
VINTAGE PATTERN FIT GUIDE

SPRING 2026 EDITION

[THREE-MEASUREMENT REFERENCE](#)[FULL BUST ADJUSTMENT CHECKLIST](#)[CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCE GUIDE](#)

Before cutting any vintage-inspired sewing pattern, three measurements tell you more than the number on the envelope. This guide walks you through sizing selection, full bust adjustment, and the construction sequence for spring 2026 structured silhouettes.

PATTERNS COVERED IN THIS GUIDE

- Charm Patterns Lamour Dress
- Charm Patterns Etoile Bodice (2026)
- Butterick B6582
- Vogue V1864
- Butterick 5882

THREE-MEASUREMENT SIZING REFERENCE

Select your pattern size from these three numbers, not the size label on the envelope.

<p>1 HIGH BUST</p> <p>Measure under your arms, across your upper chest just above your bust. This is your SIZE SELECT.</p> <p>SIZE SELECTION</p>	<p>2 FULL BUST</p> <p>Measure around the fullest part of your bust, keeping the tape parallel to the floor.</p> <p>FBA CALCULATOR</p>	<p>3 WAIST</p> <p>Measure your natural waist (the narrowest point when you bend sideways) relaxed, not pulled tight.</p> <p>EASE CHECK</p>
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FBA CALCULATOR

Full Bust minus High Bust = CUP DIFFERENCE

- Under 1 inch > No FBA needed. Use your high bust size.
- 1 inch (approx. B cup) > Standard FBA, one slash line.
- 1.5 inches (approx. C cup) > Standard FBA, additional ease.
- 2 inches (D cup) > FBA plus side seam adjustment.
- 2.5 inches or more > FBA plus rotating dart and side seam.

VINTAGE VS. MODERN SIZE COMPARISON

VINTAGE SIZE	FULL BUST (in)	MODERN EQUIV.	HIGH BUST (approx.)
12	34"	Size 6-8	32-32.5"
14	36"	Size 8-10	33-34"
16	38"	Size 12	35-36"
18	40"	Size 14-16	37-38"
20	42"	Size 18	39-40"

Measurements shown are approximate. Always verify against pattern's finished garment measurements, not the size label.

FULL BUST ADJUSTMENT CHECKLIST

Use this checklist before cutting any fitted bodice in a vintage-inspired pattern.

Before You Cut

- Take high bust measurement (above bust, under arms).
- Take full bust measurement (fullest point, tape parallel to floor).
- Take waist measurement (natural waist, relaxed).
- Subtract high bust from full bust to find cup difference.
- Select pattern size using HIGH BUST number only.**
- Note the cup difference for FBA reference (see page 2).
- Locate the bust dart on the pattern front bodice piece.
- Confirm pattern includes side seam and bust dart before cutting.

Muslin Fit Check

- Cut bodice front and back in cotton broadcloth.
- Sew side seams and shoulder seams. Baste only, no pressing yet.
- Put on the muslin over your normal undergarments.
- Check: do horizontal drag lines appear at bust? FBA needed.**
- Check: does the side seam hang straight? If it pulls forward, FBA needed.
- Check: does the armhole gap away from the body? Broad back or FBA issue.
- Mark all corrections with contrasting chalk before removing muslin.
- Transfer corrections to paper pattern before cutting final fabric.**

FBA Step-by-Step

01. Draw a vertical slash line from the bust point down to the hem notch.
02. Draw a second slash line from the bust point to the side seam, parallel to the grain.
03. Draw a pivot line from the bust point to the end of the bust dart leg.
04. Cut along the vertical slash line from the hem to the bust point. Stop. Do not cut through.
05. Cut the pivot line from the dart end to the bust point. Stop.
06. Cut the second slash from the bust point to the side seam. Stop 1mm from edge.
07. Spread the slash open by the amount of your cup difference (measured at the bust level).
08. Pin the spread piece onto paper. Redraw the dart legs to the original dart point.
09. True up the side seam and hem line across the slash opening.
10. Confirm: the added width equals the cup difference from your measurements.
11. Note any adjustment to the waistline or side seam from the spread.

