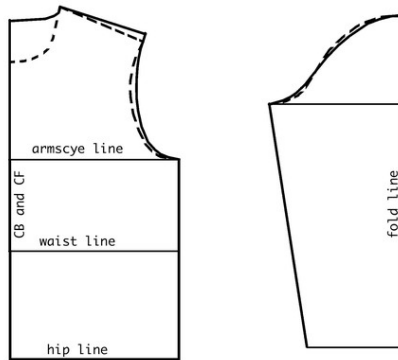


Drafting the Easy-Fitting OverGarment Block

By: gedwoods

<http://www.burdastyle.com/techniques/drafting-the-easy-fitting-overgarment-block>



These instructions lead to a dartless block for a loose-fitting women's overgarment (for example, a tunic) in a non-stretch fabric. I shall follow these instructions up with detailed instructions for making a tunic (actually, an Indian kameez) in the Projects section, but the block can be used in many different ways and this just illustrates one use of the block. Indeed, under a slight variation the block can also be used to make a jacket (I shall indicate what changes need to be made to support that use). This block is particularly easy to draft as there are no calculations regarding darts or bust size to make. Note that this block, like many of the others, is heavily inspired by the blocks published by Winifred Aldrich (see Winifred Aldrich, "Metric Pattern Cutting for Women's Wear", 5e ed., Blackwell Publishing: Oxford, 2008, 215 pp.), although I make a point to embellish my instructions with additional points I have discovered through experience, and also provide equivalent Imperial measurements to complement the metric ones.

Step 1 — Drafting the back neckline - 1

O
A

Locate your origin point (point O) near the top left corner of your sheet of paper. Draw a straight line downwards and measure off 3 cm (1 & 3/8"). We call this point "A", it is the bottom of the back neckline. Note that the line from point "O" to point "A" is a construction line, not part of the final garment outline, and should therefore be drawn in lightly.

Step 2 — Drafting the back neckline - 2

O B
A

Measure horizontally from point O to the right a distance of one fifth of the NECK size plus 0,4 cm (1/8"), and mark this point (point "B"). The marks where the back neckline meets the shoulder seam. The NECK size can be obtained by direct measurement, or you can use a one of the following measurements for the standard sizes : XS : 34 cm (13&1/4"), S : 35,5 cm (13&7/8"), M : 37 cm (14&1/2"), L : 38,5 cm (15"), XL : 40 cm (15&5/8"), and extend them appropriately for larger sizes (XXL : 41,5 cm (16&1/4") and XXXL : 43 cm (17")). Note that standard sizes are used here as this is a loose-fitting garment with more ease and the more precise adjustments found for other blocks are not necessary. Note also that the line from point "O" to point "B" is a construction line - it does not form part of the final block outline. Therefore draw this line in lightly.

Step 3 — Drafting the back neckline - 3



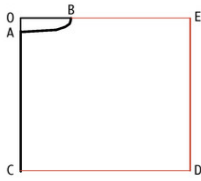
Now draw a shallow curve between points A and B, as shown. This is the back neckline.

Step 4 — Drafting the armscye line - 1



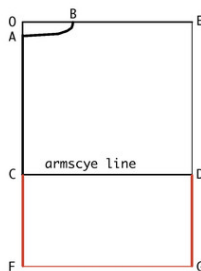
Measure downwards from point A a distance of the ARMSCYE DEPTH plus 4 cm (1 & 5/8 ") and mark this location (point "C"). The ARMSCYE DEPTH can be measured directly (distance from the neckline to the underarm) or can be assumed based on the standard sizes XS : 19,8 cm (7 & 3/4"), S : 20,4 cm (8"), M : 21 cm (8 & 1/4"), L : 21,6 cm (8 & 1/2"), XL : 22,2 cm (8 & 3/4"), and extend them appropriately for larger sizes (XXL : 22,8 cm (9") and XXXL : 23,4 cm (9 & 1/4")). If you wish to make a jacket, then add 6 cm (2 & 3/8") instead of 4 cm to the ARMSCYE DEPTH measurement. This line forms part of the final block outline and should be drawn in more heavily than the construction lines.

