

Understanding Pattern Markings

Part 1

3.110

Page 1



SEW-lutions Guidelines

Your Guide
to
Successful
Sewing

© 2008 Sewing & Craft Alliance
Permission is granted to
educators and retailers to
reproduce these publications
as-is as a handout for
educational purposes only.
They may not be altered,
changed or added to in any
manner. No commercial or other
use, distribution, or
reproduction is permitted.

Get free projects and
more SEW-lutions
Guidelines at
www.sewing.org



Commercial patterns are printed with a universal system of symbols and lines designed to help you put the pattern pieces together quickly, easily and successfully. Every marking is there for a specific reason. Learning what they mean will make your cutting and sewing go more accurately.

Not every marking is on every pattern because some are specific to a certain style or construction technique. Layout and cutting markings don't need to be transferred to the fabric. Construction markings, on the other hand, are very helpful during the sewing process and transferring them to the fabric is a good idea.

General Information

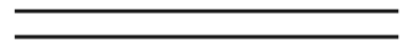
Every pattern piece has general information printed in the center. Each piece is numbered and the number indicates the order in which the pieces are sewn together. For example: Skirt Front 1 is joined to Skirt Back 2.

Other helpful information includes:

- Pattern brand and style number
- View letter (if there is more than one view)
- Size
- Name of the piece (skirt front, sleeve, pleat underlay, etc.) and its number
- Cutting information (cut one on fold, cut two, etc.)
- Lining/interfacing information (if applicable)

Pre-Layout Markings

Pattern Adjustment Lines: Two parallel lines that indicate where you can lengthen or shorten a pattern piece to maintain the original shaping. This should be done before layout.



Waistline Marking: A short solid line that indicates the natural waistline of the wearer. During tissue-fitting, if the waistline is not in the same position as the pattern marking, adjustment may be needed on the Pattern Adjustment Lines.

Layout Markings

Grainline: This heavy, solid line with arrows at both ends is usually in the center of the pattern, although it can appear anywhere within the pattern piece. Use it to ensure the pattern is positioned along the straight grain of the fabric, so that the garment or project hangs properly. Unless otherwise indicated, pin the pattern piece so the grainline is parallel to the fabric selvage.



Place on Fold Bracket: This solid line with arrows that point to the pattern piece edge, indicates that the piece should be positioned along the fabric fold. This usually applies to garments that do not have a center front or center back seam.



Understanding Pattern Markings, Part 1

3.110

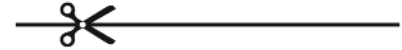
Page 2

Notches: Diamond or trapezoidal shaped symbols along the seamline are used both in pattern layout and during construction. When you are laying out the pattern pieces to match a plaid, stripe or large design, position adjoining notches so that the fabric at the seamlines (not the cutting lines) will match when the seams are sewn.

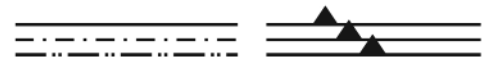



Cutting Markings

Cutting Line (single size): The outer line of the pattern piece provides a guide for cutting the fabric. The line sometimes has an illustration of tiny scissors on it.



Cutting line (multi-size): Multi-size patterns have several sizes printed on the same tissue and are sold in one envelope. Sometimes the multiple cutting lines are all solid, in which case it helps to highlight your size before cutting, and sometimes each cutting line is a slightly different line configuration.



Cutting line within the body of the pattern: When the design has a shorter view, there is often a cutting line for the shorter length within the pattern. 

For information on construction, placement and detail markings, see Guideline 3.111.