CADTERNS® LITTLE Lessons in Personal Patternmaking

Introduction

Where do sewing patterns come from?

Using *slopers* in common sizes is the traditional way for most manufacturers to begin a patternmaking process. If you are a recreational fashion artist (home sewer) the easiest way to make your own *personal* patterns is to use your own *personal* slopers.

Where do slopers come from?

The most common ways to create a sloper are by drafting or draping it. Drafting a sloper requires a specific combination of figure measurements and mathematical algorithms to draw the lines, arcs and curves necessary to achieve the appropriate shapes.

If you have ever drafted a personal sloper, you would probably agree that *once is enough*! The fastest, easiest way to get a sloper today is digitally - at the computer.

You will find a variety of appropriate software products by searching on-line for personal patternmaking keywords. The examples used here were created with the *CADTERNS* program at www.cadterns.com.

Once you have a personal sloper, make it *uniquely YOURS!*

1. Make a test garment to confirm that it fits the way that you like.
2. Pinch-fit (tweak) it if necessary, to make it feel comfortable and look attractive.
3. Adjust your sloper *pattern* to correspond with the test *garment* after pinch-fitting.

NOW, ***how*** do you actually use your personal sloper?

This is where *CADTERNS* Little Lessons come in. Here you will find maximum use of illustrations and minimum use of text to provide quick, clear understanding of flat patternmaking techniques (even if you have difficulty with English or mathematics).

Little Lessons are available for both manual and digital techniques. Neither technique is better than the other. Manual techniques are fastest and easiest, great for learning patternmaking and for using as a quick cross-reference for digital patternmaking.

Digital instructions show the same patternmaking techniques using the computer with a CAD (Computer-Assisted Drafting) program as your tool. (AutoSketch® is the easy, introductory level CAD program used in these illustrations.)

Most CAD programs accept DXF files such as the slopers created using *CADTERNS*.

These lessons are referred to as *little* because they deal with the smallest, most basic details of patternmaking for apparel. Each Little Lesson illustrates one very basic technique that you can use when you choose to style a sloper into a pattern.

The first thing that you need to know about for styling new patterns is the **fitting darts**. A slide show on the Anatomy of a Dart, gives an overview of the lines, circles and points included in a dart and describes how they are used.

From here, you can proceed to **Dart Art 1** where you will find out how to

- Move darts from one seam line to another
- Split them into more (smaller) darts
- Combine them into fewer (larger) darts.

This gives you control over how many darts you use and where they will appear.

To have even more control over darts and learn how to turn them into styling features, proceed to **Dart Art 2**. In this section you will learn how to disguise fitting darts as:

- Tucks
- Gathers
- Seamlines
- Flare
- Fullness

Darts that are converted into dart-equivalent features aren't *stylish* features yet. To take converted darts to the next level, you can continue with the publication **Adjust Fullness**. Two types of fullness are covered:

- Squared fullness
- Flared fullness

The final step to address is **Finish**, but don't think of it as final and leave it to consider last. There are two types of finish discussed here, with just a couple of samples

- Functional Finish
    - Seam allowances
    - Facings
    - Openings/Closures
- Decorative Finish
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You can use more than one technique in a single project, just don't use all appealing modifications in the same garment, and stay balanced. Flat Pattern Design uses fashion elements of design following universal principles of design.

Use techniques illustrated in these little lessons with any slopers from any source in any garment type. The lesson illustrations here use slopers created with ***CADTERNS Personal Patternmaking*** program and **Fit-*FIRST*** system.

The three basic steps of the ***CADTERNS*** system are - fit, style and finish. More specifically, you would:

1. Fit a personal sloper
1. Style a personal pattern
2. Finish a stylish garment.

Use techniques illustrated in these Little Lessons with *any* slopers from *any* source in *any* garment type.

The personal sloper used could be yours or your customer's. When you keep a record of the styling steps that you follow, you can repeat the steps on someone else's sloper.

A personal designer wardrobe starts with one piece – shall we begin?