Step 5 — Drafting the armscye line - 2



Measure to the right of point C a distance of one quarter of the bust measurement plus 4 cm (1 & 5/8"), mark the point (point "D") and then draw in the line that goes straight upward from here to the point "E", level with the point "O". If you do not have a bust measurement, but know the standard size for the planned garment, assume the following values for the bust measurement : XS : 76 cm (30"), S : 82 cm (32"), M : 88 cm (34"), L : 94 cm (36"), XL : 100 cm (38"), and extend them appropriately for larger sizes (XXL : 106 cm (40") and XXXL : 112 cm (42")). Now draw in the line from point "O" to point "E". Note that all these lines are construction lines that do not form part of the final garment outline - therefore draw them in lightly. If you are interested in making a jacket, add 7 cm (2 & 3/4") instead of 4 cm to the initial distance (one quarter of the bust measurement).

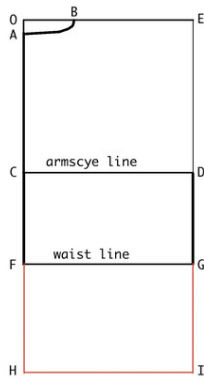
Step 6 — Drafting the waist line



Measure the distance from the neckline to the waist, downward from point "O" and mark this point (point "F"). If you want to use the standard sizes, use the following measurements for the NECK-TO-WAIST distance - XS : 39,8 cm (15&1/2"), S : 40,4 cm (15&3/4"), M : 41 cm (16"), L : 41,6 cm (16&1/4"), XL : 42,2 cm (16&1/2"), and extend them appropriately for larger sizes (XXL : 42,8 cm (16&3/4") and XXXL : 43,4 cm (17")). Otherwise, use the NECK-TO-WAIST distance

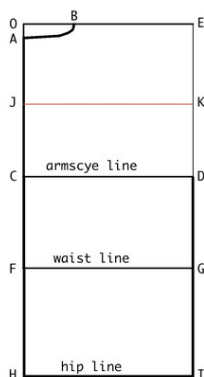
measured directly of the wearer's body. Draw across and mark point "G" directly below point "D" and draw upward to point "D". The horizontal line is the WAIST LINE. The two vertical lines are both parts of the final block outline.

Step 7 — Drafting the hip line



Measure downwards from point "C" the distance of the WAIST-TO-HIP measurement and mark the point (point "H"). If you do not have a WAIST-TO-HIP measurement but know the standard size for the garment you plan to make, use the appropriate measurement from the following : XS : 19,8 cm (7&3/4"), S : 20,2 cm (7&7/8"), M : 20,6 cm (8"), L : 21 cm (8&1/8"), XL : 21,4 cm (8&1/4"), and extend them appropriately for larger sizes (XXL : 21,8 cm (8&3/8") and XXXL : 22,2 cm (8&1/2")). Now measure from this point across the width of the block to the point "I" directly below point "G" and connect points "I" and "G" with a line. All three of these lines are part of the final block outline and therefore may be drawn in more heavily. The horizontal line is the HIP LINE.

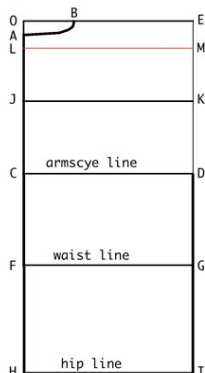
Step 8 — Drafting the armscye - 1



Mark the location halfway between points "A" and "C" (call it point "J"), and draw a light

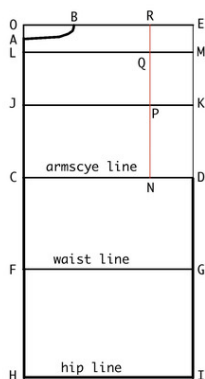
construction line horizontally across to the right size of the block. At the intersection point, call this point "K".

Step 9 — Drafting the Back Shoulder - 1



Measure half the distance between points "A" and "J" downward from point "A" and add 0,25 cm (1/8"). Mark this point (point "L") and draw in a light horizontal construction line to the intersection point with the right side of the block (mark the intersection point "M"). This line locates the bottom of the back shoulder seam.

