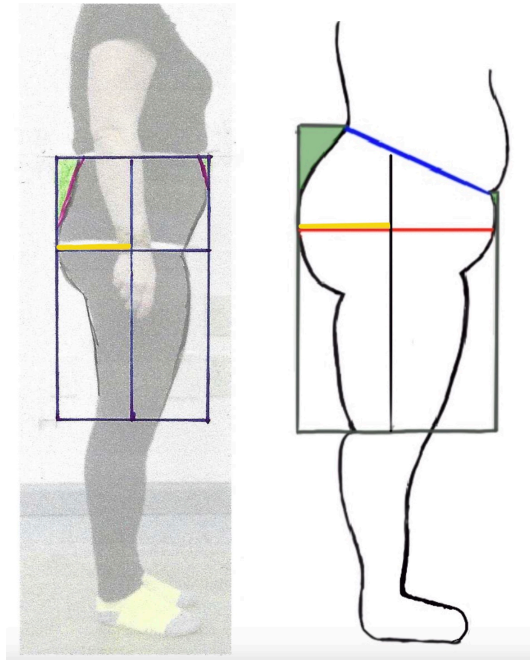
Finding your Side Seam on your body via your Back Hip Arc:

You may recall that the most important measurement for our blocks is likely the Cylinder Circumference. It sets the volume of the draft and how much paper/fabric is included.

The second most important measurement is likely the **Back Hip Arc**. When following my drafting steps, this number will set the placement of the side seam. We will build the volume distribution and custom shaping of the front and back draft based on the side seam's placement.

Try Creating a Balanced Block:

The best starting point for finding your ideal side seam placement is to locate the center of your cylinder when viewed from the side. This offers a **balanced block**.



To test this theory on the body, we will try to replicate the exercise of evenly dividing the Cylinder on the photo. (See *previous Guide*.)

Since we are only drafting for half of our body, we will only be using the *Half Cylinder* measurement when drafting. The center of the *Half Cylinder* is the *Quarter Cylinder*.

In theory, repeating your *Quarter Cylinder* as your *Back Hip Arc* will reveal your balanced side seam placement.

The measurement for the *Back Hip Arc* follows the horizontal hip elastic from the center back to the side seam.

Yellow line = Back Hip Arc & Quarter Cylinder (2D)

If our hunch is correct that our *Quarter Cylinder* is a good match for our side seam placement, placing the zero end of the measuring tape at the Center Back of the hip elastic and following it over to the side of the body until it reaches our *Quarter Cylinder* measurement will reveal your balanced side seam placement along the hipline.

Put a piece of tape or pin on the elastic right at the number of your **Quarter Cylinder** (or at the nearest 1/2" or 1 cm).



To **observe and double check this placement**, stand relaxed with your pelvis squared to the side of your mirror and:

- hang a yardstick or plumb bob at the mark to visualize the line.
- reference your Photo Tool's balanced side seam to visually compare what you've drawn to the the mark on your body. It can often be easier to visualize and locate flat- rather than in 3D.
- A great side seam placement is often one that points straight down to the front of the ankle, and if continued straight up, would hide under the armpit.

If your Quarter Cylinder doesn't seem like a good match for your side seam placement, consider revisiting and possibly revising the number data of your *Cylinder Circumference*. A new-and-improved overall circumference could offer a better *Half* and *Quarter*, as well as a better *Back Hip Arc* and a better Side Seam placement. *This could be an excellent discovery!*

If you decide not to repeat your Quarter Cylinder as your Back Hip Arc (which will create an unbalanced block), do your best to make the changes based on your anatomy- not your style. *(You can change the placement later in your patterns.)* Or share your photos with me! I'd love to offer another set of eyes.

Marking the Side Seam:

Once you've decided on your best guess for your Side Seam placement at the hipline, use a strip of tape to add a straight vertical line on your body between the hipline elastic and the waistline elastic.

The goal is for the line to be **perpendicular to the floor, when standing in a neutral relaxed posture**.

Consider using a plumb bob or long ruler to double check your work.



Finding your Center Front and Center Back:

On most bodies, the **Center Front** will be on the same vertical plane as your **belly button** and your **Center Back** will match the vertebra of your **spine**. Feel free to use those anatomical references as you measure your Arcs.

If your body has left/right asymmetry, it is possible that the center of your front Cylinder may *not* be in line with your belly button and your Center Back may *not* be in line with your spine. Observing your Photo Tool could help you locate and potentially customize your placement now. Otherwise, *do your best*. The fitting will offer more opportunities to play around and fine-tune your centers, if needed.

Arc Measurements:

As you measure your Arcs, **be consistent** about whether you are measuring from the front, back, or middle of your Side Seam tape.



Back Hip Arc: Place the zero end of your measuring tape at the Center Back of your hipline elastic. Measure along the elastic to the Side Seam tape. The nearest 1/2" or 1 cm can be recorded as your *Back Hip Arc*.

Front Hip Arc: Place the zero end of your measuring tape at the Side Seam mark on your hipline elastic. Measure along the elastic to your Center Front. The nearest 1/2" or 1 cm can be recorded as your *Front Hip Arc*.

