

How to Make Patterns for Sewing Your Own Clothes

1(5) Patternmaking Templates - Slopers

If you sew your own clothes, you may have considered making your own sewing patterns.

Where does making your own patterns begin? The best place to start is with a patternmaking template - which is seldom if ever, called "a Patternmaking Template". It may be called a basic block, a sloper, a fitter or something else that means a plain starting shape for adapting into patterns for making stylish garments.

There are several ways to get a patternmaking template, but we will consider the three easiest:

1. **Purchase** a basic sloper from a pattern catalogue.

Even patternmaking companies use slopers (templates) at the beginning of making patterns that appear in their catalogues. Pattern catalogues usually include a pattern that can be used as a template by you for styling other patterns as well.

Advantage: Readily available

Disadvantage: Available in standard sizes only

2. **Draft** a sloper for yourself **manually**

You could use a set of instructions and basic drafting tools to manually draft your slopers for yourself. Instructions can be found at such places as libraries, bookstores and a variety of on-line sources.

Advantage: You can use your own measurements and make your template personal.

Disadvantage: This is a long and tedious process for people unfamiliar with drafting.

3. Use a computer to **draft** your patternmaking template **digitally**

Use CAD (Computer Aided Drafting) programs or CAD related technology to draft your slopers to your specific measurements. Some programs rely upon an extensive list of measurements and others rely upon sophisticated algorithms applied to fewer measurements that are then used to calculate others.

Advantage: The computer calculates and prints your patternmaking template(s).

The templates can usually be styled and stored using a CAD system.

Disadvantage: All are individual having different strengths & weaknesses

The original starting slopers are bodice and skirt, but there are others that include a combination or adaptation of these first basics as well. Examples include pants and blouses.

Start with a template that is most suitable for your project; for example, start a waist free gown from a sheath sloper or a gown with a waist from the combination of skirt and bodice slopers.

Creating your own patterns is an excellent way to increase your sewing satisfaction. No longer will you have to combine pattern pieces from other patterns to get just the one that you want.

The next step is fitting your basic slopers to use as pre-fitted patternmaking templates.