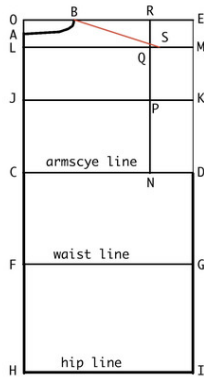
Step 10 — Drafting the armscye - 2



Measure one half the BACK size plus 2,5 cm (1") from point "C" to the right and mark this point (point "N"). If you do not have a measurement of the back, but do know the standard size your garment will have, use the appropriate value from the following list : XS : 31,4 cm (12&1/4"), S : 32,9 cm (12&7/8"), M : 34,4 cm (13&1/2"), L : 35,9 cm (14"), XL : 37,4 cm (14&5/8"), XXL : 38,9 cm (15&1/4"), XXXL : 40,4 cm (15&3/4"). Now draw a vertical line upward from point "N", passing across the line between points "J" and "K" (mark the intersection point "P"), and across the line

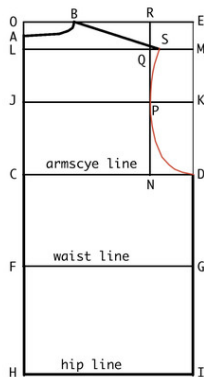
between points "L" and "M" (mark this intersection point "Q") until level with the origin (point "O") - call this point "R". This should be a light construction line. If you are planning on designing a jacket, add 4,5 cm (1 & 3/4") instead of 2,5 cm (1") to the initial measurement (the BACK size).

Step 11 — Drafting the back shoulder - 2



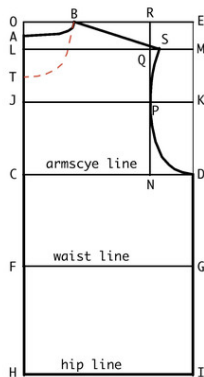
Measure 1,5 cm (5/8") to the right of point "Q" and mark this point "S". Connect points "B" and "S" with a heavy line - this is the back shoulder seam.

Step 12 — Drafting the back armscye



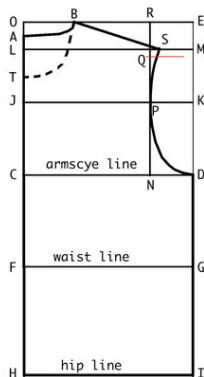
Using your French Curve, draw in a curved line between points "S", "P" and "D". If you don't have a French Curve, use a dinner plate (draw a small section of the curve, then slide the plate along and draw a new section - you'll need to practice to get this to work). This line is the armhole (armscye) seam and forms part of the final block outline - once you have worked out a satisfactory curve, you should pencil the line in more heavily.

Step 13 — Drafting the front neckline



Now mark the point "T" a distance of one fifth the NECK size plus 0,4 cm , down from the origin point "O". This is the bottom of the front neckline. Draw a curve in from point "T" to point "B". Note that we are drafting the front of the block "over the top" of the back of the block - you will need to recopy the basic block elements developed to this point onto a new piece of paper to separate the front and back blocks. In the diagram, the front block outline that differs from the back block outline is shown in dashed lines.

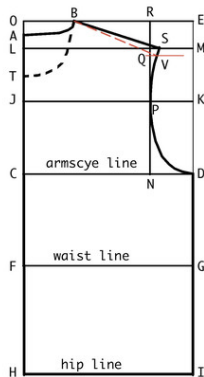
Step 14 — Drafting the front shoulder - 1



N.B. At this point in the development of the block, the shoulder and armhole seams are identical for the front and the back of the block. I have developed several easy-fitting overgarments without further differentiating the two block sections - that is, the only difference between the block sections in this case would be the neckline. However, Winnifred Aldrich in her book recommends a slight change between the front and the back block sections to get a better fit. For completeness, I include her additional modification as a variant on the block design, but I note that for many garments it may not be necessary to do this. If you decide not to pursue the variant, you may skip over the next two steps and go straight to Step 17. Variant : Draw in a horizontal line 0,75 cm (1/4")

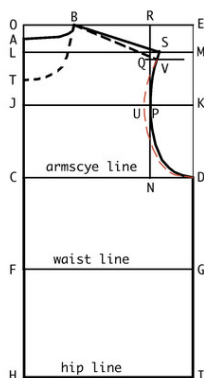
below the line between points "Q" and "M" - this is a construction line, so draw it in lightly.

