

# GUIDELINES FOR TRACING OUT PATTERNS



Tracing out patterns, preparing them for cutting and eventually sewing can be a time consuming process so it's **best to know the tricks and important points before you start**. Below is a guide to the process of tracing a pattern, preparing fabric, cutting and finally pinning your pieces ready to start sewing!

## START BY SELECTING A BLOCK

**Select a pattern block** that is closest to the garment you would like to make (so if you want to make a pair of shorts you might have a 'shorts block' available or use a 'trouser block' and then adjust it).

## TRACE PATTERN

**Cut off a large piece of patternmaking paper** and place the cardboard pattern block on top of it. Place a heavy item onto the cardboard block so it doesn't move, then trace around the block with a lightweight pencil.

## CHECK TRACING, DETAILS AND SEAM ALLOWANCES

**Check your pattern is traced accurately** and make sure marks like NOTCHES & DARTS are clearly visible. Then add a seam allowance around your pattern. This is done by using a ruler to mark out a 1cm border around the edge of the pattern (NOTE: the seam allowance can vary depending on the area).

## EVALUATE FABRIC

**Work out what fabric you will use**, if you have enough of it and how you might place the pattern pieces onto the fabric. REMEMBER the pieces need to be placed so the grainline on each pattern is aligned with the selvedge on the fabric. All pattern pieces grainlines should face the same direction.

# GUIDELINES FOR PINNING AND CUTTING OUT



## LAY PATTERNS ONTO FABRIC

**Lay your patterns pieces onto the fabric.** You must ensure the 'CUT DESCRIPTIONS' are followed... if you have a 'PAIR' listed for one pattern, that panel piece needs be on folded fabric so you have two pieces after cutting. For 'MIRROR' pieces, place your patterns on a fold. For SINGLE pieces there's no need to fold the fabric.

## TEACHER CHECK, THEN PIN AND CUT.

**Get your teacher to check the pieces are laid out well and you avoid fabric wastage.** Once your teacher gives you the green light, pin your pieces down and then cut out around each piece with fabric scissors.

## SAFETY CHECK

**Before you start sewing you need to check your machine and potential safety issues.** Make sure your machine is threaded correctly, is set to the right adjustments (eg. straight stitch is on) and your workspace is clear. Cords should be tucked away and there should be no water bottles on the table.

## PLAN OF ATTACK

**Before you start sewing you need to write a production plan - this will save you tears later!**

Do this by working out the basic construction that needs to be done first... eg. your side seams or center front seam or center back seam usually is done first. Sleeves are then added later and finer details like collars and buttons towards the end of your production process.

REMEMBER to work together, help others & look at the resources provided before you ask the teacher!

# KEY INFORMATION ON PATTERNS

**NAME** – EG. FLANNEL SHIRT

**PANEL TYPE** – EG. FRONT PANEL, BACK PANEL, SLEEVE, COLLAR ETC

**CB,CF,SS SEAMS** – THIS INCLUDES THE CENTER BACK (CB) SEAM, CENTER FRONT(CF) SEAM AND SIDE SEAMS (SS).  
THESE SIGNS INDICATE WHERE THE PANEL IS IN COMPARISON TO THE BODY.  
THEY ARE AN IMPORTANT REFERENCE PT.

**CUTTING INSTRUCTIONS** – THIS INCLUDES 'PAIRS', 'MIRRORED' PIECES (ON THE FOLD), 'SINGLE' PIECES AND ANY SORT OF LINING/FUSING.  
(SEE LABELLING OF PATTERNS WORKSHEET FOR DETAILS ON THESE TYPES OF CUTS).

**SIZE OF PATTERN** – SMALL, MEDIUM, LARGE  
OR SIZE 10, 12, 16 ETC

**NOTCHES AND GRAINLINE** – THESE ARE SHOWN AS SYMBOLS TO HELP YOU MATCH PIECES AND MAKE SURE THEY ARE ON THE CORRECT GRAIN