

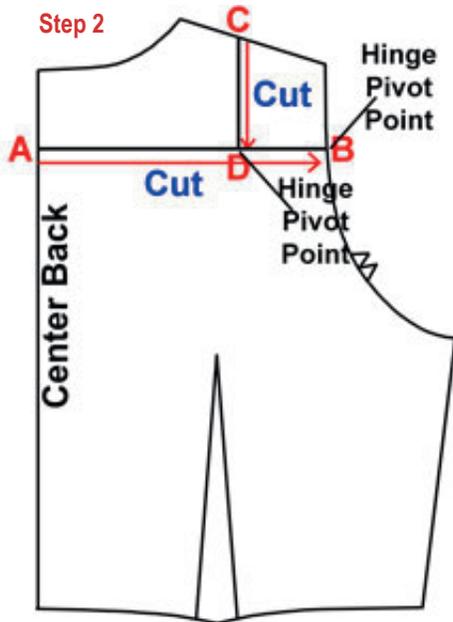
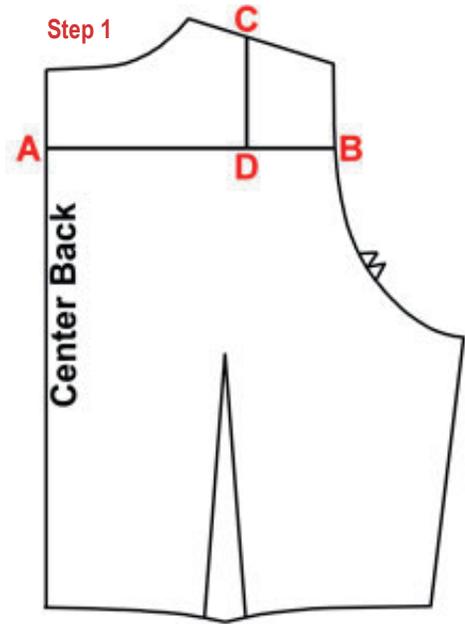
Adding a Shoulder Dart

Some of you may have rounding in your upper back or protruding shoulder blade and as a result, your bodice and shirt patterns would fit better if they had a shoulder dart. As we all know, the purpose of a dart is to shape a curved area of the body. For some of you, your upper back and shoulder may not appear substantially rounded, but adding this shoulder dart may benefit the fit of the back bodice.

Here is an easy technique for adding a shoulder dart to either the Dress Kit Bodice Back or to the Shirt Back pattern.

Step 1:

Draw line A to B as illustrated. This line should be at a level where the most rounding or protruding fullness is on your back. Then draw line C to D as shown. This line does not have to be at a right angle to A-B, but the angle that you choose will affect the final position of the dart therefore, it should be at a pleasing angle for your specific body shape. And, if you were to design a shoulder princess line, you'd want the shoulder dart to connect in a pleasing line toward the top of the waist fitting dart. You may need to sew a couple of tests to make sure you're pleased with the results.

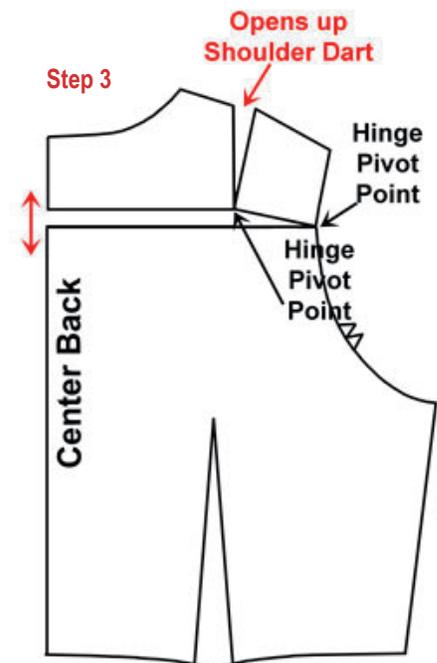


Step 2:

Cut from A to B and from C to D, leaving a paper hinge at the armscye point B and at point D on line A-B.