Step 15 — Drafting the front shoulder - 2 (Variant section)



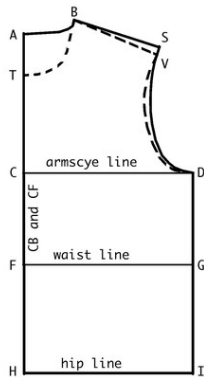
If you are drafting the shoulder seam variant, proceed, if not, skip down. For the variant, measure the back shoulder seam length (the distance between points "B" and "S"), and swivel this length down (using point "B" as a pivot) until it crosses the construction line slightly below the line connection points "Q" and "M". Mark the intersection point as point "V", and connect points "B" and "V" - this is shown in the diagram as a dashed line, as it corresponds to an additional change between the back and the front sections of the block. This line represents the front shoulder seam.

Step 16 — Drafting the front armscye (Variant section)



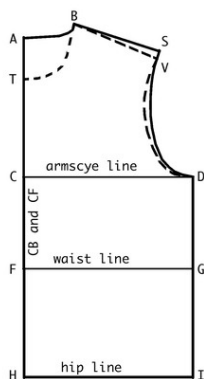
If you are drafting the shoulder seam variant, proceed, if not, skip to the next step. Measure and mark the location (as point "U") a distance of 0,75 cm (1/4") to the left of point "P". Now draw a curved line from point "V", passing through point "U" and arriving at point "D". This is the front armhole seam (shown as a dashed line in the diagram). If you are planning on making a jacket, locate the point "U" a distance of 1 cm (3/8") to the left of point "P", rather than 0,75 cm (1/4").

Step 17 — The overgarment block - back and front



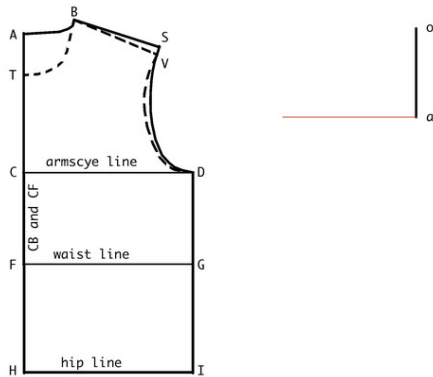
In the diagram, I've added in the indication for the Center Back and Center Front lines. This would be a good time to separate the two half blocks (the front block from the back block), by retracing the block outline of one (or both) of these onto additional sheet(s) of paper. Be careful to note that the dashed line(s) represent the FRONT block.

Step 18 — Drafting the sleeve cap - 1



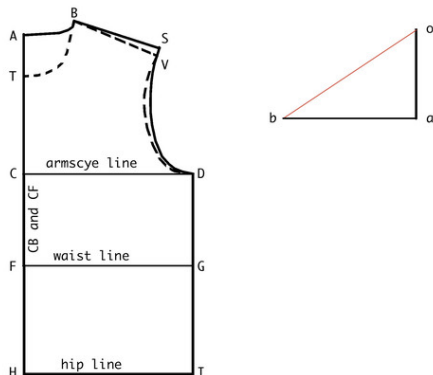
The origin point "o" for the sleeve is to the far right at the top. Draw a line vertically downwards from this point a distance equal to half the distance between points "A" and "C" plus 1 cm (3/8") and mark this point as "a". This represents the height of the sleeve cap.

