

Simple Linen Shorts: Sizing and Cutting Guide

Companion to the free article and instruction guide on Sewing.com. Use with the pattern piece pages that follow.

Where These Measurements Come From

The body measurements below (waist, hip, inseam) are drawn from a published children's shorts and pants size chart (Lowland Kids, sizes 2T through 6/7). We did not invent or estimate these numbers. Every child measures a little differently, so if your child falls between two sizes, size up and take in the side seams rather than sizing down.

Size	Waist	Hip	Inseam
2T	19.5"	19.5"	13"
3T	20"	21.5"	14"
4T	21"	22.5"	15.5"
5T	21.5"	23"	17"
6/7	22"	24"	18.5"

Source: Lowland Kids published size chart, Kids Pants/Shorts category (lowlandkids.com/pages/size-charts).

How the Pattern Piece Is Drafted

This is a basic flat-pattern draft, not a custom fit. It uses a standard quarter-hip method common in beginner shorts patterns: the body measurement is divided by 4, then wearing ease and seam allowances are added. The formulas are shown below so you can recalculate for a size not listed, or for a child whose measurements fall outside this chart.

Measurement	Formula
Cut width (at hip)	$(\text{Hip} / 4) + 1" \text{ wearing ease} + 1" \text{ side seam allowances}$
Rise (waist to crotch point)	$(\text{Hip} / 4) + 1.25" \text{ ease} + 0.5" \text{ seam allowance}$
Finished leg length	$\text{Inseam} \times 0.35 \text{ (rounded to nearest } 1/4\text{'')}$
Cut leg length (below crotch)	$\text{Finished leg length} + 0.5" \text{ hem allowance}$
Waistband/casing allowance	1.5" added above the rise, for the elastic casing fold
Total cut height (outer edge)	$\text{Waistband allowance} + \text{Rise} + \text{Cut leg length}$

Do a quick tissue fit check before cutting your good fabric: pin the paper pattern pieces together and hold them up against your child, or pin them onto a cheap scrap of fabric first. Adjust the width at the side seam if needed. This takes two minutes and prevents the most common fit surprise.

Cut Dimensions by Size

These are the finished cut measurements for each pattern piece (Front and Back are cut identically for this simple, beginner-friendly draft; cut 2 of each, mirrored). All numbers are in inches and already include the ease and seam allowances from the formulas on the previous page.

Size	Cut Width	Rise	Cut Leg Length	Total Cut Height
2T	6 7/8"	6 5/8"	5"	13 1/8"
3T	7 3/8"	7 1/8"	5 1/2"	14 1/8"
4T	7 5/8"	7 3/8"	6"	14 7/8"
5T	7 3/4"	7 1/2"	6 1/2"	15 1/2"
6/7	8"	7 3/4"	7"	16 1/4"

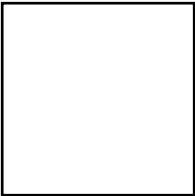
The highlighted row (4T) is the size drawn to true scale on the pattern piece pages that follow. If you're cutting a different size, use the Adjusting for Other Sizes instructions on the last page rather than the printed outline directly.

Want a Longer or Shorter Length?

This draft produces a mid-thigh, casual summer length. To make them longer, add to the cut leg length measurement before cutting; to make them shorter, subtract. Add or subtract the same amount on both the Front and Back pieces so the side seams still match up.

Simple Linen Shorts Pattern Piece -- Size 4T -- Page 1 of 2 (TOP)

Print at 100% / Actual Size (no "fit to page"). Front and Back are cut identically.



measure: must be exactly 1" x 1"

Cut Width: 7 5/8" (A)

(C) fold here for elastic casing

grainline (B)

(E) side seam

(D) rise: 7 3/8"