Step 3:

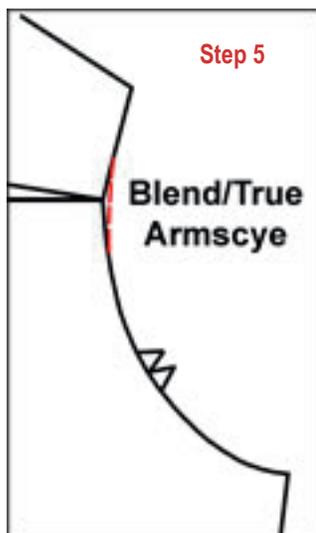
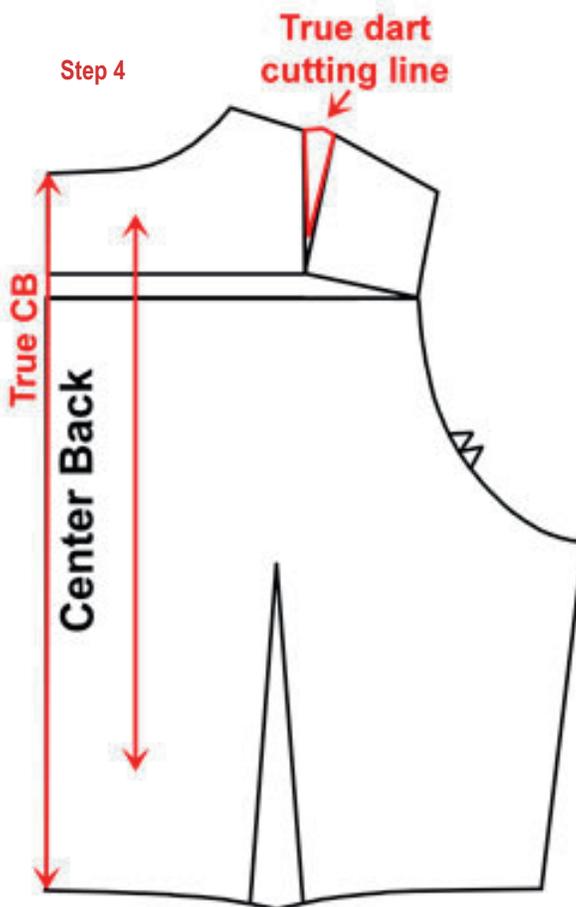
Spread the shoulder area of the pattern open as shown always maintaining the paper hinge points. This will open up a small dart shape in the shoulder seam line and will automatically lengthen CB. Often people with rounded, protruding shoulder blades also have some rounding at the upper back and this extra length will help the bodice back to sit more comfortably. Additionally, depending on how rounded your entire back is, you may also want to add a CB seam which is shaped/curved to suit your body contours. For Rounded Back instructions, see Page 14 #3 in the Minor Tune-Ups section of the Dress Kit Instruction Book.



Step 4:

The more you open/lengthen CB that results in a wider dart, the more the upper and lower center back line becomes 'jagged'. To maintain CB on the fold of the fabric, simply draw/true a new CB from the back neck point to the waist point. Also re-establish a parallel straight of grain marking. Depending on how accurately you measured your CB waist length and where this length is actually needed, you may now need to shorten CB at the waist and gently true from CB to the side seam.

Also, true the dart cutting line (shoulder line) by backing the opening with tracing vellum, fold the dart into stitching position, then cut along the shoulder line. When the dart is opened up, it will automatically give you the correct cutting line for the shoulder seam line.



Step 5:

This technique for adding a shoulder dart shouldn't distort the armscye significantly. However, if the armscye appears too angled at the armscye hinge pivot point, make sure to blend/true to create a smooth curve.