Step 19 — Drafting the sleeve cap - 2



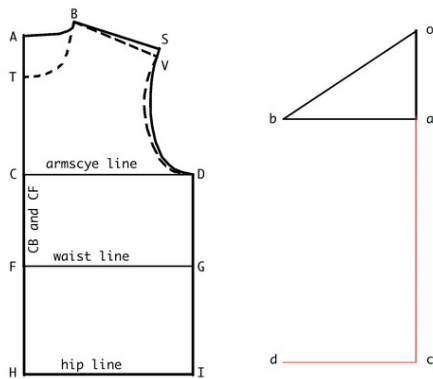
Draw in a horizontal line from point "a" to the left, a large enough distance to incorporate the projected half width of the sleeve.

Step 20 — Drafting the sleeve cap - 3



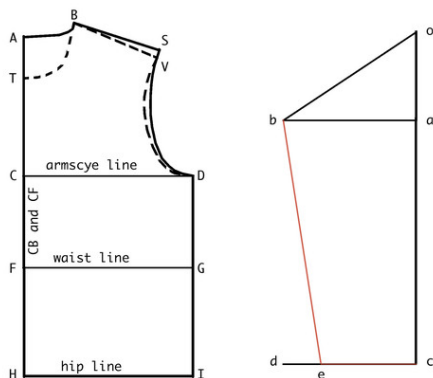
Using a ruler that pivots at point "o", for a length equivalent to the armhole seam (the curved length of the curve passing through points "S", "P" and "D" - measure this using a length of string or curving your flexible tape measure around the distance, being careful not to twist it), mark the intersection point (call this point "b") with the horizontal line passing through point "a". If you've done this right, the straight-line distance between points "o" and "b" will equal the curved distance between points "S" and "D".

Step 21 — Drafting the main body of the sleeve - 1



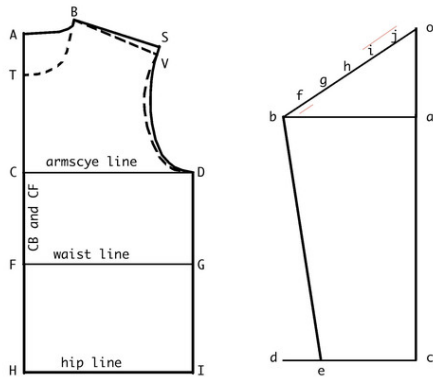
Now, extend the vertical line from the point "o" downwards until it's length is equal to the measured SLEEVE LENGTH of the wearer plus 1 cm (3/8"), and mark this point (point "c"). If you have not measured the SLEEVE LENGTH, you can estimate it from the standard sizes by selecting one of the following values : XS : 57,1 cm (22&3/8"), S : 57,8 cm (22&5/8"), M : 58,5 cm (22&7/8"), L : 59,2 cm (23&1/8"), XL : 59,9 cm (23&3/8"), XXL : 60,6 cm (23&5/8"), XXXL : 61,3 cm (23&7/8"). Draw a horizontal line towards the left from point "c", out to roughly the same distance as point "b" is from point "a".

Step 22 — Drafting the main body of the sleeve - 2



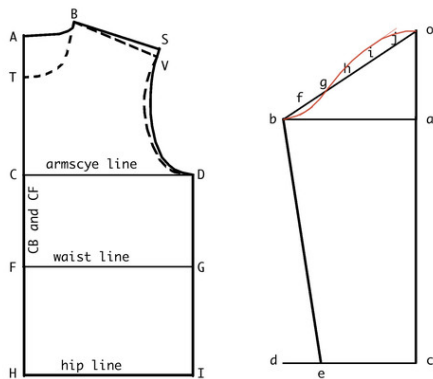
Measure from point "c" a distance equal to two thirds of the distance between points "a" and "b" and mark this point (point "e"). Now draw a straight line from point "b" to point "e".