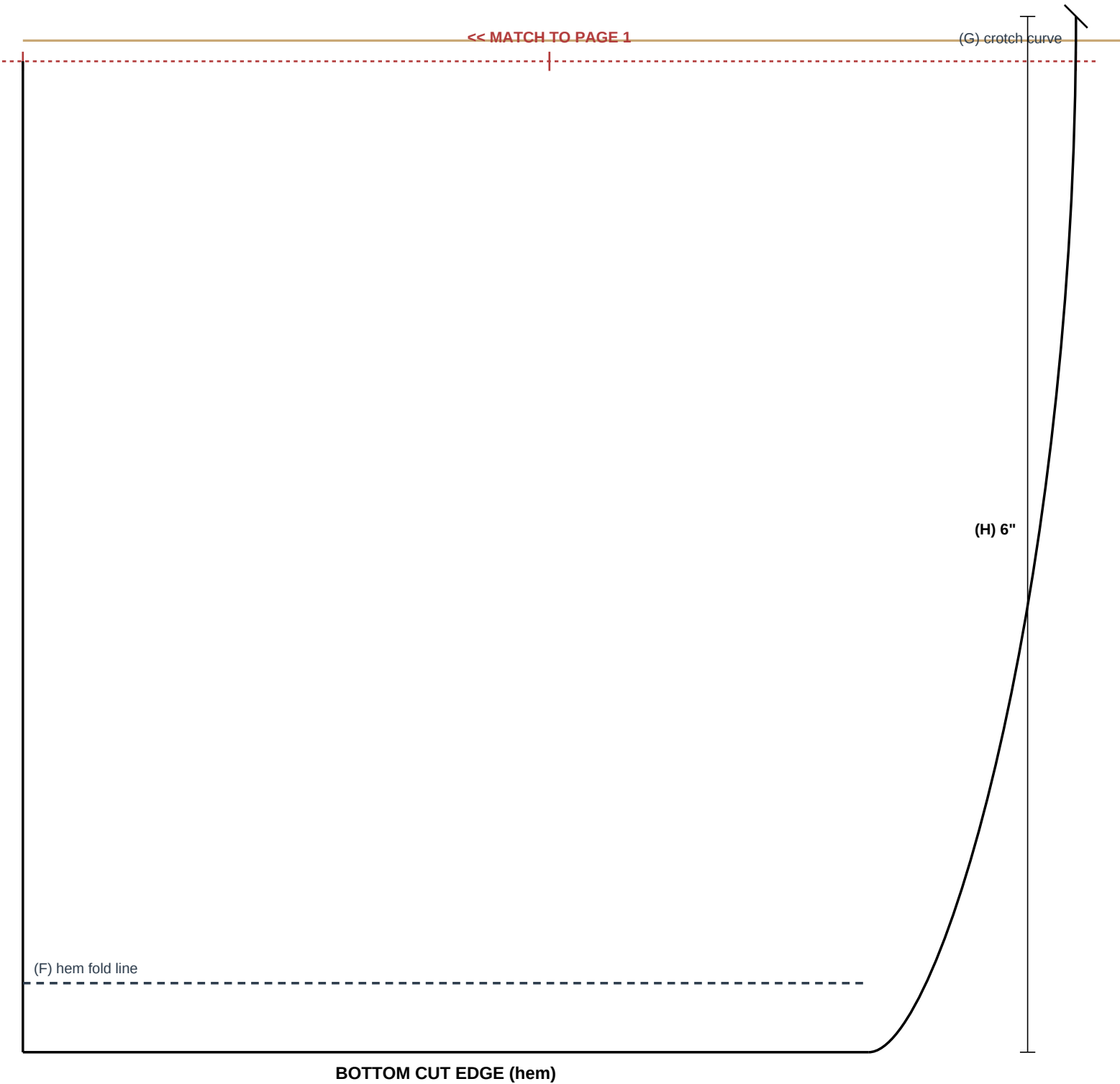
MATCH TO PAGE 2 (align registration ticks)

Key:

- (A) Cut width -- includes 1" wearing ease and 1" side/crotch seam allowance.
- (B) Grainline -- keep parallel to the fabric selvage when cutting.
- (C) Waistband fold line -- 1.5" down from the top cut edge.
- (D) Rise -- vertical distance from the fold line to the crotch point.
- (E) Side seam -- straight edge, 0.5" seam allowance already included.

Simple Linen Shorts Pattern Piece -- Size 4T -- Page 2 of 2 (BOTTOM)