KEY PRINCIPLE:

A full bust adjustment is not an advanced alteration. For anyone above a B cup, it is the default starting point on any fitted vintage-inspired bodice. The pattern was not drafted for that body at the size shown on the envelope. That is a structural fact, not a skill judgment.

CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCE GUIDE

Spring 2026 structured silhouettes. Steps are sequence-dependent. Do not skip or reorder.

Full Circle Skirt

1950s Casual

BEGINNER-INTERMEDIATE

Indie or Big 4 reproduction

- 1 **Machine:** Verify tension on project fabric scrap.
- 2 **Fabric:** Confirm cotton sateen or linen; press to remove fold lines.
- 3 **Cut:** Cut on grain. Use pattern weights, not pins, on tissue.
- 4 **Interface:** Fuse interfacing to waistband piece using pressing cloth.
- 5 **Seams:** Sew side seams directionally (waist to hem). Press open.
- 6 **Finish:** French seams or serged finish depending on fabric weight.
- 7 **Waistband:** Attach waistband. Understitch facing before turning.
- 8 **Hem:** Hang skirt 24 hrs before hemming. Hand-stitch or blind hem.
- 9 **Press:** Final press on tailor's ham for curved seam areas.

Structured Bodice Dress

1950s Formal

INTERMEDIATE-ADVANCED

Charm Patterns Lamour Dress / Etoile Bodice

- 1 **Machine:** Re-thread. Test on two layers of fashion fabric + underlining.
- 2 **Fabric:** ID fiber content. Test press on scrap for temperature and shrink.
- 3 **Underline:** Cut underlining pieces. Hand-baste to fashion fabric on all bodice pieces before any construction.
- 4 **Fit:** Take 3 measurements. Cut muslin. Fit on body. Mark corrections.
- 5 **Transfer:** Transfer muslin corrections to paper pattern. Re-cut if needed.
- 6 **Darts:** Sew and press all darts before crossing with any seam.
- 7 **Boning:** Attach boning channels to seam lines per pattern instruction.
- 8 **Bodice:** Sew bodice seams in order per pattern. Press each before crossing.
- 9 **Understitch:** Understitch all facings before turning to inside.
- 10 **Skirt:** Construct skirt separately. Attach to bodice at waist.
- 11 **Hem:** Hand-sew hem. Do not machine hem on silk or structured wovens.
- 12 **Final:** Press entire garment on tailor's ham with pressing cloth.

Wrap Dress / Blouse

1940s-1950s Daywear

BEGINNER-INTERMEDIATE

Vogue V1864 / Indie reproduction

- 1 **Machine:** Verify tension on project fabric scrap.
- 2 **Fabric:** Matte crepe, cotton lawn, or silk habotai only. No stretch.
- 3 **Cut:** Mark grain lines clearly. Cut directionally with grain.
- 4 **Staystitch:** Staystitch neckline and armhole curves before any seaming.
- 5 **Darts:** Sew and press all darts on bodice front.
- 6 **Seams:** Sew shoulder seams. Press open. Attach front facings.
- 7 **Understitch:** Understitch front facing and neckline before turning.
- 8 **Side seams:** Sew side seams. French seam on lawn or fine wovens.
- 9 **Sleeves:** Ease and set sleeves. Do not stretch the sleeve cap.
- 10 **Hem:** Press hem allowance up. Hand-stitch or machine blind hem.
- 11 **Ties:** Attach tie pieces. Reinforce at attachment point with bar tack.

THE RULE THAT APPLIES TO EVERY SILHOUETTE:

Press every seam before crossing it with another seam. Press every dart before cutting the next piece.

Pressing is construction, not finishing. Deferring it produces seams that will not lie flat regardless of later pressing.