Step 23 — Drafting the sleeve cap - 4



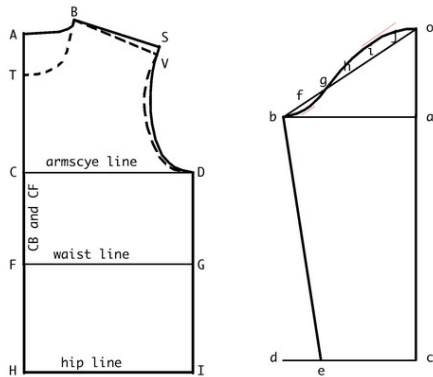
Divide the length of the line from point "o" to point "b" into six pieces and mark each separation point (indicated as points "f", "g", "h", "i" and "j" in the diagram). Also, draw in a short line parallel to the line between points "o" and "b" a distance of 0,5 cm (3/16") underneath the section of the line between points "b" and "g", and a second line parallel to the line between points "o" and "b" a distance of 1,5 cm (9/16") above the section of the line between points "g" and "o". These two lines are construction lines and should be penciled in lightly.

Step 24 — Drafting the back part of the sleeve cap - 1



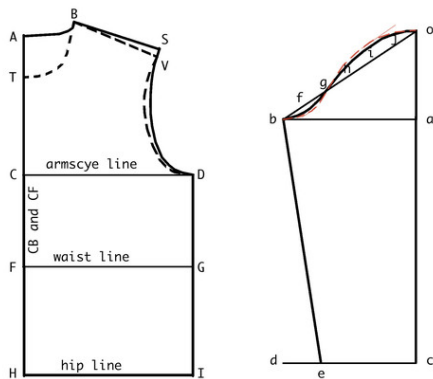
Draw a curve between point "b" and point "o" that touches the two tangent lines as shown, first below the straight line connecting "b" and "o" and then above it. This is the shape of the sleeve cap.

Step 25 — Drafting the back part of the sleeve cap - 2 (Variant section)



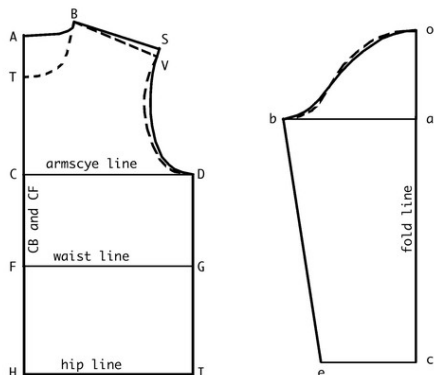
If you did not follow the shoulder seam variant that changes the front shoulder seam from the back shoulder seam in Step 14, you are finished the sleeve, and may skip down to the final step, Step 28. If, however, you followed the variant, you must now draft the modified sleeve cap shape. To do this, draw a second short parallel line between points "b" and "g" an additional 0,25 cm (1/16") below the first line, and draw a new parallel line between points "g" and "o" an additional 0,25 cm (1/16") above the line shown in the previous step.

Step 26 — Drafting the front part of the sleeve cap - 1 (Variant section)



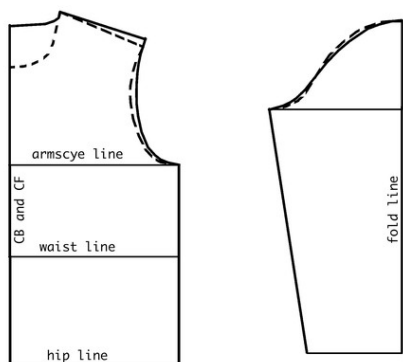
If you are not doing the shoulder seam variant, skip to Step 28. If you are doing the variant, draw a new curve between points "b" and "o" so that it touches the two new lines constructed in the previous step, in a manner similar to what you did for the first (back) sleeve cap.

Step 27 — Drafting the front part of the sleeve cap - 2 (Variant section)



If you did not do the shoulder seam variant, skip down to the next step. If you did the variant, you should note that the two half sleeves, for the front and the back, are joined at the fold.

Step 28 — The finished overgarment block



This completes the easy-fitting overgarment block. Note that the dashed lines correspond to the front block. If you didn't do the shoulder seam variant, the only front block line you should have is the neck line. If you haven't already, separate the front and back blocks by retracing each block onto a new sheet of paper. Note that these blocks are not quite finished for garment construction. Seam allowances will need to be added in, and other modifications may likewise be appropriate. If you want to see a garment made using this block, see my "Kameez tunic" under Projects (if it isn't posted yet, it will be in a couple of days). Good luck!