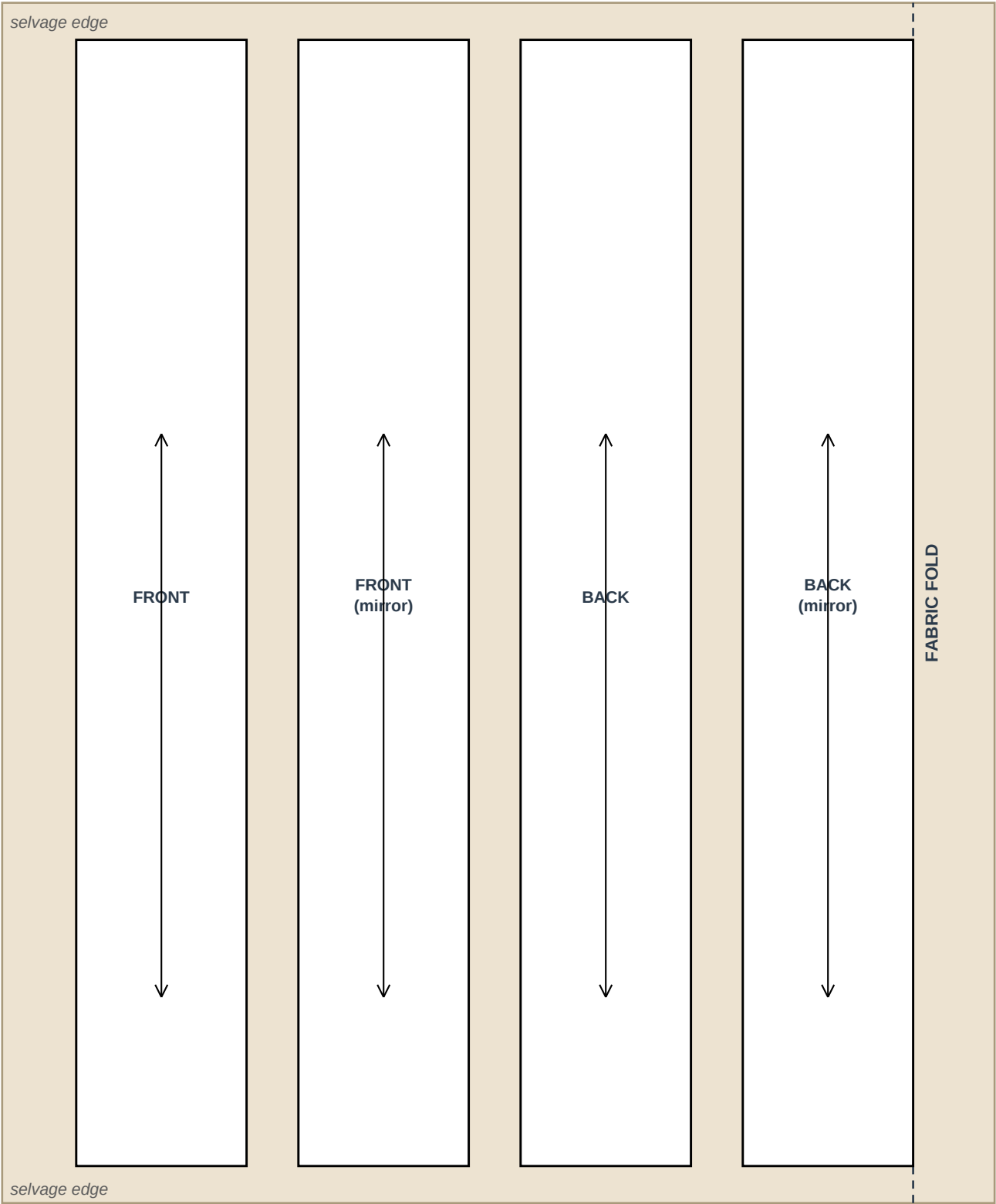
Match this page's registration ticks to Page 1's red line, then tape the pages together.



- Key:**
- (F) Hem fold line -- 0.5" up from the bottom cut edge.
 - (G) Crotch curve -- 0.5" seam allowance already included.
 - (H) Cut leg length -- crotch point to bottom cut edge, includes hem allowance.

Cutting Layout on Fabric

Schematic layout, not to scale. Based on 44" wide linen, folded selvage to selvage.



Leave at least 1" between pieces and 0.5" from the fold for seam allowance clearance.

Layout notes:

- Cut all four pieces with the grainline arrow running parallel to the selvage.
- The Front and Back pieces in this simple draft are the same shape; cut two of each, flipping the pattern piece over for the mirrored cut so you get a left and a right side.
- Linen frays fast once cut. Finish the raw edges of all four pieces before you start sewing.

Adjusting for Other Sizes

The printed diagram is drawn to true scale for size 4T only. For any other size, use the Cut Dimensions by Size table on page 2 of this guide and redraw the piece on pattern paper or freezer paper using these steps:

1. Draw a straight vertical line for the outer edge (side seam). Its length is the Total Cut Height for your size.
2. At the top of that line, mark the Cut Width measurement across to place the inner edge, and draw a second vertical line down from that point.
3. Measure down the inner line by the Rise measurement for your size. Mark this as the crotch point.
4. From the crotch point, curve the line outward and down to meet the bottom edge, ending about 1.5" in from the inner edge. Use the size 4T diagram as a shape reference. This curve does not need to be mathematically precise. A smooth, even curve is what matters.
5. Connect the bottom of the outer edge to the end of the curve to complete the hem edge.
6. Mark the waistband fold line 1.5" down from the top edge, and the hem fold line 0.5" up from the bottom edge, both parallel to their respective cut edges.

Check Your Print Scale First

Before cutting anything, confirm the pattern pages printed at true size. Print the pattern piece pages (page 3 and 4 of this guide) with your printer set to "Actual Size" or "100%," not "Fit to Page." Then measure the square on the pattern piece pages with a ruler -- it's labeled and must measure exactly 2 inches by 2 inches. If it doesn't, adjust your print settings and print again before cutting fabric.

Before You Cut Your Good Fabric

Cut your redrawn pattern piece out of scrap paper or an old pillowcase first and hold it against your child, or against a well-fitting pair of shorts they already own. This quick check catches most fit problems before they cost you any linen.

A Note on This Pattern

This is a basic flat-pattern draft built from a published children's size chart and a standard quarter-hip drafting formula, not a fitted or graded commercial pattern. It is intended to get a beginner sewist to a wearable, comfortable pair of shorts, not a precision fit. If you sew often for the same child, keep notes on any adjustments you make here so future projects go faster.