Note: *The Front Hip Arc is almost useless and will not be used when drafting. We will only reference this measurement as a way to double check some of the other measurements, if needed.*





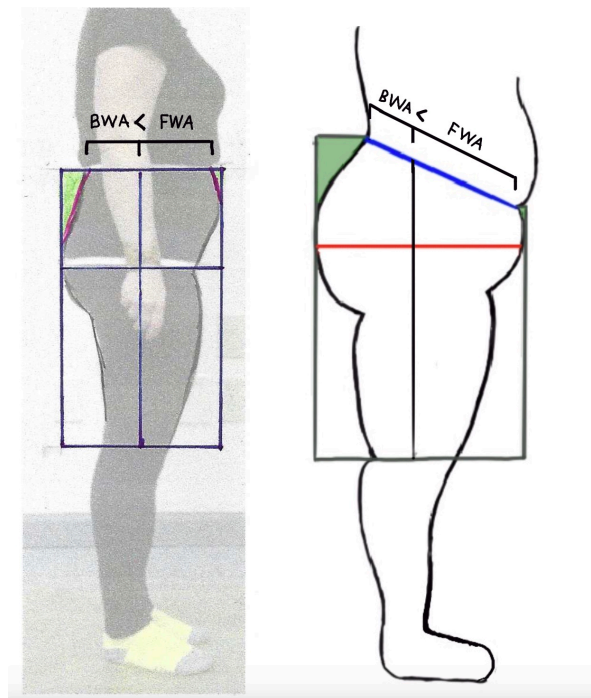
Back Waist Arc: Place the zero end of your measuring tape at the Center Back of your waistline elastic. Measure along the elastic to the Side Seam tape. The nearest 1/2” or 1 cm can be recorded as your *Back Waist Arc*.

Front Waist Arc: Place the zero end of your measuring tape at the Center Front on your waistline elastic. Measure along the elastic to your Side Seam tape. The nearest 1/2” or 1 cm can be recorded as your *Front Waist Arc*.



Double Checking the Number Data with the Visual Data:

On both Shelly and myself, we can observe (and measure) in our photo that the **Back Waist Arc is smaller than the Front Waist Arc**. Due to the nature of spines, this is very common (when the Side Seam is balanced).

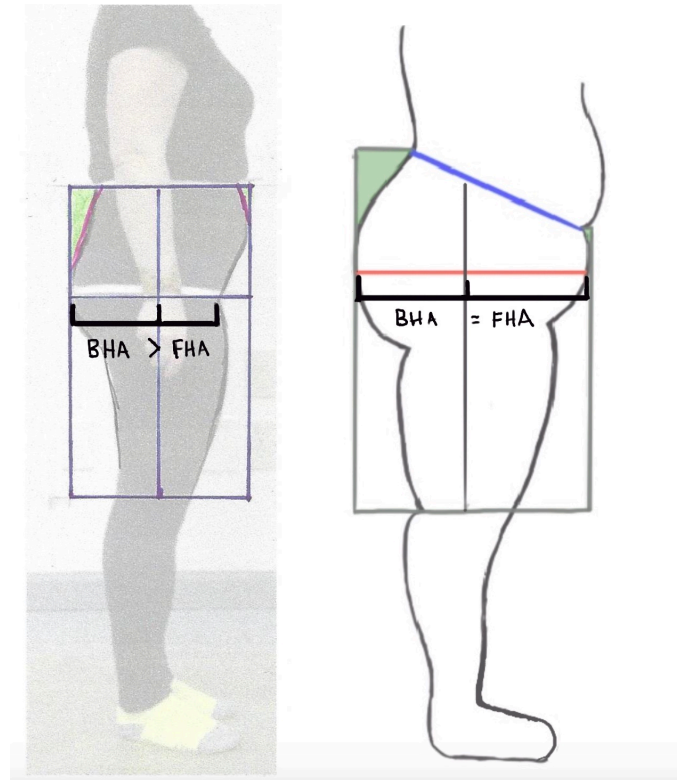


If your *Back Waist Arc* is larger than the *Front*, or if both measurements are the same, double check your work on your body and your photo. Adjust, if necessary.

On my photo, you can see (and measure) that **my Back Hip Arc is larger than my Front Hip Arc**. If your hipline elastic is tucked underneath a fuller front like mine, expect your *Front Hip Arc* to also be the smaller number (if your Side Seam is balanced).

On Shelly's photo, the two Hip Arc numbers are the same. This is because *her hipline elastic includes the fullest part of her front, as well as the fullest part of her bum*. The volume of her body at hipline level is divided evenly by her balanced side seam.

Make sense? Kinda nerdy and fun?



Double Checking the Number Data with other Number Data:

You can also look into whether your **Waist Arcs** are on the right track by comparing them to your **Natural Waist Circumference**.

Though we can't expect perfection, in theory, if you add your Back Waist Arc to your Front Waist Arc and double it, you will find a match to your Natural Waist Circumference. These are measuring the same thing in different ways.

(Back Waist Arc + Front Waist Arc) x 2 = ~Natural Waist Circumference

If there's a mismatch, *investigate!* It can often be easier to get an accurate number for the full circumference. So *when in doubt*, consider tweaking the Arcs.

I hope this helps you locate your vertical seams and gather the number data for your Arcs. Reach out if you have questions or puzzles to solve. *There's only a few more bits of number data to collect before you are ready to draft!*